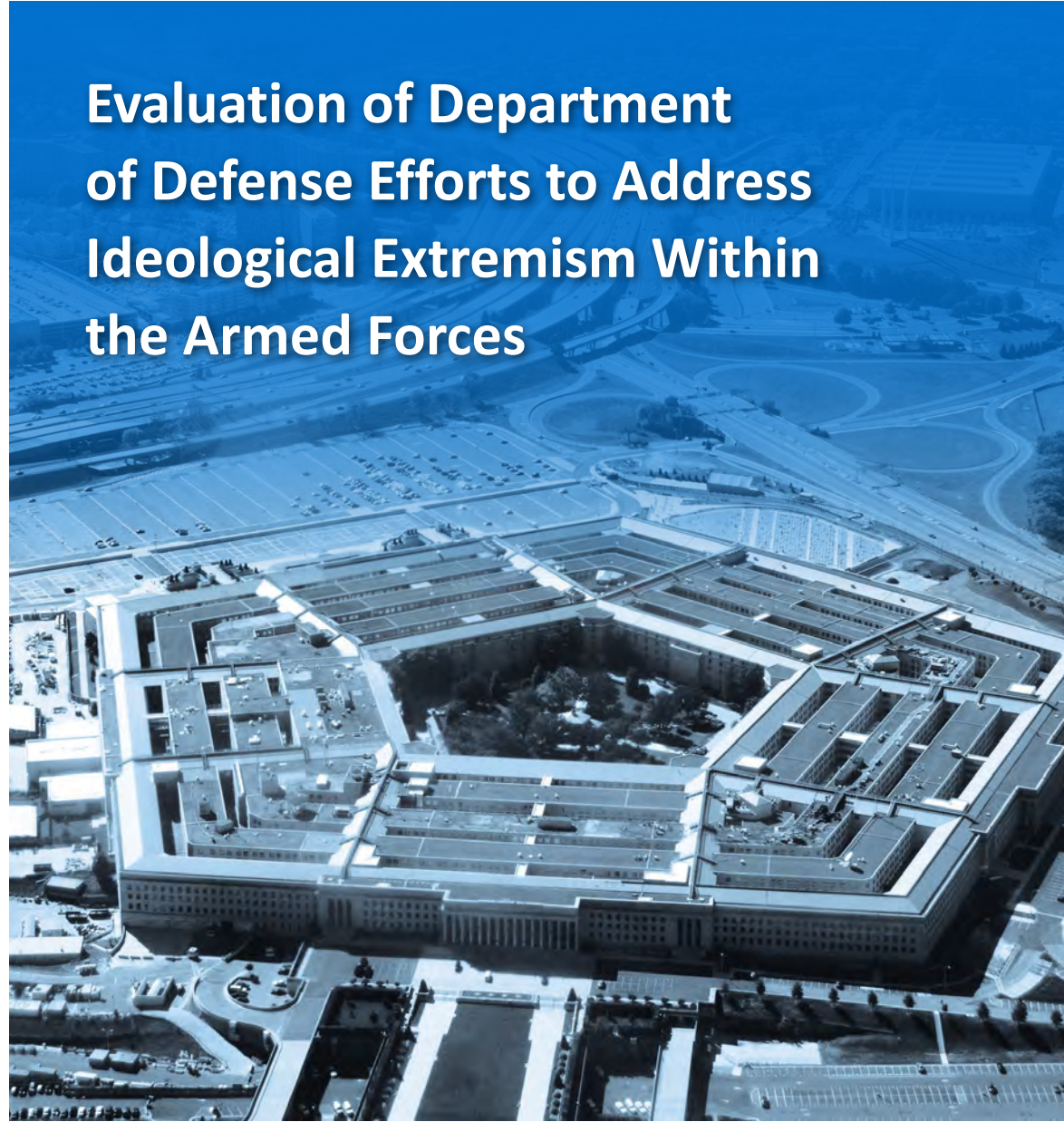




# INSPECTOR GENERAL

*U.S. Department of Defense*

MAY 10, 2022



## Evaluation of Department of Defense Efforts to Address Ideological Extremism Within the Armed Forces

INTEGRITY ★ INDEPENDENCE ★ EXCELLENCE







# Results in Brief

## *Evaluation of Department of Defense Efforts to Address Ideological Extremism Within the Armed Forces*

May 10, 2022

### Objective

The objective of our evaluation was to determine the extent to which the DoD and the Military Services have implemented policy and procedures that prohibit active advocacy and active participation related to supremacist, extremist, or criminal gang doctrine, ideology, or causes by active duty military personnel, as required by DoD Instruction 1325.06.

### Background

This evaluation was planned and conducted to align with the DoD OIG's focus on ethical decision-making and conduct, in the context of incidents indicating the presence of prohibited extremist activity within the U.S. military.

DoD Instruction 1325.06, "Handling Dissident and Protest Activities Among Members of the Armed Forces," prohibits Service members' active advocacy of and participation in organizations that espouse supremacist, extremist, or criminal gang doctrine, ideology, or causes. However, recent surveys and incidents have raised concerns about the presence of ideological extremists within the U.S. military.

We identified nine publicly reported incidents involving active and former military members from several branches of the military that have been charged with criminal offenses related to participation in or advocacy of violent extremist or supremacist groups and ideologies since January 2020. For example, in October 2020,

### Background (cont'd)

two recently discharged Service members linked to violent extremist groups were charged with plotting to kidnap the Governor of Michigan. In addition, the DoD has received six congressional inquiries since February 2019 regarding the DoD's policy on prohibited activities, especially extremist and supremacist activities in the Armed Forces.

### Findings

DoDI 1325.06 prohibits active advocacy of extremist ideology and active participation in extremist organizations. However, DoDI 1325.06 was last updated on February 22, 2012, and does not have sufficiently detailed and easily-understood definitions of extremism-related terminology, including the terms "extremist," "extremism," "active advocacy," and "active participation." Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security and Military Service officials consistently stated that Service members and commanders do not know what behaviors constitute extremism or extremist activity. As a result, the DoD cannot fully implement policy and procedures to address extremist activity without clarifying the definitions of "extremism," "extremist," "active advocacy," and "active participation."

We also found that the DoD collects data through a variety of processes to track extremist-related activities within the Armed Forces; however, these processes are not interconnected. As a result, the DoD is not able to accurately collect and analyze Service-level data and develop a DoD-wide understanding of extremist-related activity within the Armed Forces. In addition, senior officials cannot determine the full extent of extremist activity to adequately address the issue within the Armed Forces.

### Recommendations

We recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, in coordination with the Department of Defense Office of General Counsel, update DoDI 1325.06 to clarify the meanings of terms related to extremism and



# Results in Brief

## *Evaluation of Department of Defense Efforts to Address Ideological Extremism Within the Armed Forces*

### **Recommendations (cont'd)**

extremist activity. In addition, we recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments review their extremist-related policies, procedures, and training materials to ensure conformity with the revised version of DoDI 1325.06.

We also recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security, in coordination with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Secretaries of the Military Departments, develop and publish standardized policies, processes, and tracking mechanisms to enable the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement across the Services in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities. According to Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness officials, during our evaluation the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness drafted an implementation policy and coordinated the draft policy with the Services for their review and feedback. Therefore, the recommendation is unresolved and remains open, pending OUSD(P&R) issuance of the implementation policy.

### **Management Actions Taken**

On December 20, 2021, the Secretary of Defense updated DoDI 1325.06. The updated policy improved the definition of extremist activities to ensure that DoD policy on extremist activities is easily understood by both Service members and commanders. Specifically, the updated DoDI 1325.06 provides a clarifying definition for the term “extremist activities” and the term “active participation.” This action fully addresses the recommendation to clarify the meanings of terms related to extremism and extremist activity; therefore, this recommendation is closed.

### **Management Comments and Our Response**

Senior officials from the Military Departments concurred with and fully addressed the recommendation to develop and publish policy and guidance for identifying, tracking, and reporting service member involvement in prohibited extremist-related groups and activities; therefore, the recommendation is resolved and remains open. We will close the recommendation when the Secretaries for the Military Departments provide us a copy of their approved and published policies.

All management comments we received agreed with our recommendation to develop and publish standardized policies, processes, and mechanisms to enable the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities. The management comments addressed the intent of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is resolved and open. We will close the recommendation when the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and the Secretaries of the Military Departments provide us a copy of their issued policies.

Please see the Recommendations Table on the next page for the status of recommendations.

## Recommendations Table

Management	Recommendations Unresolved	Recommendations Resolved	Recommendations Closed
Secretary of the Army	None	A.2, B	A.1
Secretary of the Navy	None	A.2, B	A.1
Secretary of the Air Force	None	A.2, B	A.1
Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness	None	B	A.1
Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security	None	B	A.1

Please provide Management Comments by June 13, 2022.

**Note:** The following categories are used to describe agency management’s comments to individual recommendations.

- **Unresolved** – Management has not agreed to implement the recommendation or has not proposed actions that will address the recommendation.
- **Resolved** – Management agreed to implement the recommendation or has proposed actions that will address the underlying finding that generated the recommendation.
- **Closed** – DoD OIG verified that the agreed upon corrective actions were implemented.





**INSPECTOR GENERAL  
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
4800 MARK CENTER DRIVE  
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22350-1500**

May 10, 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY  
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY  
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE  
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY  
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS  
UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY  
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

SUBJECT: Evaluation of DoD Efforts to Address Ideological Extremism Within the  
Armed Forces (Report No. DODIG-2022-095)

This final report provides the results of the DoD Office of Inspector General's evaluation. We provided copies of the draft report and requested written comments on the recommendations. We considered management's comments on the draft report when preparing the final report; these comments are included in the report.

Officials from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security, Department of the Army, Department of the Navy, and Department of the Air Force concurred with the recommendations presented in the report; therefore, we consider the recommendations resolved and open. As described in the recommendations section of this report, we will close the recommendations when we are provided with documentation showing that all agreed-upon actions to implement the recommendations are completed. Therefore, within 90 days, please provide us your response to specific actions in progress or completed on the recommendations; send your response [REDACTED]

If you have any questions, please contact [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] We appreciate the cooperation and assistance received during the evaluation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Dubinok", is located below the text.

