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LOUISIANA MILITARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES FOR THE
LOUISIANA MILITARY ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON THE 19TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2022
COMMENCING AT 10:00 A.M.

REPORTED BY:
LISA LANATA
CERTIFIED COURT REPORTER

1 PROCEEDINGS
 2 MR. ABBOUD:
 3 Good morning, everyone. Thank you all
 4 for taking the time to join us today for the
 5 Louisiana Military Advisory Council Meeting.
 6 We have a number of guests joining us today.
 7 We have what I think will be a great program
 8 for you all today. Of course we appreciate
 9 everyone's attendance in joining us.
 10 We will go ahead and call the meeting.
 11 To start here call to order on 19 October, I
 12 am showing 5 after 10 for the record.
 13 Before we begin any business, we will
 14 be following the agenda very closely. I will
 15 would like to first begin with the Pledge of
 16 Allegiance. So I ask that everyone please
 17 rise and join me in reciting the pledge.
 18 (The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)
 19 MR. ABBOUD:
 20 You may be seated. Thank you.
 21 So we will go head and get started with
 22 the roll call here. I will just run through
 23 this real quick. Again, you should have your
 24 packets in front of you.
 25 The left side, you will see an agenda

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1 with also behind that, a list of current LMAC
 2 members. On the right side are some of the
 3 reports that we will get into as we move
 4 along here. So we will begin with the roll
 5 call. Again, correct me should there be any
 6 mispronunciations.
 7 Mayor Clarence Bebee?
 8 (No response.)
 9 MR. ABBOUD:
 10 Representative Raymond Crews?
 11 (No response.)
 12 MR. ABBOUD:
 13 General Robert Elder?
 14 GENERAL ROBERT ELDER:
 15 Here.
 16 MR. ABBOUD:
 17 Mr. Robert Gatti?
 18 (No response.)
 19 MR. ABBOUD:
 20 Mr. Brian Jakes?
 21 (No response.)
 22 MR. ABBOUD:
 23 Mr. John Manion?
 24 MR. JOHN MANION:
 25 Here.

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1 MR. ABBOUD:
 2 Secretary Don Pierson?
 3 SECRETARY DON PIERSON:
 4 Present.
 5 MR. ABBOUD:
 6 Ms. Deborah Randolph?
 7 (No response.)
 8 MR. ABBOUD:
 9 Major Rick Allen?
 10 (No response.)
 11 MR. ABBOUD:
 12 Major General Ronald Richard?
 13 (No response.)
 14 MR. ABBOUD:
 15 Mr. Gary Silbert?
 16 MR. GARY SILBERT:
 17 Here.
 18 MR. ABBOUD:
 19 Mr. Ronnie Slone?
 20 (No response.)
 21 MR. ABBOUD:
 22 Senator Mike Reese?
 23 SENATOR MIKE REESE:
 24 Here.
 25 MR. ABBOUD:

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1 Secretary Joey Strickland?
 2 SECRETARY JOEY STRICKLAND:
 3 Here.
 4 MR. ABBOUD:
 5 Mr. Murray Viser?
 6 (No response.)
 7 MR. ABBOUD:
 8 Major General Keith Waddell?
 9 MAJOR GENERAL KEITH WADDELL:
 10 Here.
 11 MR. ABBOUD:
 12 Rear Admiral Joel Whitehead?
 13 (No response.)
 14 MR. ABBOUD:
 15 Okay. Thank you very much everyone.
 16 So we will go ahead and move on to previous
 17 meeting's minutes. Those should have been
 18 circulated prior to today's meeting. Does
 19 anyone have any questions, comments, actions,
 20 revisions related to the previous meeting's
 21 minutes?
 22 SENATOR REESE:
 23 Move we adopt the minutes.
 24 MR. JAKES:
 25 Second.

