



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

MAR 20 2014

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
ACTING UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL
AND READINESS
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Military Decorations and Awards Review

As we scale back combat operations in Afghanistan at the end of this year, it is imperative that we use the lessons learned from 13 years of combat experience to improve the Department of Defense Decorations and Awards Program. To this end, I am directing a comprehensive review of the Department's military decorations and awards program to ensure it provides avenues to appropriately recognize the service, sacrifices, and actions of our Service members.

This review will primarily focus on combat and valor awards to determine if the program adequately recognizes all levels of combat valor, and if award processes and authorities are properly aligned with the joint nature of warfare. Additionally, the review will determine how best to recognize Service members who use remote technology to directly impact combat operations.

The Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) will lead the review, working with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Military Departments, and the Combatant Commanders. The review will begin in June 2014 and be completed in one year with recommendations to me by June 1, 2015.

I am fully committed to this endeavor and will monitor it closely. The Acting USD(P&R) will provide me quarterly updates on your progress.

Thank you.

cc:
Under Secretary of Defense
Chiefs of the Military Services
Chief of the National Guard Bureau
General Counsel of the Department of Defense
Director, Administration and Management



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