Jefferson L. Dubinok  
Acting Assistant Inspector General for  
Program Evaluations, Combatant  
Commands, and Overseas Contingency  
Operations



# Contents

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## Introduction

Objective .....	1
Background .....	1

## **Finding A. DoD Policy Prohibits Participation in Extremist Organizations; However, DoD Officials Expressed Difficulty in Identifying Extremist Activity**..... 6

DoD Instruction 1325.06 Prohibits Active Participation in Extremist Organizations, but DoD Officials Expressed Difficulty in Identifying Extremist Activity .....	7
The DoD Cannot Fully Implement Policy and Procedures to Address Extremist Activity Without Clarifying the Definition of Extremism .....	9
Current DoD Efforts to Revise DoD Instruction 1325.06 and Clarify the Definition of Extremism .....	10
Recommendations, Management Comments, and Our Response .....	11

## **Finding B. Without Collecting and Analyzing Data, the DoD Cannot Fully Determine the Extent of Extremist Behavior and Activities Within the Armed Forces**..... 14

The DoD Collects Data on Extremist Activity Within the Armed Forces, but Has Gaps in Its Data Collection .....	15
DoD Officials Have Not Developed and Implemented Standard Policies and Processes to Track Extremist Activity Data .....	18
Without Complete Data on Extremist Activity, the DoD Is Unable to Make Information-Based Decisions to Address Extremist Activity Within the Armed Forces .....	19
Recommendation, Management Comments and Our Response .....	19

## Appendixes

Appendix A. Scope and Methodology .....	23
Use of Computer-Processed Data .....	28
Prior Coverage .....	28
Appendix B. Other Matters of Interest .....	30



# Contents (cont'd)

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**Management Comments** ..... 35

Department of the Army Comments..... 35

Department of the Navy Comments..... 37

Department of the Air Force Comments..... 38

Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness..... 40

Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security Comments..... 41

**Acronyms and Abbreviations** ..... 43



# Introduction

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## Objective

The objective of this evaluation was to determine the extent to which the DoD and the Military Services have implemented policy and procedures that prohibit active advocacy and active participation related to supremacist, extremist, or criminal gang doctrine, ideology, or causes by active duty military personnel, as required by DoD Instruction 1325.06.<sup>1</sup>

## Background

DoD Instruction (DoDI) 1325.06 establishes DoD policy regarding Service members' participation in prohibited activities. The Instruction prohibits Service members from actively advocating for "supremacist, extremist, or criminal gang doctrine, ideology, or causes." In addition, Service members may not actively participate in organizations that advocate supremacist, extremist, or criminal gang doctrine, ideology, or causes. Although the Instruction does not explicitly define "extremism," "extremist activity," or "extremist organization," it states the following in regard to active participation:

Active participation includes, but is not limited to, fundraising; demonstrating or rallying; recruiting, training, organizing, or leading members; distributing material (including posting online); knowingly wearing gang colors or clothing; having tattoos or body markings associated with such gangs or organizations; or otherwise engaging in activities in furtherance of the objective of such gangs or organizations that are detrimental to good order, discipline, or mission accomplishment or are incompatible with military service.

DoDI 1325.06 also recognizes that the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects individuals' freedom of speech and the right to peaceable assembly. Accordingly, the Instruction states that a Service member's First Amendment rights should be preserved to the maximum extent possible, while also charging commanders to not be "indifferent to conduct that, if allowed to proceed unchecked, would destroy the effectiveness of the military unit." According to the Instruction, this balancing of Constitutional rights with military good order and discipline "depends largely upon the calm and prudent judgment of the responsible commander." In addition, DoDI 1325.06 requires that each Military Department

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<sup>1</sup> DoD Instruction 1325.06, "Handling Dissident and Protest Activities Among Members of the Armed Forces," November 27, 2009 (Incorporating Change 1, Effective February 22, 2012).

establish policies and procedures to implement the Instruction's requirements. Therefore, each Service has incorporated guidance regarding prohibited activities into its extremism policies.

### ***Incidents or Allegations of Extremist Activity Within the DoD***

Although DoD and Service policies clearly prohibit extremist behavior by military Service members, recent surveys and incidents have raised concerns about the presence of ideological extremists within the U.S. military. For example, a 2020 Military Times poll "found about one-third of all active-duty respondents said they saw signs of white supremacist or racist ideology in the ranks."<sup>2</sup>

We identified nine publicly reported incidents involving active and former military members linked to violent extremist or supremacist groups since January 2020. The active duty and Reserve Component Service members involved in these incidents were serving or had served in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Army National Guard. The suspects were charged with criminal offenses related to participation in or advocacy of violent extremist or supremacist organizations and ideologies. For example, according to the Department of Justice, 13 defendants, including two former U.S. Marines, were arrested on charges related to domestic terrorism, including a plot to kidnap the Governor of Michigan in October 2020. One of these former Marines was discharged from the Marine Corps Reserve the same day charges were announced against him, while the other was discharged from the active duty Marine Corps in 2019.

In a January 2020 report to Congress, the DoD noted 45 allegations involving supremacist, neo-Nazi, and other extremist affiliations by Service members during the preceding 12 months.<sup>3</sup>

- The Department of the Navy disclosed 10 cases involving Sailors or Marines affiliated with extremist or hate groups.
- The Department of the Army disclosed 24 cases involving Soldiers affiliated with extremist or hate groups.
- The Department of the Air Force disclosed 11 cases involving Airmen affiliated with extremist or hate groups.

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<sup>2</sup> Military Times, "Troops: White nationalism a national security threat equal to ISIS, al-Qaida," (Tysons, Virginia), September 3, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Defense Report to Congress, "Military Personnel and Extremist Ideologies," January 16, 2020.



## ***Congressional Inquiries Regarding DoD Policy on Prohibited Extremist Activities***

The DoD has received six congressional inquiries since February 2019 regarding the DoD's policy on prohibited extremist activities, especially extremist and supremacist activities in the Armed Forces. These inquiries included requests for:

- clarification and review of DoD policy on prohibited activities, particularly regarding extremist and supremacist ideology and activity;
- information on actions the DoD is taking to prevent the accession of recruits with ties to supremacist or hate groups;
- development of DoD guidance to assist recruiters in identifying extremist groups and activities; and
- clarifying the term "extremism" and the scope of violent extremism among Service members.

Following the events at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021, 11 Senators requested that the DoD Office of Inspector General (OIG) investigate "supremacist and violent fringe extremist activity within the military." Additionally, the request called for recommendations to prevent and neutralize extremist ideology within the Armed Forces.

## ***The DoD Stand-Down to Address Extremism in the Ranks***

On February 5, 2021, the Secretary of Defense directed commanders and DoD supervisors at all levels to conduct a one-day stand-down with their personnel to address the issue of extremism within the ranks.<sup>4</sup> Stating that Service members, DoD civilian employees, and all those who support the DoD mission deserve an environment free of behaviors characterized by discrimination, hate, and harassment, the Secretary of Defense called upon all those who hold leadership positions within the DoD to guard against these behaviors and set the example for those they lead.

The Secretary of Defense gave commanders and DoD supervisors the discretion to tailor the program of instruction for their unit's stand-down day. However, the Secretary of Defense required the stand-down instruction to include:

- the importance of the Oath of Office taken by Service members and Federal civilian employees upon entering public service. The Oath of Office, which the U.S. Constitution requires all Service members to take, includes the commitment to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic;

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<sup>4</sup> Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Stand-Down to Address Extremism in the Ranks," February 5, 2021.

- a description of impermissible behaviors related to extremism, including actions associated with extremist or dissident ideologies;
- procedures for reporting suspected or actual extremist behaviors in accordance with DoDI 1325.06; and
- an opportunity for DoD personnel to offer their concerns, experiences, and possible solutions.

As stated in the memorandum, the stand-down day is one element of what must be a concerted effort to better educate Service members about the extent of extremist activity within the DoD and to develop sustainable ways to eliminate the corrosive effects of extremist ideology and conduct on the DoD workforce.

### ***The DoD Countering Extremism Activity Working Group***

In an April 9, 2021, memorandum to DoD senior leadership, the Secretary of Defense directed several immediate actions to address extremism within the DoD.<sup>5</sup> These immediate actions included a review and update of DoDI 1325.06 to revise its definitions of extremism and extremist activities; development of personnel training in regard to the potential targeting of separated and retired Service members for recruitment by extremist groups; the development of enhanced screening questionnaires for military recruits; and the initiation of a study to determine the scope of extremist behavior within the DoD.

The Secretary of Defense memorandum also directed the establishment of the DoD Countering Extremism Activity Working Group (CEAWG), led by the Senior Advisor on Human Capital and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, to oversee the execution of these activities and to develop additional recommendations for Secretary of Defense consideration. The Secretary of Defense tasked the CEAWG to examine policy and programmatic changes along four lines of effort (LOE).

1. Military Justice and Policy—Evaluate whether seeking an amendment to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) is appropriate to address extremism and if current regulations are sufficient or should be expanded.
2. Support and Oversight—Determine how the DoD can facilitate improved information collection and sharing among Service Insider Threat Programs, law enforcement organizations, security organizations, commanders, and supervisors, as well as examine standards of conduct and the expectations for social media use and reporting within the DoD.

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<sup>5</sup> Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Immediate Actions to Counter Extremism in the Department and the Establishment of the Countering Extremism Activity Working Group,” April 9, 2021.

3. Screening Capability—Examine the DoD’s pursuit of capabilities to screen publicly-available information for accession of military recruits and for continuous vetting of national security positions.<sup>6</sup>
4. Education and Training—Examine existing training and use lessons learned from the stand-down to make recommendations for training at different leadership levels and discrete, targeted audiences, as necessary.

The Deputy’s Workforce Council, chaired by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, will review the final recommendations from the CEAWG and any related recommendations from DoD Components and will guide the work of the CEAWG.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> While outside the scope of this evaluation, we discuss our observations on screening recruits in Appendix B, Other Matters of Interest, “DoD Efforts to Screen Social Media of Members of the Armed Forces for Extremist Activity.”

<sup>7</sup> The Deputy’s Workforce Council addresses the Department’s people management, personnel policy, and total force requirements. Topics include Countering Extremism.