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1 MR. ABBOUD:
2 So moved. All in favor of adoption,
3 please say aye?
4 (All participants said Aye.)
5 MR. ABBOUD:
6 Okay. Thank you. And with that, I
7 would like to go ahead and turn the meeting
8 over to LED Secretary Don Pierson who is the
9 LMAC chairman for a few remarks.
10 SECRETARY PIERSON:
11 Thank you, everyone. I will be brief
12 this morning but greatly appreciate you all
13 carving out the time to be with us.
14 The state of the enterprise of the
15 Louisiana Military Advisory Council and the
16 things that we manage is strong. We're very,
17 very active. We enjoy the opportunity to
18 gather together and share the information and
19 the presentations that will come your way
20 today, but this enterprise goes on 24/7/365.
21 We're very fortunate to have some great
22 representation in Washington at the Pentagon
23 and interfacing with congress and the
24 Roosevelt Group, but we're also very active
25 in our interface across the Department of

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1 Defense installations here in Louisiana and
2 great partnerships in all the regions.
3 Thank you to GNO, Inc. and the
4 Southeast Military Alliance and Gary
5 Silbert's effective leadership for us here
6 and in hosting today. I greatly appreciate
7 these great accommodations and hospitality
8 here. We do try to move these meetings
9 around the state to facilitate everyone's
10 orientation in different parts of the state.
11 We would hope to be on Belle Chasse
12 today but as we got into our requirements
13 that these meetings can be and should be open
14 to the public, the requirement to meet all
15 the security elements and such caused our
16 lawyers a little bit of pause, so we ended up
17 coming over here to our good friend and
18 neighbor GNO. So thank you again, Gary for,
19 making those arrangements and to Michael Heck
20 who meets this organization and understands
21 the importance of the military presence
22 throughout Louisiana.
23 So I am going to yield now so that we
24 can have a number of presentations today and
25 updates but again, please know and understand

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1 that just because we gather twice or so a
2 year doesn't mean that these are the only
3 timeframes in which active activities and
4 important engagements are being made. We are
5 very mindful and have some very effective
6 leadership in our executive director Robbie
7 Abboud. So again, thank you.
8 MR. ABBOUD:
9 Thank you, Mr. Secretary. Thank you
10 for those comments, Mr. Secretary.
11 So now we can move into our reports and
12 overviews portion of today's meeting. At
13 this time, I would first like to call on Mr.
14 McGinnis who will be providing report on
15 behalf of Secretary Strickland today.
16 MR. MCGINNIS:
17 Good morning, everybody. I am here on
18 behalf of Colonel Strickland. He couldn't be
19 here today because he is in Vidalia meeting
20 with some Veterans that are doing a Veterans
21 Memorial out there.
22 For LDVA, we have 847 persons staffed
23 that serve the 283,000 Louisiana Veterans.
24 According to the VA within our benefits
25 section, last fiscal year, we brought in \$1.6

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1 billion to the State of Louisiana through
2 compensation and pension programs with the
3 VA.
4 We are continually working to bring in
5 more with our Veterans, getting them to come
6 in, getting them to know about our offices,
7 so they can come in and we can help for
8 veterans. Also, through our homes with
9 hiring people, we're constantly hiring.
10 We're trying to get our census up so we can
11 provide more money into the community that
12 way.
13 With our benefits department in FY22,
14 our VACs filed a total of 97,000 claims on
15 behalf of the Louisiana Veterans and for the
16 fiscal year '23 at this point, we have over
17 35,000 claims filed. Our VACs have also
18 verified 1,070 businesses with the LED's
19 veterans First Benefit Initiative and one of
20 our projects we're working on right now is
21 the Louisiana National Guard Disability
22 benefit.
23 Right now we're working 230
24 applications for the Louisiana National Guard
25 and Air National Guard for the hundred

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1 thousand and 50,000 disability benefit.
 2 To date for fiscal year '23, we have
 3 approved eight \$50,000 benefits and for
 4 fiscal year 2022, we awarded a total of \$2.15
 5 million. We're growing our lane disability
 6 section because these claims take a lot of
 7 time to process. We have just added three
 8 more of our veterans assistant counselors,
 9 our senior ones so they can help work the
 10 claims so we can start processing these
 11 claims faster.
 12 It is a pretty lengthy process. It
 13 gets to us, we have to review all of the
 14 medical records of that service member and go
 15 through page by page, bounce it off of orders
 16 to make sure they are on the appropriate
 17 orders when the disability incurred, but
 18 we're hoping with five total VACs now that we
 19 have working them, we will start to push
 20 these out a lot faster and you will see this
 21 number, total number grow.
 22 With our cemeteries, when it comes to
 23 our cemeteries and VA, VA is very generous
 24 with us. They have approved all of our
 25 expansion projects that we put in for our