## Finding A

### **DoD Policy Prohibits Participation in Extremist Organizations; However, DoD Officials Expressed Difficulty in Identifying Extremist Activity**

The DoD developed and implemented policy to prohibit activities with extremist organizations and ideologies by Service members. DoDI 1325.06 provides guidance related to prohibited activities, including prohibited active participation with extremist organizations and active advocacy of extremist ideologies by Service members. Specifically, DoDI 1325.06 requires that:

- military personnel must reject active participation in organizations that advocate supremacist, extremist, or criminal gang doctrine, ideology, or causes;
- military commanders must remain alert for signs of prohibited activities;
- military commanders must intervene early, primarily through counseling;
- military commanders are authorized to employ a full range of administrative and disciplinary actions, including administrative separation or appropriate criminal action, against military personnel who engage in prohibited activities; and
- the Military Departments must ensure that policy and procedures on prohibited activities outlined in the DoDI 1325.06 are included in Service training programs.

However, DoDI 1325.06 was last updated on February 22, 2012, and does not have sufficiently detailed and easily-understood definitions of extremism-related terminology, including the terms “extremist,” “extremism,” “active advocacy,” and “active participation.” The CEAWG is reviewing and amending the definitions within DoDI 1325.06.

Officials from the Offices of the Under Secretary of Defense (OUSD) for Personnel and Readiness (P&R), and Intelligence and Security (I&S), and from the Military Services we interviewed consistently stated that Service members and commanders do not know what behaviors constitute extremism or extremist activity and that identification of extremist activity is often subjective and is inconsistently reported by the Services. In addition, Service training commands are unable to develop detailed training materials for Service members about extremism, including procedures for reporting extremist activity, because sufficiently detailed and easily understood definitions of extremism, as well as information on what



behavior constitutes extremist activity, have not been provided. The DoD cannot fully implement policy and procedures to address extremist activity without clarifying the definitions of “extremism,” “extremist,” “active advocacy,” and “active participation.”

## **DoD Instruction 1325.06 Prohibits Active Participation in Extremist Organizations, but DoD Officials Expressed Difficulty in Identifying Extremist Activity**

The OUSD(P&R), in coordination with the OUSD(I&S), the Joint Staff, the Office of the General Counsel of the DoD, and the Military Departments, developed and implemented policy related to prohibited activities with extremist organizations and ideologies by Service members, as outlined in DoDI 1325.06. DoDI 1325.06 provides guidance related to prohibited activities, including prohibited active participation with extremist organizations and active advocacy of extremist ideologies by Service members.

However, discussions with officials from the OUSD(P&R), OUSD(I&S), Joint Staff, Military Departments, and each of the Services highlighted difficulties with identifying and reporting extremist activities within the DoD. For example, officials from the Services’ Judge Advocate General offices commented on the subjectivity in identifying extremist activities and organizations: what one person might consider to be an extremist organization, another person might see as a group advocating for the protection of individual rights within the U.S. Constitution. An Air Force recruiting official noted that an applicant for enlistment may believe that the group they belong to is not an extremist organization; however, a recruiting officer may think otherwise.

Moreover, a Service member’s advocacy of an extremist organization or ideology may go unrecognized by colleagues, potentially leading to an unreported prohibited activity. Officials from the Joint Staff J5, Army Criminal Investigation Division, Navy Recruiting Command, and Marine Corps Insider Threat Program also commented on the use of the word “active” to describe certain prohibited activities, noting that the interpretation of the word “active” led to confusion when trying to determine advocacy of, or participation in, prohibited activities.

Officials from all four Services agreed on the need for a more clear and concise DoD-wide definition of extremism to appropriately revise and implement extremist-related policy. Therefore, although DoDI 1325.06 provides examples

of activities that constitute active participation in extremist organizations, it does not clearly define extremism, nor does it elaborate on behaviors that would indicate active advocacy of such organizations or related ideologies.<sup>8</sup>

### ***DoDI 1325.06 Balances the Constitutional Right of Freedom of Speech Against the Military's Requirement for Conduct Consistent With Good Order, Discipline, and National Security***

DoDI 1325.06 both prohibits Service members' advocacy of, and participation in, certain activities, and acknowledges their Constitutional right to free speech. The DoDI cites the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which provides that "Congress shall make no law... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." DoDI 1325.06 directs that a "Service member's right of expression should be preserved to the maximum extent possible," while also maintaining good order and discipline. For example, a Navy official stated that, although clear definitions of extremist-related terms are needed, Service members' Constitutionally-protected rights must also be taken into account.

Reconciling an individual's right of freedom of speech with military order and discipline is left to the subjective judgement of unit commanders. DoDI 1325.06 states that the "proper balancing of these interests depends largely upon the calm and prudent judgment of the responsible commander." According to an internal Department of the Navy "Tiger Team" report, provided by an official from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, commanders "shoulder the responsibility" for recognizing and addressing domestic extremism, but without clear policy or guidance and with little to no training.<sup>9</sup> As a result, according to the Department of Navy Tiger Team report, it is difficult for commanders to ascertain when a Service member has crossed a threshold into a prohibited activity.

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<sup>8</sup> DoDI 1325.06 states: "Active participation includes, but is not limited to, fundraising; demonstrating or rallying; recruiting, training, organizing, or leading members; distributing material (including posting online); knowingly wearing gang colors or clothing; having tattoos or body markings associated with such gangs or organizations; or otherwise engaging in activities in furtherance of the objective of such gangs or organizations that are detrimental to good order, discipline, or mission accomplishment or are incompatible with military service."

<sup>9</sup> Department of the Navy, "Report of the Department of Navy Domestic Extremism Tiger Team," (undated). The purpose of this report was to report on the results of the Department of Navy's domestic extremism tiger team. The tiger team sought to (1) document existing capabilities for preventing, detecting, and mitigating domestic extremism, and (2) identify gaps in current capabilities.

## The DoD Cannot Fully Implement Policy and Procedures to Address Extremist Activity Without Clarifying the Definition of Extremism

OUSDP(P&R), OUSDP(I&S), and Service officials acknowledged that the lack of a clear definition has created confusion for Service members and commanders in their understanding of extremism. Officials from the Joint Staff J5, Army Criminal Investigation Division, Navy Recruiting Command, Navy Security and Intelligence Office, and Marine Corps Counter Insider Threat Analysis Service recognize that, along with the imprecise definition of extremism, related terms such as “active,” “advocate,” and “participation” are also subject to differing interpretations. These uncertainties make it difficult for Service members to identify and report extremist behaviors and activities, as well as create challenges with the development of the training needed to educate Service members about extremism and extremist activities.

In addition to the challenges expressed by the Services with regard to identifying, reporting, and acting on extremist activity, Congress has also expressed concern over the ambiguity of DoD definitions of relevant terms. Since 2019, Congress has sent six inquiries to the DoD regarding the DoD’s definition of extremism. For example, a June 2020 letter to the Secretary of Defense, signed by 40 members of the House of Representatives, requested clarification of the terms “supremacist” and “extremist,” as referenced in DoDI 1325.06. Additionally, in letters to the Secretary of Defense from April and June 2021, a member of Congress referred to a “glaring omission” in the DoD’s definition of extremism and the need to define terms related to extremism in the Services. These congressional concerns were similar to those of DoD officials we interviewed regarding the ambiguity of key definitions related to extremism, including “extremism,” “extremist,” “active advocacy,” and “active participation.”

The congressional inquiries regarding the DoD’s clarification of the term “extremism” also discussed extremism-related training for Service members. A June 2020 letter from members of the House of Representatives requested the review and clarification of DoD policy on prohibited activities, particularly regarding extremist and supremacist ideology and activity. This included an inquiry into extremist- and supremacist-related training provided to Service members. However, officials from the Office of Secretary of Defense (OSD) and the Services stated that effective, targeted training cannot be developed and provided to military personnel if there isn’t a clearly-defined meaning of extremism upon which the program of instruction is based.

Additionally, Section 554(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2021 requires that the Secretary of Defense establish standard policies and processes across the Armed Forces to ensure proper documentation and tracking of prohibited activity allegations.<sup>10</sup>

## **Current DoD Efforts to Revise DoD Instruction 1325.06 and Clarify the Definition of Extremism**

On April 2021, the Secretary of Defense issued a memorandum establishing the CEAWG and directing several immediate actions, including the review and update of the definition of extremism contained in DoDI 1325.06. Specifically, the memorandum directed the OUSD(P&R) and the DoD Office of General Counsel to review the Instruction and revise its definition of prohibited extremist activities among uniformed military personnel. According to an OUSD(P&R) official, the DoD is in the beginning stages of deciding how to revise DoDI 1325.06. OUSD(P&R) officials have been working on clarifying the definition of extremism for several years and, during that time, have received recommendations from Congress and from senior DoD leaders that have informed and guided their work.

One OUSD(P&R) official stated that although the DoDI 1325.06 is 9 years old, the information contained within remains appropriate. The official also stated that any review and prospective updates of DoDI 1325.06 should be thoughtful and deliberate to preserve Service members' rights. Another OUSD(P&R) official agreed, stating that the DoD should carefully consider any changes to the DoDI, particularly changes related to potential legal and policy implications. Joint Staff and Marine Corps Military Equal Opportunity officials commented on the distinction between actions and thoughts, noting that any definitions related to extremism or extremist activity should address an individual's "problematic conduct," without infringing on their rights of free speech.

According to one OSD Office of General Counsel official, a standardized definition of "extremism" and "supremacy," "does not need to be updated." The official further stated that he is hesitant to predict the feasibility of standardizing these definitions. Similarly, a Headquarters Marine Corps Judge Advocate Division official stated that consideration of definitions for extremism or for extremist activity "walks a very thin wire" with respect to staying within Constitutional First Amendment constraints protecting freedom of speech and expression.

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<sup>10</sup> Public Law 116-283, "The William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021," Section 554(b), "Inspector General Oversight of Diversity and Inclusion in Department of Defense; Supremacist, Extremist, or Criminal Gang Activity in the Armed Forces," January 1, 2021.



In June 2021, the Military Justice and Policy subcommittee of the CEAWG provided us a draft of its proposed language updating the DoD policy on prohibited activities. The draft includes the revision and expansion of definitions regarding “extremist activities” and “active participation,” as well as distinguishing between extremist and criminal gang activities. The CEAWG submitted its report and recommendations to the Deputy Secretary of Defense’s Office in late July 2021 for coordination with the Services.

## Recommendations, Management Comments, and Our Response

### ***Recommendation A.1***

**We recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, in coordination with the Department of Defense Office of General Counsel, update Department of Defense Instruction 1325.06 to clarify the meaning of the terms “extremism,” “extremist,” “active,” “advocate,” and “participation,” to encourage greater understanding throughout the Armed Forces of the Department of Defense policy on extremism and extremist activities.**

### ***Management Action Taken***

During our evaluation, on December 20, 2021, the Secretary of Defense released the DoD Report on Countering Extremist Activity within the Department of Defense, which included information on the revised DoDI 1325.06. The revised DoDI improved the definition of extremist activities to make it clearer. Specifically, the updated DoDI 1325.06 provides clarifying definitions for the terms “extremist activities” and “active participation.”

The definition of “extremist activities” provides more detail about what Service members can and cannot do with regard to extremist activities and active participation, to include cyber activities (for example, posting, liking, sharing, re-tweeting, or otherwise distributing social media content). The revised DoDI 1325.06 also provides more specific instruction on what commands are responsible for and includes a glossary that defines key terms related to extremism, including advocacy, liking, distributing literature, and sharing.

### ***Our Response***

The management action taken fully addresses the recommendation to clarify the meaning of the terms associated with extremism and extremist activities; therefore, this recommendation is closed.

## ***Recommendation A.2***

**We recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments update their Service's extremist-related policies, procedures, and training materials to ensure compliance with the revised version of Department of Defense Instruction 1325.06.**

### ***Department of the Army Comments***

The Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) agreed and stated that the Department of the Army submitted its draft implementation guidance to the OUSD(P&R) in accordance with OUSD(P&R) instructions. The instructions directed the Services to develop and submit draft implementation guidance for Change 2 of DoDI 1325.06 to the OUSD(P&R) for review and approval prior to implementation. An Army Directive will implement Change 2 of DoDI 1325.06 and will include the specific text to be inserted in paragraphs 4-12 and 4-13 of a future revision of Army Regulation 600-20, "Army Command Policy," which is pending OUSD(P&R) and DoD Office of General Counsel approval.

In addition, the Joint Staff is currently developing a stand-alone Joint Knowledge Online block of training to address extremism as part of the DoD Countering Extremist Activities Working Group recommendations. The Acting Assistant Secretary stated that, upon completion and fielding of the Joint Knowledge Online training, the Army will develop its Service-level training to integrate the Joint Knowledge Online training concepts, learning objectives, and standards.

### ***Our Response***

The comments from the Acting Assistant Secretary addressed the intent of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is resolved and open. We will close the recommendation when the Department of the Army provides us a copy of the approved and published Army Command policy.

### ***Department of the Navy Comments***

The Director of Readiness and Transition for the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) agreed. On February 4, 2022, the Department of the Navy provided a draft policy implementing DoDI 1325.06 to the OUSD(P&R) and the Office of the DoD General Counsel for approval. Upon receipt of approval, the Department of the Navy will issue the policy implementing the DoDI. The projected completion date for publishing the final Department of the Navy policy is August 31, 2022.

### ***Our Response***

The comments from the Director addressed the intent of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is resolved and open. We will close the recommendation when the Department of the Navy provides us a copy of the issued policy.

### ***Department of the Air Force Comments***

The Acting Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) agreed and stated that the Air Force has completed draft guidance implementing DoDI 1325.06, which is currently being reviewed for approval by the OUSD(P&R) and the DoD Office of General Counsel, as required. The Acting Assistant Secretary further stated that there is no timeline for completing the review; however, the Air Force will publish the final Air Force policy promptly as soon as the OUSD(P&R) draft guidance is approved and published.

### ***Our Response***

The comments from the Acting Assistant Secretary addressed the intent of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is resolved and open. We will close the recommendation when the Department of the Air Force provides us a copy of the approved and published policy.

## Finding B

### **Without Collecting and Analyzing Data, the DoD Cannot Fully Determine the Extent of Extremist Behavior and Activities Within the Armed Forces**

The DoD collects data through a variety of processes to track extremist-related activity within the Armed Forces. However, there is no process in place to share this information within the Armed Forces, the processes employed by the DoD are not interconnected, and the data from the various processes are not aggregated into a central repository that can be accessed by senior DoD personnel. Section 554(b) of the FY 2021 NDAA requires the Secretary of Defense to establish standard policies, processes, tracking mechanisms, and reporting requirements for extremist activity in the Armed Forces. According to a January 2020 OSD report, DoD personnel are required to report behaviors that run counter to ethical standards, DoD policies, and U.S. law, including when they witness or experience incidents of extremist, supremacist, or hate-based activity or harassment.<sup>11</sup>

Both the OUSD(P&R) and the OUSD(I&S) receive information from the Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, which is an office within the OUSD(P&R), and the Federal Bureau of Investigation related to extremist-related activity within the Armed Forces. Specifically, the OUSD(P&R) receives a consolidated annual report from the Office for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion that incorporates an aggregation and assessment of data related to Military Equal Opportunity complaints through which extremist incidents can be reported. In addition, OUSD(I&S) officials stated that they collaborate with the Federal Bureau of Investigation to share and receive information, which helps the DoD identify individuals who may have tendencies to engage in extremism-related violence. OUSD(I&S) officials also stated that Services send certain extremism-related reports through the DoD Insider Threat Management and Analysis Center (DITMAC), an operational element of the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency under OUSD(I&S) oversight.

However, we found that although the OUSD(P&R), OUSD(I&S), and the Services have employed a number of programs, processes, and databases that are leveraged to collect information on allegations or incidents of extremist activity, the databases of these separate reporting processes are not interconnected. This lack of data interconnectivity occurred because the DoD does not clearly outline in

<sup>11</sup> OSD report, "Military Personnel and Extremist Ideologies," prepared pursuant to Senate Report 116-103, page 24, accompanying S. 2474, the Department of Defense Appropriations Bill, 2020, January 16, 2020.

DoDI 1325.06 what information related to extremism is required to be reported, by what processes, and to what entity. Specifically, the OUSD(I&S), in conjunction with the OUSD(P&R), has not developed and implemented standard policies, processes, tracking mechanisms, and reporting requirements to collect and analyze Service-level data on extremist-related activity within the Armed Forces.

As a result, the DoD is not able to accurately collect and analyze Service-level data and develop a DoD-wide understanding of extremist-related activity within the Armed Forces, as required by Section 554(b) of the FY 2021 NDAA. Without Service-level extremist-related activity data, senior officials cannot determine the full extent of extremist activity within the DoD and, therefore, cannot make information-based decisions to develop and implement recruiting, training, retention, and security policies to address extremist activity and ideology within the Armed Forces.

## **The DoD Collects Data on Extremist Activity Within the Armed Forces, but Has Gaps in Its Data Collection**

Although the DoD collects extremist-related activity data, it is not able to accurately and efficiently identify all instances of extremist behavior or extremist activity within the Services. According to the December 2020 DoD Board on Diversity and Inclusion Report, testimony given in a 2020 hearing before the House of Representatives Armed Services Committee highlighted gaps in tracking extremist activities within the DoD, including data collection and reporting.<sup>12</sup> During the hearing, a Representative stated, “I think that data is a huge key to unpacking the issue. We need to define the problem and get reliable data on how prevalent it is in the military. I realize that we do not have a lot of reliable data on this. Aside from a recent newspaper poll on racist behavior in the military, we have few solid statistics on extremist behavior in the military.”

### ***Service Processes for Collecting Data Related to Extremist Activity***

The Military Services have processes in place for collecting extremism activity data. During the 2020 hearing before the House of Representatives Armed Services Committee, a Representative stated that over the last 5 years the DoD has reported 21 criminal cases involving white supremacy within the Services. In addition, during our fieldwork we found that Army Criminal Investigation Division records

<sup>12</sup> Department of Defense Board on Diversity and Inclusion Report, “Recommendations to Improve Racial and Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion in the U.S. Military,” December 2020. House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Personnel, “Hearing on White Supremacy and the Military,” February 11, 2020.

identified 21 Soldiers subject to disciplinary actions due to participation in extremist organizations or activities from 2015 to 2020, although the underlying basis for these actions may have been characterized more generally as “misconduct violations.” An Air Force official stated that eight Service members received non-judicial punishment for participation in extremist organizations or activities in the last 5 years. A Navy official stated the Navy does not currently track disciplinary action for participation in extremist organizations and activities.

The Services collect data on allegations or incidents through a variety of processes, such as:

- a military unit’s organizational chain of command;
- referrals from the DoD OIG Hotline and from each Service’s OIG Hotline;
- the military police forces of the Services;
- the installation or unit security office;
- the installation or unit human resources office;
- each Service’s Employee Assistance Program;
- the installation or unit counterintelligence office;
- the military component’s Insider Threat Program office; and
- Military Equal Opportunity offices.

Although Service-specific policies and procedure are in place for the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps, the DoD has not directed or developed Departmental policies, processes, and tracking mechanisms that could be standardized across all the Services and which would allow for extremist activity to be consolidated in a central repository. For example, an Army official stated that there are three “channels” in which extremist incidents can be reported and tracked: the Military Equal Opportunity office, the Army Inspector General, or the Insider Threat Program. But he also went on to state that if the incident related to extremist activity crosses the criminal threshold, the incident is tracked in the Army alert/law enforcement database. However, these channels for reporting extremist-related incidents are not linked, so there is not a central Army repository for collecting and tracking extremist-specific data.

Disciplinary actions reported may derive from, or be related to, participation in extremist organizations or activities. However, the underlying basis for disciplinary action may be characterized more generally as “misconduct”—for example, a violation of an AR or directive, such as AR 600-20. Therefore, according to Army officials responding to our January 29, 2021, request for information, the



Army does not currently have a tracking mechanism that captures all disciplinary actions imposed by commanders for incidents involving, or related to, participation in extremist organizations or activity.

Similarly, in addition to disciplinary action, Army officials responding to our January 29, 2021, request for information stated that a Soldier may ultimately be discharged for using racist or discriminatory verbiage or for advocating hatred or intolerance during discourse with another Soldier. A Soldier's commander is empowered to initiate proceedings to separate the Soldier from the Service for violating prohibitions against extremist activity articulated in AR 600-20, and a higher commander may execute the separation. The separation may be conducted in accordance with a commander's authority prescribed in AR 635-200, "Active Duty Enlisted Administrative Separations," and AR 600-8-24, "Officer Transfers and Discharges".<sup>13</sup> Under current recordkeeping systems, Headquarters, Department of the Army may record the number of Soldiers separated for misconduct. However, Army officials said Headquarters, Department of the Army does not specifically track the underlying basis for separation, such as, "advocating hatred or intolerance."