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1 five cemeteries. With our cemeteries, the
 2 Central Louisiana Veterans Cemetery in
 3 Leesville has 1,262 interred with an average
 4 of 12 burials a month.
 5 Our northeast Louisiana Veterans Home
 6 in Rayville has 841 with an average of 11
 7 burials a month. Our northwest has 3,799 or
 8 29 burials a month. Our southeast has 3,774
 9 with 49 burials a month, and our southwest
 10 has 311 with an average of 12. So we have a
 11 total of nearly 10,000 interred with a
 12 hundred thirteen burials a month going on
 13 throughout the state.
 14 We're also working with the federal VA
 15 on construction projects to expand our
 16 cemeteries so we can hold more veterans. So
 17 far, we have a project in Keithville that's
 18 4.4 million and in Leesville, that's 2.2
 19 million that's underway right now.
 20 Keithville, the project is anticipated
 21 to be completed in the spring of 2023 and
 22 Leesville is in the construction phase now.
 23 We're also expecting an approval for
 24 expansion in improvements, projects to
 25 Rayville which will be \$1.1 million and

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1 Slidell which will be \$3.1 million.
 2 We're also working with the federal VA
 3 cemetery at Port Hudson to help improve the
 4 national cemetery in Baton Rouge. If you
 5 drive by, the fence going around it is not
 6 real good, so we're working with them to try
 7 to get down there and improve, get some
 8 improvements on that cemetery.
 9 With our homes, we're totally or we're
 10 caring for a total of 565 veterans in our
 11 five homes. Right now we're working to get
 12 our census back up. Before Covid, we had
 13 over 700 veterans in our homes, but due to
 14 Covid, that number dropped drastically. A
 15 lot of families wanted their veterans close
 16 to them and not away, and it is sort of still
 17 that way. We're slowly bringing our census
 18 up to fill them back up, but we're working
 19 real hard on getting those numbers back up.
 20 Changes, we have a small number of
 21 veterans and employees that are contacting or
 22 contracting Covid. The homes have adopted
 23 the new CDC guidance on September 26 to
 24 include masking is not required in any
 25 parish home unless it is a high transmitted

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1 area. Weekly employee testing based on
 2 transmission rates is no longer required.
 3 Covid testing is only required upon certain
 4 exposures and we're still working to combat
 5 the nursing and staff shortages through job
 6 fares.
 7 What we have done is worked extensively
 8 on social media with the civil service, with
 9 the local communities to put out the jobs so
 10 we can get the nursing staff and the regular
 11 staff to come back in. The colonel just got
 12 approved a pay raise for our CNAs, so we are
 13 hoping that will help to keep people in and
 14 stay because we're having to compete with the
 15 private sector and the private sector just
 16 pays a lot more than we do.
 17 The job fares have been successful. We
 18 did one in Jennings in our southwest home.
 19 We had 22 people there that did applications.
 20 We actually hired one person right on the
 21 spot. These have shown to be very
 22 successful, so we're going to keep doing
 23 those at all our homes throughout the year.
 24 One of our newest programs, the LAVET
 25 corp, the LAVET corp operates on 32 college

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1 and university campuses with veteran centers.
 2 The, money to fund it comes from AmeriCorps
 3 and the state. Our program right now is in
 4 its fourth year of operation and we were
 5 declared a model program for the nation by
 6 AmeriCorps. We're also partnered with the
 7 governor's office and the board of regions on
 8 this.

9 The program serves more than 10,000
 10 student veterans and their families. Of the
 11 32 campuses, two of them, the LSU in Baton
 12 Rouge and Grambling State have two navigators
 13 there because of the large population of
 14 veterans and we're looking right now to fill
 15 vacancies at Baton Rouge Community College,
 16 Holy Cross, River Parish Community College,
 17 McNeese State University, and Tulane.

18 Out of those two or out of those, Holy
 19 Cross and Tulane are both private colleges,
 20 so they don't have to participate but they've
 21 stepped up and chose to participate and are
 22 funding the offices, the equipment, the
 23 electricity, everything, phones. They are
 24 funding them because they believe it is a
 25 good program. And we're also reaching out to

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1 other colleges and universities that are
 2 private to see if they want to join as well.