In addition, according to several officials from the different Services, none of the Services can accurately or sufficiently report extremism activity. For example, a Department of the Navy official stated, "Domestic extremism flagged reporting requirements are not established in policy and are not well understood by commanders." A U.S. Marine Corps official also "acknowledged that there is currently no way to accurately capture data regarding extremism, and violations can't be tracked, at least in part, since current UCMJ articles don't reference extremism."

### ***The DoD Insider Threat Management and Analysis Center (DITMAC)***

The DITMAC was created in 2014 following the Washington Navy Yard active shooter incident and is the DoD's enterprise for reporting, analyzing, and sharing data involving insider threat activity within the DoD.<sup>14</sup> The DITMAC collects all DoD Components' insider threat information, which can include extremism-related data. Specifically, according to the DoDI 5205.83, DoD Component heads share insider threat information with the DITMAC director.<sup>15</sup> DoD Component heads deliver to the DITMAC post-processed results of information system monitoring, as appropriate, in accordance with criminal thresholds published by the DITMAC.

<sup>13</sup> Army Regulation 635-200, "Active Duty Enlisted Administrative Separations," December 19, 2016.  
Army Regulation 600-8-24, "Officer Transfers and Discharges," September 13, 2011.

<sup>14</sup> Enterprise systems are software applications that have cross-organizational capabilities as opposed to department or group-specific programs. Enterprise systems allow for collaboration and communication across the organization through collection of data that is accessible and usable by multiple departments.

<sup>15</sup> DoD Instruction 5205.83, "DoD Insider Threat management and Analysis Center," March 30, 2017 (Incorporating Change 1, Effective October 29, 2020).

The DITMAC director oversees the management and analysis of insider threat information by a multidisciplinary team of DITMAC personnel. DITMAC personnel assess the information on potential insider threats, track responses by DoD Components to insider threats within a DoD enterprise level information management system, and generate relevant metrics and reports to inform DoD Component heads of reported and identified insider threats.

However, reports of extremism within the insider threat information reported in DITMAC are not specifically identified or extracted automatically by DITMAC personnel. In addition, reports on extremism and violent extremism can and do cross multiple categories of offenses and, according to OUSD(I&S) officials, can be searched within DITMAC databases under a variety of descriptors. Furthermore, OUSD(I&S) officials stated that querying DITMAC databases for extremism-specific incidents is a very time-consuming, sometimes manual, word-search process. The DITMAC is exploring automation of capabilities that will enable specific data-tagging and search solutions to more effectively track and account for extremism cases and other areas of concern.

## **DoD Officials Have Not Developed and Implemented Standard Policies and Processes to Track Extremist Activity Data**

The Services do not have a standardized mechanism in place to track and report extremist activity data because the DoD has not developed and implemented standard policies and processes requiring the Services to provide this data. The FY 2021 NDAA states that all allegations and related information that a member of the Armed Forces has engaged in prohibited activity are to be referred to the DoD OIG and that the Secretary of Defense will establish the policies, processes, and mechanisms for doing so. However, the FY 2021 NDAA does not provide information related to the assignment of such responsibility to a particular DoD Component, office, or entity, nor has the Secretary of Defense assigned that task to a specific DoD Component, office, or entity.

### ***Responsibility for Policy and Process Development and Implementation to Standardize the Tracking of Extremist Activity Within the DoD Is not Clearly Assigned***

The Secretary of Defense has not established standard policies, processes, tracking mechanisms, and reporting requirements across the Armed Forces for all extremist activity to be reported, as required by the FY 2021 NDAA. Therefore, the Services are not tracking and reporting all extremist activity related cases in a standardized manner, as required by the FY 2021 NDAA.

None of the DoD officials we interviewed were responsible for developing policy and processes to standardize tracking extremist activity within and across the DoD. An official from the OUSD(P&R) acknowledged that there has been disparate reporting on extremist behavior across the Services, but stated that the Joint Staff is looking at ways to collect this information in a more standardized fashion. When we spoke to officials from the Joint Staff, we were told that there is currently no way to accurately capture data regarding extremism and that violations can't be tracked at least in part because current UCMJ articles don't reference extremism. Another official from the OUSD(P&R) stated that it is "taking a fresh look at this area" to ensure policies are sufficient and properly aligned with DoD policy.

Officials with the OUSD(I&S) stated that the OUSD(P&R) has the overall lead for standardizing policies related to extremism in the Armed Forces and is leading the effort for policy standardization and possible revision through the CEAWG. In addition, according to an official from the OUSD(I&S), that office is waiting for approval of the CEAWG recommendations before determining a way forward in the development of standard policies, processes, tracking mechanisms, and reporting requirements for extremist activity in the Armed Forces.

## **Without Complete Data on Extremist Activity, the DoD Is Unable to Make Information-Based Decisions to Address Extremist Activity Within the Armed Forces**

Without standard policies, processes, tracking mechanisms, and reporting requirements for extremist activity in the Armed Forces, as required by section 554(b) of the FY 2021 NDAA, the DoD cannot accurately quantify or qualify the instances of extremist-related activity within the Armed Forces. With Service-level extremist-related data, senior officials could better determine the extent of extremist activity within the DoD and, therefore, make information-based decisions to develop and implement recruiting, training, retention, and security policies to address extremist activity within the Armed Forces.

## **Recommendation, Management Comments and Our Response**

### ***Recommendation B***

**We recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security, in coordination with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Secretaries of the Military Departments, develop and publish standardized policies, processes, and mechanisms to enable the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement across the Services in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities.**

### ***Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security Comments***

The Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security agreed with our recommendation. However, the USD(I&S) suggested that we consider modifying the recommendation to account for the shared responsibilities of the OUSD(I&S) and the OUSD(P&R). The USD(I&S) stated that Intelligence and Security has oversight of the DoD's Insider Threat program and that Personnel and Readiness has oversight of personnel matters. For example, the OUSD(P&R) has a draft policy in coordination to implement Section 554(b)(1) of the "William M. ("Mac") Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021," which may fulfill the intent of the recommendation for Personnel and Readiness.

Likewise, the USD(I&S) stated that the OUSD(I&S) is currently updating DoD Directive 5205.16, "The DoD Insider Threat Program," to address processes and mechanisms for reporting Service member involvement in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities. The update to the DoDD 5205.16 will likely be published in FY 2023.

### ***Our Response***

The comments from the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security addressed the intent of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is resolved and open. We will close the recommendation when the OUSD(I&S) and the OUSD(P&R) provide us a copy of their updated policies that includes processes, and mechanisms to enable the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement across the Services in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities.

### ***Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Comments***

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness agreed and stated that the OUSD(P&R) is coordinating a draft policy with the Military Departments, DoD Office of Inspector General, and other Department entities in compliance with Section 554 (b)(1) of the "William M. ("Mac") Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021."

### ***Our Response***

The comments from the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness addressed the intent of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is resolved and open. We will close the recommendation when the OUSD(P&R)

provides us a copy of the approved and published policy that includes processes and mechanisms to enable the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement across the Services in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities.

### *Department of the Army Comments*

The Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) agreed, but stated that the Army cannot effectively develop and publish standardized policies, processes, and mechanisms to enable the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement in extremist activities until the DoD issues implementation guidance to the Services in accordance with Section 554 (b)(1) of the “William M. (“Mac”) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021.”

### *Our Response*

The comments from the Acting Assistant Secretary addressed the intent of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is resolved and open. We will close the recommendation when the Department of the Army provides us a copy of the approved and published policy that includes processes, and mechanisms to enable the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement across the Services in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities.

### *Department of the Navy Comments*

The Director of Readiness and Transition for the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) agreed and stated that the new DoD Instruction 1325.06 provides mechanisms to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement in prohibited activities. The Director further stated that the draft Department of the Navy implementing guidance assigns reporting requirements and delineates responsibilities accordingly.

### *Our Response*

The comments from the Director addressed the intent of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is resolved and open. We will close the recommendation when the Department of the Navy provides us a copy of the approved and published policy that includes processes, and mechanisms to enable

the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement across the Services in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities.

### ***Department of the Air Force Comments***

The Acting Assistant Secretary of the Air Force (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) agreed. The Department of the Air Force reviewed the draft OUSD(P&R) implementation policy and provided comments on the draft policy to OUSD(P&R). The Acting Assistant Secretary further stated that the Department of the Air Force is awaiting additional review or finalization of this policy; therefore, he did not provide a timeline when this action will be complete.

### ***Our Response***

The comments from the Acting Assistant Secretary addressed the intent of the recommendation; therefore, the recommendation is resolved and open. We will close the recommendation when the Department of the Air Force provides us a copy of the approved and published policy that includes processes, and mechanisms to enable the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement across the Services in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities.



## Appendix A

### Scope and Methodology

We conducted this evaluation from January 2021 through November 2021 in accordance with the “Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation,” published in January 2012 by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency.<sup>16</sup> Those standards require that we adequately plan the evaluation to ensure that objectives are met and that we perform the evaluation to obtain sufficient, competent, and relevant evidence to support the findings, conclusions, and recommendations. We believe that the evidence obtained was sufficient, competent, and relevant to lead a reasonable person to sustain the findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

We planned and conducted this evaluation to align with the DoD OIG’s focus on ethical decision-making and conduct, in the context of incidents indicating the presence of prohibited extremist activity within the U.S. military. We reviewed information related to active duty forces only; Service operational commands, combatant commands, DoD agencies, field activities, and elements at the unit level were not evaluated. We also did not review details of individual UCMJ-related disciplinary actions, but rather reviewed the aggregate of such actions at the Service-level. The information we reviewed was focused on the last 5 years, from January 1, 2016, to July 3, 2021.

### *Interviews With Officials*

We interviewed DoD officials to follow up on responses provided to our written requests for information and to understand their concerns and challenges associated with addressing extremist activity within the Armed Forces. Because extremist activity is an emerging topic, we relied heavily on testimonial evidence to identify the most pressing challenges the DoD faces. Additionally, due to coronavirus disease-19 restrictions, we conducted virtual site visits and meetings with the organizations identified in this report. We met with officials from the following organizations:

- OUSD(P&R), Office of Legal Policy
- OUSD(I&S), Office of the Director for Defense Intelligence, Counterintelligence, Law Enforcement, and Security
- Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy, Accessions Policy

<sup>16</sup> Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, “Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation,” January 2012.

- Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Defense Continuity and Mission Assurance–Domestic Counterterrorism and Global Anti-Terrorism
- OSD Office of General Counsel, Military Justice and Policy
- OSD, CEAWG
- Joint Chiefs of Staff J5, (Global Integration Directorate)
- Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff of the Army, G1
- Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Manpower and Reserve Affairs
- Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- Military Department and Service officials from commands and staff directorates with responsibility for legal, recruiting, Inspector General, military criminal investigative, counter-Insider Threat, military equal opportunity, and accessions policy

### ***Data Collection***

To determine whether DoD officials complied with DoD and statutory requirements to address prohibited activity, including extremist activity, in the Armed Forces, we collected and reviewed the following documents.

- Federal statutes that address extremist activity within the Armed Forces, including relevant Articles of the UCMJ;
  - Section 888, title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.), UCMJ Article 88, Contempt toward officials, 2006
  - Section 892, title 10, U.S.C., UCMJ Article 92, Failure to obey order or regulation, 1956
  - Section 922, title 10, U.S.C., UCMJ Article 122, Robbery, 1956
  - Section 917, title 10, U.S.C., UCMJ Article 117, Provoking speeches or gestures, 1950
  - Public Law 116-283, NDAA for FY 2021, Section 554(b), “IG Oversight of Diversity and Inclusion in DoD; Supremacist, Extremist, or Criminal Gang Activity in the Armed Forces,” January 1, 2021
  - Public Law 116-92, NDAA for FY 2020, Section 530, “Study Regarding Screening Individuals Who Seek to Enlist in the Armed Forces,” December 20, 2019
- DoD congressional testimonies on extremist activity within the Armed Forces;

- House Armed Services Committee Subcommittee on Military Personnel, Hearing on White Supremacy and the Military, February 11, 2020
  - House Armed Services Committee, Hearing on FY 2022 Budget Request for the Defense Department (includes Secretary of Defense testimony on extremism and definitions), June 23, 2021
- Congressional letters to the Secretary of Defense, DoD reports, and letters prepared in response to congressional inquiries related to extremist activity within the Armed Forces;
  - House of Representatives letter to Acting Secretary of Defense and Secretary of Department of Homeland Security regarding Extremism in Military, February 25, 2019
  - OUSD(P&R) Report to House of Representatives, “Military Personnel and Extremist Ideologies,” January 16, 2020
  - Congressional letter to the Secretary of Defense on Extremism in the Military, June 30, 2020
  - OUSD(P&R) response letter to June 30, 2020 congressional letter, August 21, 2020
  - OUSD(P&R), “Report to Armed Services Committees on Screening Individuals Who Seek to Enlist in the Armed Forces,” October 14, 2020
  - DoD Board on Diversity and Inclusion Report, “Recommendations to Improve Racial and Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion in the Military,” December 2020
  - Senate letter to DoD Acting IG on Extremism in the Military, January 14, 2021
  - House of Representatives letter to the White House, the Secretary of Defense, and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence concerning connections between military service members and violent extremist groups, January 29, 2021
  - House of Representatives letter to the Secretary of Defense to request a detailed review of the stand down order to address extremism within the military and to reiterate the need for the DoD to define the terms and scope of the problem of violent extremism among Service members, April 21, 2021
  - OUSD(P&R) letter in response to congressional letter of April 21, 2021, concerning the request to review the stand down order and the need for the DoD to define the terms and scope of extremism among Service members, May 19, 2021

- House of Representatives letter to the Secretary of Defense, “Extremism Definition Follow-up and Social Media Usage within DoD,” June 4, 2021
- Secretary of Defense and Deputy Secretary of Defense memorandums and guidance addressing extremist activity within the Armed Forces;
  - Secretary of Defense memorandum, “Diversity and Inclusion in the U.S. Military,” December 17, 2020
  - Secretary of Defense memorandum, “DoD Stand-Down to Address Extremism,” February 5, 2021
  - Secretary of Defense memorandum, “Delegation of FY 2021 NDAA Section 554 Duties,” February 8, 2021
  - Secretary of Defense memorandum, “Reaffirming Values and Ethical Conduct,” March 1, 2021
  - Secretary of Defense memorandum, “Immediate Actions to Counter Extremism,” April 9, 2021
  - Deputy Secretary of Defense memorandum, “Governance Structure for Deputy Secretary Managed Processes,” March 11, 2021
  - OSD Directive memorandum 19-008, “Expedited Screening Protocol,” November 6, 2020
- DoD policies;
  - DoDI 1020.03, “Harassment Prevention and Response in the Armed Forces,” February 8, 2018
  - DoDI 1304.26, “Qualification Standards for Enlistment, Appointment, and Induction,” October 26, 2018
  - DoDI 1325.06, “Handling Dissident and Protest Activities,” November 27, 2009 (Incorporating Change 1, February 22, 2012)
  - DoDI 1350.02, “DoD Military Equal Opportunity Program,” September 4, 2020
  - DoDI 2000.26, “DoD Use of the Federal Bureau of Investigation eGuardian System,” December 4, 2019
  - DoD Directive 1344.10, “Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces,” February 19, 2008
- Military Department and Service-level policies;
  - Army**
    - Army Regulation (AR) 381-12, “Threat Awareness and Reporting Program,” June 1, 2016
    - AR 525-2, “Army Protection Program,” December 8, 2014

- AR 600-8-24, “Officer Transfers and Discharges,” September 13, 2011
- AR 600-20, “Army Command Policy,” (Chapters 1-4), July 24, 2020
- AR 635-200, “Active Duty Enlisted Administrative Separations,” January 18, 2017
- AR 670-1, “Wear and Appearance of Uniforms & Insignia,” (Chapters 1-3), January 26, 2021
- Army Directive 2013-18, “Army Insider Threat Program,” July 31, 2013

### **Navy**

- Chief of Naval Operations Instructions 5354.1G, “Navy Equal Opportunity Program Manual,” July 24, 2017
- Naval Military Personnel Manual, Section 1910-160, May 28, 2008
- Navy Regulations, Article 1167, “Supremacist Activity,” September 3, 1997

### **Air Force**

- Air Force Instruction 36-2706, “Equal Opportunity Program Military & Civilian,” October 5, 2010
- Air Force Instruction 51-508, “Political Activities, Free Speech, and Freedom of Assembly,” October 12, 2018
- Air Force Instruction 51-903, “Dissident and Protest Activities,” July 30, 2015
- Notice to Airmen 20-15, “Air Force Recruiting Service Extremist or Criminal Organization Policy,” August 20, 2020
- Notice to Airmen 21-07, “Air Force Recruiting Service Extremist or Criminal Organization Policy,” January 11, 2021
- Air Force Policy Directive 36-27, “Equal Opportunity,” March 18, 2019
- Secretary of the Air Force memorandum, “FY20 Equal Opportunity & Non-Discrimination Policy,” February 4, 2020
- Air Force Manual 36-2032, “Military Recruiting & Accessions,” (extract), September 27, 2019

### **Marine Corps**

- Marine Corps Order 1020.34H, “Marine Corps Uniform Regulations,” May 1, 2018
- Marine Corps Order 5354.1E, “Prohibited Activities and Conduct Prevention and Response Policy,” June 15, 2018
- Marine Administrative Message 016/21, “Permissible and Prohibited Conduct, Public Demonstrations,” January 12, 2021

- Marine Corps Recruiting Command Order 1100.1, “Marine Corps Recruiting Command Enlistment Processing Manual,” November 9, 2011
- Federal Bureau of Investigation Intelligence Assessments; and
  - Federal Bureau of Investigation-Department of Homeland Security Strategic Intelligence Assessment and Data on Domestic Terrorism, May 2021
  - Federal Bureau of Investigation, Intelligence Assessment-White Supremacist Recruitment of Military Personnel, July 7, 2008
- CEAWG briefings and information papers;
  - OSD training aid for Leadership Stand Down to Address Extremism, February 26, 2021.

## Use of Computer-Processed Data

We did not use computer-processed data to perform this evaluation.

## Prior Coverage

During the last 5 years, the Government Accountability Office issued one report related to U.S. Government efforts to counter violent extremism and the Congressional Research Service issued one Insight document related to military personnel and extremism. However, the DoD OIG is not aware of previous work specifically examining the topic of prohibited ideological extremist activities in the U.S. military at any oversight organization, including the GAO.

Unrestricted GAO reports can be accessed at <http://www.gao.gov>.

Unrestricted Congressional Research Service reports can be accessed at <https://crsreports.congress.gov>.

## GAO

Report No. GAO-17-300, “Countering Violent Extremism: Actions Needed to Define Strategy and Assess Progress of Federal Efforts,” April 2017

The GAO was asked to review domestic Federal Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) efforts. In 2011, the U.S. Government developed a national strategy and Strategic Implementation Plan for CVE aimed at providing information and resources to communities. The GAO found that the U.S. Government does not have a cohesive strategy or process for assessing the overall CVE effort. However, the GAO was not able to determine if the United States is better off today than it was in 2011 as a result of these tasks because no cohesive strategy with measurable outcomes has been established



to guide the multi-agency CVE effort. Such a strategy could help ensure that the individual actions of stakeholder agencies are measureable and contributing to the overall goals of the U.S. Government's CVE effort.

The GAO also found that the U.S. Government had not established a process by which to evaluate the effectiveness of the collective CVE effort. The CVE Task Force was established in part to evaluate and assess CVE efforts across the U.S. Government but has not established a process for doing so. Evaluating the progress and effectiveness of the overall Federal CVE effort could better help identify successes, gaps, and resource needs across stakeholder agencies. The GAO recommended that the Department of Homeland Security and Department of Justice direct the CVE Task Force to (1) develop a cohesive strategy with measurable outcomes and (2) establish a process to assess the overall progress of CVE efforts.

### ***Congressional Research Service***

Congressional Research Service Insight No. IN11086, "Military Personnel and Extremism: Law, Policy, and Considerations for Congress," updated May 16, 2019

This Congressional Research Service Insight document is not a full report. However, the Insight is relevant because the Congressional Research Service stated that, while the DoD has several policies in place outlining restrictions on certain activities, there is an opportunity for further study on the prevalence of supremacy ideology among Service members and the extent to which the DoD and the Military Services are effectively implementing these policies. The Congressional Research Service suggested that Congress, in its oversight role, consider, with respect to the DoD and extremism, data collection and reporting, including whether a standard process exists for reporting; analyzing and sharing data across DoD components; screening and monitoring; and training and awareness.