3 And what this program does is it puts a
 4 navigator on the campus to help the veterans
 5 that are going to college with resources
 6 around the campus, also resources with
 7 pointing them to VA, to our VAC offices if
 8 they need help with VA, and it is giving them
 9 every tool to be successful in college and to
 10 graduate college so they can get their
 11 degree.

12 Next we have our Military Family
 13 Assistance Fund. Our board reviews
 14 applications and they can award up to \$10,000
 15 per veteran. That does not need to be paid
 16 back. It is awarded to them. They don't
 17 have to pay it back. With that, it is not
 18 cash that is handed directly to the veteran
 19 and put in their hands. What it does is it
 20 pays the lenders.

21 If they come in and they are having
 22 financial problems and they can't pay their
 23 electric bill, their mortgage payment, if it
 24 gets approved through us, then we will pay
 25 the mortgage lender, the electrical company

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1 for them to keep them ahead so they don't get
 2 their lights turned off, so they don't lose
 3 their vehicle, they can still get to work and
 4 everything.

5 The fund balance is just over 633,000
 6 what we have in the bank right now. The last
 7 fiscal year we awarded a hundred eight
 8 thousand out and with the Military Family
 9 Assistance Fund, none of that money comes
 10 from the state. All of that money is donated
 11 through private parties.

12 A new program we have with the OMV is
 13 when anyone goes in to renew their license or
 14 get a driver's license, you can elect to
 15 donate a dollar to the MFA fund, and last
 16 year we got \$35,000 from the OMV from
 17 donations.

18 We also have our outreach program and
 19 we're continuing -- Larry Williams is
 20 continuing to travel the state to help
 21 prevent veterans' homelessness, veterans'
 22 suicide. He is also working with serving for
 23 women's veterans and women's health,
 24 veterans' health and also job fares. He held
 25 a suicide prevention and a gold star mother

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1 and families recognition ceremony in
 2 September.

3 We are supporting a bunch of Veterans'
 4 Day Events that are going on throughout the
 5 state. On our websites, we have all the
 6 events that are going on. Also maintains
 7 relationships with all the veterans service
 8 organizations so we can get information out
 9 and better help the veterans, and we're
 10 working with the director on the events for
 11 the spring commemoration for the 50th
 12 anniversary of the Vietnam War and that will
 13 be done in New Orleans at the River Center.

14 Our state-approving agency that does
 15 all our GI bills, they are constantly out on
 16 the road with the colleges making sure the
 17 universities are staying within the regs for
 18 federal VA so they can keep those programs
 19 open and veterans can still use their GI
 20 bills there at that institute on those
 21 programs.

22 Most recently, they brought in more
 23 than a hundred sixty-eight million in
 24 federal dollars to Louisiana's higher
 25 education communities through 232 different

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1 programs.
 2 The honor medals, we're still
 3 continuing to hand those out. The colonel
 4 brings those wherever he goes for events and
 5 ceremonies while we recognize veterans there
 6 with the honor medals and we're also
 7 continuing to support the operations of the
 8 USS KIDD and serve on the advisory board and
 9 we support and serve on the East Baton Rouge
 10 Parish Mayor Broome's Veterans advisory
 11 board.
 12 And with that, if you have any
 13 questions?
 14 Yes, sir.
 15 GENERAL ELDER:
 16 When is the 50th anniversary of
 17 Vietnam?
 18 MR. MCGINNIS:
 19 It is going to be in February, sir.
 20 MR. SILBERT:
 21 That was going to be my question, too,
 22 just if you had a date that you and who are
 23 the attendees? Is it primarily vets or are
 24 you looking to have active military
 25 leadership coming in, missions down here show

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1 up?
 2 MR. MCGINNIS:
 3 I would have to get with Brandy, our
 4 communications director, but from my
 5 understanding, it is for mainly Vietnam
 6 veterans and distinguished guests. They are
 7 going to send the invitation out to the
 8 military community as well to show up and to
 9 the government community as well.
 10 Does that answer?
 11 MR. SILBERT:
 12 Yes.
 13 MR. MCGINNIS:
 14 They haven't sent anything out. They
 15 just got the River Center reserved about two
 16 weeks ago because they were questioning on
 17 where we were going to be able to handle it
 18 because they want it to be a very big event
 19 and they want to try to get a large
 20 population of veterans to show up.
 21 MR. SILBERT:
 22 I would like to attend if possible.
 23 MR. MCGINNIS:
 24 Yes, sir.
 25 MR. SILBERT:

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1 That's all.
 2 MR. MCGINNIS:
 3 Thank you. Anyone else?
 4 (No response.)
 5 MR. ABBOD:
 6 Thank you very much, Mr. McGinnis. We
 7 certainly appreciate the great partnership
 8 that we have with Colonel Strickland. You
 9 had mentioned our Veterans First Business
 10 Initiatives. We will touch a little more on
 11 that a little later, but again, we just
 12 certainly appreciate your great partnership,
 13 so thank you.
 14 Next item on the agenda, I would like
 15 to call on General Waddell to come brief on
 16 guard activities.
 17 GENERAL WADDELL:
 18 Good morning fellow council members. I
 19 would like to begin by thanking Secretary
 20 Pierson and Mr. Abboud for allowing me the
 21 opportunity to give an update on Louisiana
 22 National Guard's efforts since July 13th,
 23 2022.
 24 Today, the Louisiana National Guard
 25 remains operationally engaged in federal

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1 deployments, cyber security missions, and
 2 steady state operations. Currently we have
 3 59 service members federally deployed either
 4 overseas or at continental United States
 5 locations, and we expect to mobilize another
 6 1,032 service members throughout this next
 7 year.
 8 Additionally, in 2023, the 139th
 9 regional support group headquarters will be
 10 ready to deploy as a mobilization support
 11 force at Camp Shelby should they be ordered,
 12 and our 2225th Multi-Role Bridge Company is
 13 also prepared to answer the call to be a
 14 contingency response force if needed.
 15 I would like to give the council a
 16 state emergency and emergency management
 17 assistance or EMAC update. This past
 18 september, two members of our 122nd air
 19 support operations squadron lent their
 20 support to the wildfires of the Northwest
 21 great Basin and northern California where
 22 they conducted fire detection and mapping
 23 across these regions. Their efforts helped
 24 display how much versatility we have in our
 25 National Guard.

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1 In late September, the Louisiana
2 national Guard offered EMAC support to
3 florida in the wake of Hurricane Ian.
4 Approximately 245 soldiers stood ready to
5 answer the call for assistance to this
6 destructive hurricane. Fourteen members of
7 two movement control teams departed on
8 September 27th for Camp Blanding, Florida.
9 One UH 60 Blackhawk crew dispatched on
10 september the 28th flying 31 missions and
11 more than 20 hours transporting 69 people and
12 16,000 pounds of cargo to assist the citizens
13 of Florida, and we worked mainly in Sanibel
14 Island.
15 Sixty-seven soldiers of a medium truck
16 company began their convoy to Florida on
17 september 29th, and an additional Blackhawk
18 crew and horizontal engineer company received
19 a mission halt prior to departing for
20 florida. Louisiana ended up mobilizing 90
21 soldiers within 48 hours of notification and
22 the pride I have for these outstanding men
23 and women is so immense and I am humbled to
24 lead and serve with such an amazing group of
25 people.

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1 Additionally, our joint cyber teams
2 continue to support cyber incidents
3 throughout the state. We continue to work
4 closely with the office of technology
5 services, Louisiana State Police, and the
6 governor's office of Homeland Security and
7 emergency Preparedness on developing a
8 state-run program that focuses on getting
9 left of boom which is any activity that
10 focuses on preparing a network for cyber
11 attacks and actions to assist state and local
12 agencies to better -- to be better prepared
13 for cyber defense.
14 We remain a co-lead with emergency
15 support function 17 for future cyber
16 incidents and our 178th cyber protection team
17 is currently deployed in CONUS and is due to
18 return to the state at the end of the month.
19 They have been gone for 12 months.
20 We're also going to provide cyber
21 support to the secretary of state's office
22 for the mid term elections in November. A
23 personnel readiness update, Louisiana
24 unational Guard's current end strength is
25 107.9 percent and Louisiana Air National