## Appendix B

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### Other Matters of Interest

During our evaluation, we identified the following two recurring other matters of interest: the DoD efforts to screen social media of members of the Armed Forces for extremist activity and the considerations for a UCMJ article to address extremist activity.

#### ***DoD Efforts to Screen Social Media of Members of the Armed Forces for Extremist Activity***

We found that screening of individual users' social media, as a component of personnel background investigations, may be needed to address extremism in the Armed Forces. An official from the U.S. Army Criminal Investigations Command stated that most extremist-related activity is conducted online, while another official from Headquarters Marine Corps Judge Advocate Division added that "since so much extremism-related activity takes place online and on social media platforms, screening social media would be a major part of any effort to identify Service members' previous or current affiliation with, or participation in, extremist organizations." However, a DoD official testified to Congress in February 2020 that the military recruiting process does not include checks on an applicant's social media, although the DoD was working to determine how best to potentially incorporate that requirement.

DoDI 1304.26 establishes policy for "judg[ing] the suitability of individuals to serve in the Military Services on the basis of their adaptability, potential to perform, and conduct."<sup>17</sup> DoDI 1304.26 sets standards designed to ensure that individuals under consideration for enlistment, appointment, or induction into the Armed Forces are able to perform military duties successfully and to select those who are the most trainable and adaptable to Service life. For example, basic entrance qualification standards are prescribed for age, aptitude, citizenship, dependents, education, medical, character, conduct, and physical fitness.

An official from the OUSD(I&S) stated that DoD policies and processes developed with regard to security screening and vetting of prospective candidates seeking to join the Armed Forces ("accessions") look at "the whole picture," including trying to determine whether accessions hold extremist ideologies. The official added that "signals that a candidate for enlistment might hold such ideology can be more subtle than, for example, displaying swastika tattoos."

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<sup>17</sup> DoD Instruction 1304.26, "Qualification Standards for Enlistment, Appointment, and Induction," March 23, 2015 (Incorporating Change 3, October 26, 2018).

Identifying extremist ideology in potential recruits is challenging, according to officials from the Accessions Division at Headquarters, Department of the Army. For example, the officials stated that if an individual's extremist ties are not identified through a records check of law enforcement systems, the Army's current screening tools are incapable of identifying that individual unless the individual self-admits to holding extremist ideologies or to affiliation with extremist organizations. According to Army officials, a review of an applicant's social media history would be the best way to collect information about possible extremist affiliations. However, there is no current U.S. Army policy for screening applicants' social media.

Section 530 of the FY 2020 NDAA directed the Secretary of Defense to study the feasibility of screening applicants who seek to enlist in the Armed Forces for extremist and gang-related activity.<sup>18</sup> The FY 2020 NDAA further required the Secretary to submit an unclassified report to the Committees on Armed Services of the Senate and House of Representatives containing conclusions of the Secretary regarding the study. On October 14, 2020, the DoD submitted its response to Congress in an unclassified report.<sup>19</sup> The report stated that the DoD was exploring the screening of social media in the conduct of background checks and that more review and analysis was required before the DoD will be able to determine how, and if, it can integrate social media screening into the background check process.

OUSD(I&S) officials told us their office is examining prototypes for screening social media of DoD personnel comments and posts. According to the OUSD(I&S) officials, the social media screening pilot program involves "sentiment analysis," which consists of reviewing public social media interactions using key words. In addition, OUSD(I&S) officials stated that the OUSD(I&S) is considering additional questions on the standard National Security Questionnaire form, or SF 86, related to social media—for example, requesting e-mail addresses and social media "handles."

The OUSD(I&S) officials we spoke with also identified challenges related to screening social media, such as potential constraints involved with screening social media of personnel in an organization as large as the DoD. For example, an official from the OUSD(I&S) stated that there is "no tool in existence today that can meet [the Department's] needs to search social media on the scale we require." Another

<sup>18</sup> Public Law 116-92, "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020," Section 530, "Study regarding screening individuals who seek to enlist in the Armed Forces," December 20, 2019.

<sup>19</sup> Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, "Report to Armed Services Committees on Screening Individuals Who Seek to Enlist in the Armed Forces," October 14, 2020.

official stated “we cannot scrape the entire internet every day for all three million people in the Department.” Additional constraints stated by officials related to prospective screening of social media by the DoD include:

- the difficulty of defining search parameters, such as what social media behavior or activity the DoD defines as “extremist,” for screening social media; and
- the inability of the DoD to go into private social media groups or private chat lines without legally sufficient pre-authorization based on probable cause, or the authority to allow a Government representative to join a private social media group.

In a memorandum dated April 9, 2021, the Secretary of Defense established the DoD’s CEAWG, assigned initial LOE to address extremism, and directed the CEAWG to provide a report of its mid-term and long-term recommendations no later than 90 days from its first meeting on April 14, 2021. LOE 3 directly addressed the screening of social media:

This LOE directed officials to examine the Department’s pursuit of scalable and cost-effective capabilities to screen publically available information in accessions and continuous vetting for national security positions. The LOE directed officials to make recommendations on further development of such capabilities and incorporating algorithms and additional processing into social media screening platforms.

DoD officials stated that the first wave of social media screening will be associated with accessions and the details will be developed in the CEAWG. The CEAWG submitted its report and recommendations to the Office of the Deputy Secretary of Defense in July 2021 for coordination with the Services.

### ***DoD Consideration of a Uniform Code of Military Justice Article to Address Extremist Activity***

There is currently no UCMJ article that specifically addresses extremism-related violations. In a December 17, 2020, memorandum concurring with the recommendations of the Board on Diversity and Inclusion, the Acting Secretary of Defense directed that the DoD Office of General Counsel, based on the findings and recommendations of the report on extremist and hate group activity, provide a plan of action and milestones required to modify the UCMJ by July 31, 2021.

Because there is no UCMJ article, Service members who violate regulations addressing extremist activities are subject to disciplinary action under other articles of the UCMJ. For example, an Air Force official stated that extremism-related incidents in most cases are prosecuted under UCMJ Article 92,

“failure to obey an order or regulation,” and the Marine Corps’ annual training briefing on prohibited activities states that violations may subject involved members to disciplinary action under Article 92 or other Articles of the UCMJ, as applicable.<sup>20</sup> Another official from the Department of the Air Force, Office of the Judge Advocate General, stated that, with regard to extremism, military members are subject to the UCMJ punitive articles that impact their traditional First Amendment rights, such as Article 88, contempt toward officials, and Article 117, provoking speech or gestures.

A December 2020 report by the DoD Board on Diversity and Inclusion recommended that the:

- DoD Office of General Counsel, in coordination with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs, draft language for consideration within the Executive Branch to propose that Congress update the UCMJ to address extremist activity within the U.S. military; and
- OUSD(P&R), in conjunction with the OUSD(I&S), develop a report specifically concerning initiatives to more effectively prohibit extremist or hate group activity.

According to the December 2020 report, upon completion of the OUSD(P&R) report focused on initiatives to prohibit extremist or hate group activity, the DoD will have established the baseline facts necessary to determine a course of action related to a prospective updating of the UCMJ to address extremist activity. In addition, when the CEAWG was established by the Secretary of Defense, the purpose of LOE 1 on Military Justice and Policy, was to evaluate whether seeking to amend the UCMJ is appropriate in order to address extremism.

However, officials from the Judge Advocate General Divisions within the headquarters of the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps all stated that a UCMJ article specifically directed at extremist activity was unnecessary.

- According to an Official from the Air Force Judge Advocate General office, current UCMJ articles are sufficient to prosecute extremism-related violations. For example, a robbery related to extremist activities could be prosecuted under existing UCMJ article 122 for robbery.
- According to the Air Force and a Department of the Navy Judge Advocate General officials, a new UCMJ article is not needed solely for the added convenience of providing a method for tracking the number of extremist activity incidents, as the UCMJ is an “imperfect tool to use as

<sup>20</sup> The Marine Corps Prohibited Activities and Conduct Prevention and Response annual training brief lists advocating or active participation in supremacist organizations and extremist groups as examples of prohibited activities.

a data collection” system. Rather than creating a new UCMJ article, an administrative mechanism can be developed and implemented to make tracking of extremist activity-related courts-martial easier.

- According to an official from the Department of the Navy Judge Advocate General office, elements of intent and motive related to extremism could be difficult to prove if a Service member was charged under a prospective UCMJ article focused specifically on extremist activity. In addition, the member might plead guilty to some elements of the offense, while pleading not guilty to other elements and that very often charges are reduced because of a guilty plea associated with a plea bargain to a lesser-included offense.
- According to an official from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, some allegations or incidents of extremist activities do not need to become criminal investigations. Commanders already have, and are aware of, a wide range of available administrative and disciplinary measures for addressing the spectrum of behaviors that may qualify as extremist activity, but the challenge for commanders is how to gain sufficient evidence of extremist activity to effectively reprimand or deliver consequences for the behavior.

A Marine Corps official stated that there is currently no way to accurately capture data regarding extremism, at least in part because current UCMJ articles don't reference extremism. However, according to one member of the DoD Board on Diversity and Inclusion, “[t]he UCMJ article recommendation sends a clear, zero-tolerance message for extremist activity and allows the Services to hold members accountable for such activity.” The current effort to address a prospective UCMJ article for extremist activity was developed by the CEAWG, which submitted its report and recommendations to the Office of the Deputy Secretary of Defense in July 2021 for coordination with the Services.



# Management Comments

## Department of the Army Comments



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS  
111 ARMY PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON DC 20310-0111

SAMR-MRA (800B)

MEMORANDUM FOR Office of Department of Defense Inspector General, 4800 Mark Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22350-1500

SUBJECT: Department of Defense Inspector General Draft Report: Evaluation of Department of Defense Efforts to Develop and Implement Policy and Procedures Addressing Ideological Extremism Within the U.S. Armed Forces

1. References:

a. Department of Defense (DoD) Inspector General (IG) Announcement Memorandum: Evaluation of Department of Defense Efforts to Develop and Implement Policy and Procedures Addressing Ideological Extremism Within the U.S. Armed Forces (Project No. D2021-DEV0PB-0079.000).

b. DoD IG Draft Report: Evaluation of Department of Defense Efforts to Address Ideological Extremism Within the Armed Forces, Project No. D2021-DEV0PB-0079.000, 03 February 2022.