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1 guard stands at 98.4 percent.
2 From a personnel readiness standpoint,
3 Louisiana National Guard is the number three
4 national guard in the entire country
5 according to all the personnel metrics
6 tracked by the National Guards Bureau. We
7 ended 2022 with an 82 percent overall
8 retention rate and that's three years in a
9 row over 80 percent.
10 In my 27 years in the guard, we have
11 never been over 80 percent but we cracked the
12 code the last three years. The men and woman
13 of Louisiana National Guard continue to
14 impress me each and every day with their
15 selfless service, commitment, tenacity, and
16 pro-activeness as we lean forward with our
17 end strength goals.
18 In the area of military construction or
19 MILCON, the Louisiana National Guard
20 continues to work on improving our facilities
21 and wanted to provide an update on all our
22 current construction projects. Camp
23 beauregard Readiness Center, 53,000 plus
24 square feet, \$20.4 million is currently at 63
25 percent.

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1 The Lake Charles Readiness Center,
2 60,000 plus square feet, \$31.2 million is at
3 9 percent. The 159th Fighter Wing's new
4 alert complex, 36,000 plus square feet and
5 their apron 28,000 plus square feet at Belle
6 Chasse is at 81 percent.
7 The Camp Minden's barracks, 28,000
8 square feet valued at \$13.8 million is 50
9 percent on design completion. We have a
10 field maintenance shop in Shreveport. It is
11 at 75 percent on design completion. This
12 project is an addition and alteration to the
13 current facility. It is valued at \$3.95
14 million.
15 We're expecting to receive design
16 authority in November for the Lafayette
17 Readiness Center for the 256 Infantry
18 Brigade. That's 89,000 plus square feet, \$24
19 million project, construction begins in 2025.
20 The Baker Readiness Center will receive
21 and addition in 2024 valued at \$4 million
22 with design authority potentially happening
23 this month. We have 25 low to medium income
24 housing being constructed at Camp Beauregard.
25 They are at 35 percent, and our construction

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1 facility's management office will receive the
 2 2022 Secretary of the Army Energy and Water
 3 Management Award for our energy and water
 4 resilience program effectiveness. We're
 5 still waiting on final details, but the award
 6 presentation is set to take place at the end
 7 of the month in Cincinnati, Ohio.

8 Overall, the Louisiana National Guard
 9 continues to work with the National Guard
 10 bureau, our congressional delegation,
 11 Governor Edwards, and his administration for
 12 future military construction opportunities.
 13 Of note, we're working on moving design
 14 authority into 2024 for the Abbeville
 15 Readiness Center to set conditions for a
 16 possible early construction award. Right now
 17 that project is tentatively set to start in
 18 2027. So I believe we can get conditions set
 19 and hopefully we can begin in 2024.

20 On innovative readiness training or IRT
 21 projects as many of you know, the current
 22 updates is the Louisiana National Guard
 23 frequently participates in the IRT project
 24 that provide military training opportunities
 25 that both increase deployment readiness and

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1 enhance our local communities, and this year
 2 was no exception.

3 Since January, we completed four IRT
 4 projects throughout the State and began one
 5 that will conclude next year. Projects
 6 completed over this past summer include the
 7 Prince Hall Youth Camp in St. Landry Parish
 8 which involve renovating cabins with new
 9 exterior doors, drywall installation, and
 10 improved drainage.

11 We constructed a new obstacle course at
 12 Southeastern Louisiana University for their
 13 ROTC program. We cleared and grubbed one
 14 mile of drainage canal and regraded the canal
 15 to its original profile at Louisiana LSU
 16 Alexandria and we cleared and grubbed a
 17 hundred acres at the Ruston Industrial
 18 complex to allow for expansion.

19 We began the construction of a rifle
 20 and pistol range in Grant Parish and have
 21 thus far completed the containment berm and
 22 the drainage aspects. This range is set to
 23 be completed in 2023 after the completion of
 24 the concrete firing lanes, a covered shooting
 25 area, the parking lot, and a containment berm

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1 for the pistol range.

2 I was pleased to be a part of the
 3 opening ceremony for the LSUA infrastructure
 4 and drainage improvement project last week
 5 and have enjoyed the partnership and
 6 cooperation that each of these projects
 7 highlight within our communities.

8 On the youth challenge program, our
 9 youth challenge program remains the top YCP
 10 in the nation and since the lifting of the
 11 covid restrictions, all programs have
 12 returned to 100 percent capacity. Since
 13 January, the program graduated 526 cadets and
 14 we anticipate another 226 graduating by the
 15 end of this year.

16 Our other educational programs continue
 17 to progress. The star-based program provided
 18 1880 fifth-grade students the opportunity to
 19 participate in stem education programs. The
 20 Pelican State Star Base at Camp Beauregard
 21 was improved to increase student capacity to
 22 a hundred percent resulting in the
 23 acquisition of a second classroom. This
 24 program will begin in 2023.

25 Lastly, the job challenge program

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1 graduated 41 trainees in areas and a variety
 2 of career paths that include welding,
 3 automotive, maintenance, phlebotomy, medical
 4 assistant, and culinary arts. We're
 5 projecting to produce 66 total graduates
 6 which is an 18 percent increase from last
 7 year.

8 On our state partnership program with
 9 Belize and Haiti, we continue to work with
 10 these partners. We did complete 18 exchanges
 11 or events with Belize in 2022 and are
 12 scheduled to complete 21 events with Belize
 13 in 2023. We completed four events with Haiti
 14 in 2022 and we have 15 events scheduled in
 15 2023, but current country travel restrictions
 16 and unrest may not allow us to achieve that
 17 goal, but we will keep working to that end.

18 Of note, we did have five females from
 19 the Belize Defense Force, what we call the
 20 BDF, they went through our accelerated
 21 officer candidate school in June, and they
 22 were commissioned as second lieutenants this
 23 past August.

24 Louisiana National Guard completed an
 25 end of year key leader engagement in Belize

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1 supporting the Belize Independence Day
 2 activities in September. The 156th Army band
 3 performed alongside the Belize Defense Force
 4 band at the local and national ceremonies
 5 commemorating this important day, and the
 6 prime minister of Belize had a lot of great
 7 things to say about our band and what they
 8 did for that ceremony.

9 Of note, we're also working with
 10 Southern Command to support the Belize
 11 Defense Force Resiliency Program which will
 12 assist service members and staff going
 13 through personal struggles. We presented the
 14 second donation of books to the BDF within
 15 the last three months which they were happy
 16 to receive.

17 Readiness, supporting deploying and
 18 redeploying units, all hazards operations,
 19 and moral, legal, and ethical service remain
 20 our organizational priorities. We will be
 21 adding new chemical force structure within
 22 our state in September of 2023 and we remain
 23 engaged on the acquisition of the F-35s for
 24 the 159th Fighter Wing at Belle Chasse.

25 I remain proud and appreciative of our

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1 service members and our civilian employees
 2 that I have the privilege to serve alongside.
 3 Additionally, on behalf of the men and women
 4 of the Louisiana National Guards and
 5 Louisiana Military Department, I would like
 6 to publicly thank their families and
 7 employers for their enduring support of our
 8 organization.

9 In closing, I would also like to thank
 10 Governor Edwards for his exceptional
 11 leadership. This past August, the National
 12 Guard Association of the United States
 13 recognized and presented Governor Edwards the
 14 Harry S. Truman award at our annual
 15 conference in Columbus, Ohio. This is the
 16 most prestigious and highest award that can
 17 be given by our association.

18 Also, thanks to our other elected
 19 officials and our local, state, and federal
 20 partners for their service and support of the
 21 Louisiana National Guard and the State of
 22 Louisiana.

23 Thank you for your time this morning,
 24 and I would open it up for any questions or
 25 comments at this time.

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1 MR. KELLER:
 2 Sir?
 3 GENERAL WADDELL:
 4 Yes, sir.
 5 MR. KELLER:
 6 I work for the Naval Air Station
 7 Reserve Base right here in the Belle Chasse
 8 area.
 9 GENERAL WADDELL:
 10 Yes, sir.
 11 MR. KELLER:
 12 Any other information that you have at
 13 this point in time regarding the 159th's
 14 environmental impact statement process and
 15 when we might get a hit of when or, you know,
 16 what direction the guard bureau is going to
 17 go in?
 18 GENERAL WADDELL:
 19 I don't have anything to report at this
 20 time but I will follow it up and provide that
 21 report to you offline, sir.
 22 MR. KELLER:
 23 Thank you, sir.
 24 GENERAL WADDELL:
 25 Yes, sir.