2. Background. The objective of the DoD IG evaluation announced in reference a. was to determine the extent to which the DoD and the Military Services have implemented policy and procedures that prohibit active advocacy and active participation related to supremacist, extremist, or criminal gang doctrine, ideology, or causes by active duty military personnel, as required by DoD Instruction 1325.06. The evaluation was conducted from January 2021 through January 2022, with a draft report of the evaluation's findings and recommendations released by DoD IG on 03 February 2022 (Reference b.). Recommendations A.2 and B contained within the draft report require Army review and comment to outline the Army's progress on satisfying the recommendations.

3. Army response to recommendations A.2 and B.

a. Recommendation A.2: *We recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments update their Service's extremist related policies, procedures, and training materials to ensure compliance with the revised version of Department of Defense Instruction 1325.06.* The Army concurs with recommendation A.2, and has taken the following actions:

1) The Army submitted draft implementation guidance to the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) [OUSD(P&R)] in accordance with instructions from OUSD(P&R) CATMS Tasking CATMS-21122021-46DE, which

## Department of the Army Comments (cont'd)

SAMR-MRA (800B)

SUBJECT: Department of Defense Inspector General Draft Report: Evaluation of Department of Defense Efforts to Develop and Implement Policy and Procedures Addressing Ideological Extremism Within the U.S. Armed Forces

directed Services to develop draft implementation guidance for Change 2 DODI 1325.06 and submit to OUSD(P&R) for review and approval prior to implementation.

2) Army implementation of Change 2 DODI 1325.06 will occur via Army Directive (AD), which will include the specific verbiage to be inserted in paragraphs 4-12 and 4-13 of a revised Army Regulation (AR) 600-20, Army Command Policy, pending OUSD (P&R) and DoD Office of General Counsel approval of the draft implementation guidance.

3) The DoD Joint Staff is currently developing a stand-alone Joint Knowledge Online (JKO) block of training to address extremism as part of the DoD Countering Extremist Activities Working Group recommendations; Upon completion and fielding of the JKO training, the Army will develop its Service-level training in order to integrate the JKO training's concepts, learning objectives, and standards.

b. Recommendation B: *We recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security, in coordination with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Secretaries of the Military Departments, develop and publish standardized policies, processes, and mechanisms to enable the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement across the Services in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities.* The Army concurs with recommendation B, and offers the following comment: The Army cannot effectively develop and publish standardized policies, processes, and mechanisms to enable the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement in extremist activities until DoD issues implementation guidance to the Services for Fiscal Year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act Section 554(b), which is currently pending issuance.

4. My point of contact for this action is [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]  
DN: cn=BOURCICOT:YVETTE, o=DoD

Yvette K. Bourcicot  
Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army  
(Manpower & Reserve Affairs)

## Department of the Navy Comments



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
(MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS)  
1000 NAVY PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-1000

### MEMORANDUM FOR OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSPECTOR GENERAL

**SUBJECT:** Department of the Navy's Response to the Department of Defense Inspector General Draft Report on "DoD Efforts to Address Ideological Extremism in the Armed Forces"

**Reference:** (a) Department of Defense Inspector General Draft Report, "DoD Efforts to Address Ideological Extremism in the Armed Forces," February 2, 2022

Reference (a) requests the Military Departments provide corrective actions taken or planned and proposed completion dates for recommendations provided by the draft report. There are two recommendations specified for the Department of the Navy (DON):

**RECOMMENDATION A.2:** We recommend that the Secretaries of the Military Departments update their Service's extremist related policies, procedures, and training materials to ensure compliance with the revised version of Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1325.06.

**DON RESPONSE:** Concur. On February 4, 2022, the DON provided a draft policy implementing DoDI 1325.06 to the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Department of Defense General Counsel for approval. Upon receipt of approval, the DON will promulgate the instruction. The projected completion date for publishing the final DON policy is August 31, 2022.

**RECOMMENDATION B:** Concur. We recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security, in coordination with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Secretaries of the Military Departments, develop and publish standardized policies, processes, and mechanisms to enable the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement across the Services in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities. The projected completion date for publishing the final DON policy is August 31, 2022.

**DON RESPONSE:** Concur. The new DoDI 1325.06 provides mechanisms to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement in prohibited activities. The draft DON implementing guidance assigns reporting requirements and delineates responsibilities accordingly.

The DON remains committed to continued efforts combatting extremist activities. I remain the point of contact for this issue [REDACTED]

MCINTOSH  
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Date: 2022.05.03 12:05:31 -0500

Heather McIntosh-Braden  
Director, Readiness and Transition  
Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the  
Navy (Military Manpower and Personnel)



## Department of the Air Force Comments



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
WASHINGTON DC

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

01 March 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE INSPECTOR GENERAL

FROM: SAF/MR  
1660 Air Force Pentagon, Room 4E1010  
Washington DC 20330-1660

SUBJECT: Air Force Response to DoD Office of Inspector General Draft Report,  
"Department of Defense Efforts to Develop and Implement Policy and Procedures  
Addressing Ideological Extremism within the U.S. Armed Forces" (Project No. D2021-  
DEV0PB-0079.000)

1. This is the Department of the Air Force (DAF) response to the DoDIG Draft Report, "Department of Defense Efforts to Develop and Implement Policy and Procedures Addressing Ideological Extremism within the U.S. Armed Forces" (Project No. D2021-DEV0PB-0079.000). The AF concurs with the report as written and welcomes the opportunity to review.
2. SAF/MR in coordination with AF/JA will correct issues identified in this report, and develop and implement a corrective action plan outlined in the following recommendations:

**RECOMMENDATION 1:** The DODIG recommends the Secretaries of the Military Departments update their Service's extremist related policies, procedures, and training materials to ensure compliance with the revised version of Department of Defense Instruction 1325.06.

**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE RESPONSE:** DAF concurs with recommendation 1 and has already completed draft guidance implementing DoDI 1325.06. This draft guidance (Tab 1 – DAFI 51-508 DAFGM 2022-01) is currently being reviewed for approval by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Office of the General Counsel, as required prior to publication by a 20 December 2021 memorandum from the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. There is no timeline by which this review will be complete; however, as soon as this draft guidance is approved, it will be published promptly.

**RECOMMENDATION 2:** The DODIG recommends that the Secretaries of the Military Departments develop and publish standardized policies, processes, and mechanisms to enable the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement across the

## Department of the Air Force Comments (cont'd)

Services in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities.

**AIR FORCE RESPONSE:** DAF concurs with recommendation 2 and had the opportunity to coordinate on the implementation policy drafted by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and provided feedback. We are awaiting additional review or finalization of this policy. As such, we cannot provide a timeline by which this action will be complete.

3. The SAF/MR point of contact is [REDACTED]

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JOHN A. FEDRIGO, SES  
Acting Assistant Secretary  
(Manpower and Reserve Affairs)

Attachment:

Tab 1 – DAFI 51-508\_DAFGM 2022-01



## Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.

## Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security Comments



INTELLIGENCE  
AND SECURITY

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
5000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-5000

March 10, 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR INSPECTOR GENERAL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, (ATTN: ASSISTANT INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR EVALUATIONS PROGRAMS, COMBATANT COMMANDS, AND OVERSEAS CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS)

SUBJECT: Evaluation of DoD Efforts to Address Ideological Extremism Within the Armed Forces (Project No. D2021-DEV0PB-0079.000)

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comments on Recommendation B of the subject report. As currently drafted, Recommendation B reads:

*We also recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security, in coordination with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness and the Secretaries of the Military Departments, develop and publish standardized policies, processes, and tracking mechanisms to enable the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement across the Services in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities.*

I request you consider modifying Recommendation B to read:

*We also recommend that the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security and Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, in coordination with the Secretaries of the Military Departments, develop and publish standardized policies, processes, and tracking mechanisms for programs under their purview to enable the DoD to identify, quantify, characterize, and report Service member involvement across the Services in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities.*

The reason for modification is to account for the shared responsibilities of USD(I&S) and USD(P&R). I&S has oversight of the Department's Insider Threat program, and P&R has oversight for personnel matters. For example, OUSD(P&R) has a draft policy out for coordination to implement Section 554(b)(1) of the William M. ("Mac") Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 which may fulfill Recommendation B for P&R.

Likewise, OUSD(I&S) is currently updating DoD Directive 5205.16, "The DoD Insider Threat Program," to address processes and mechanisms for reporting Service member involvement in prohibited activities that include active advocacy of and active participation in extremist groups and activities. The update to the DoDD 5205.16 is projected to be published in Fiscal Year 2023.



## Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security Comments (cont'd)

I additionally request you consider making the following modifications, in the interest of clarity and precision, to page 16 of the report:

- Change from “The DITMAC collects all DoD Components’ insider threat information, which can include extremism-related data.”
- Change to “The DITMAC receives insider threat information, pursuant to specific reporting requirements, from DoD Components, which can include extremism-related data.”
- Change from “DoD Component Heads deliver to the DITMAC post processed results of information system monitoring, as appropriate, in accordance with criminal thresholds published by the DITMAC.”
- Change to “DoD Component Heads deliver to the DITMAC post processed results of information system monitoring, as appropriate, in accordance with insider threat thresholds published by the DITMAC.”

Our review also determined that the draft report as it pertains to information referencing matters under USD(I&S) oversight are appropriately marked as Unclassified.

Thank you for the outstanding work on this important topic. My staff is available to discuss our proposed modifications in greater detail with your team if needed. The I&S point of contact [REDACTED]

REID.GARRY.PA  
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Garry P. Reid  
Director for Defense Intelligence  
Counterintelligence, Law Enforcement,  
& Security

## Acronyms and Abbreviations

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<b>CEAWG</b>	Countering Extremism Activity Working Group
<b>CVE</b>	Countering Violent Extremism
<b>DITMAC</b>	DoD Insider Threat Management and Analysis Center
<b>I&amp;S</b>	Intelligence and Security
<b>LOE</b>	Line of Effort
<b>NDAA</b>	National Defense Authorization Act
<b>OSD</b>	Office of the Secretary of Defense
<b>P&amp;R</b>	Personnel and Readiness
<b>UCMJ</b>	Uniform Code of Military Justice



# **Whistleblower Protection**

## **U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE**

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**For more information about DoD OIG  
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