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1 MR. GOODE:
 2 So they are going to have to do a state
 3 time, they are going to have to do the whole
 4 thing. It is not going to be any decision
 5 until after this election on it. We are
 6 going to have to get F-35s.
 7 GENERAL WADDELL:
 8 Thank you.
 9 MR. ABOUD:
 10 So now, I think we can move into some
 11 of our military partners reports. I will
 12 call up Chris Goode with the Roosevelt Group.
 13 He will report out on the Louisiana Armed
 14 Forces Alliance and Southeast Military
 15 Alliance, SEMA, as well as Barksdale Forward.
 16 MR. GOODE:
 17 Good morning. Thanks, Secretary
 18 Pierson, General Waddell, Garrity. Sorry for
 19 slides. You can't, you know -- it is a
 20 military thing. You have to have power
 21 points, you know, right, but I will go
 22 through these as briskly as I can. Let me
 23 start with some team mates.
 24 You know, we work pretty hard at the
 25 roosevelt Group to bring the best we can

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1 possibly find and I am really proud that
 2 Jason has joined us. Jason was the former
 3 G-9. When it comes to installations and
 4 anything to deal with installations in the
 5 Army, he is going to be great. He has
 6 already supported us on some issues at Fort
 7 Polk.

8 You know, he is on his typical
 9 two-year cooling off period which we deal
 10 with all the time, but in terms of you name
 11 it, barracks, health care, child care,
 12 environmental issues, he is going to be a
 13 great asset for Louisiana. We're really
 14 proud we have him.

15 I would like to start big picture. You
 16 know, when it comes to the defense budget,
 17 nothing has really changed, you know. We're
 18 at a CR. We're pouring lots of money at
 19 defense, you know. The budget in '23 has
 20 been increased. You know, when I started
 21 doing this, it was about 350 billion. Maybe
 22 we will get over the trillion mark at some
 23 point, who knows, but you know, we're in this
 24 CR for now.

25 We will have an NDAA, the National

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1 Defense Authorization Act by the end of the
 2 year. You will have an appropriations
 3 probably around the same time hopefully. You
 4 know, you don't get 12 appropriations bills
 5 anymore. You get typically a couple
 6 omnibuses. They will combine the defense
 7 spending with the social spending, so
 8 basically, they have gotten into everybody's
 9 head to actually pass a bill. We will see.

10 I think last year we got about an extra
 11 30 billion in defense. I think you will see
 12 about that amount, maybe a little bit more.
 13 It has all been worked out. The House
 14 basically did what the president wanted. The
 15 Senate has increased and you will conference
 16 and get I think, you know, somewhat of an
 17 increase for defense, but there is nothing on
 18 this slide that is a big surprise. It has
 19 been this way for the last 10 years, CRs,
 20 omnibuses, more money.

21 Highlights in red, you know, of
 22 relevance to Louisiana. There is a lot going
 23 on with the F-18 community. The growler,
 24 the G models, they are land based. They are
 25 up in Washington. The Navy wants to get rid

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1 of them. They don't fly under the carrier
 2 and they don't like paying for something that
 3 the joint services really need.

4 The Air Force wants them. These things
 5 have been deployed to Poland to support to
 6 the Ukraine peace, but they are a bill payer.
 7 The Navy wants to get rid of them. I think
 8 at the end of the day, we have some really
 9 strong language that is encouraging the Navy
 10 to keep them and to put them into the
 11 reserves.

12 The F-18C models at Belle Chasse can
 13 barely fly. It is an unviable mission. They
 14 are going to be retired and their placement
 15 isn't really that good. It is an old
 16 aircraft that is basically going to have less
 17 endurance. It not a good fit but it is a fit
 18 that is available and one we have been sort
 19 of forced to take.

20 This mission would be superb. It would
 21 be a game changer. It is a long shot, but it
 22 is one of the best shots we have. If these
 23 aircrafts stick around, which they should,
 24 they should be resourced. The Navy Reserve
 25 is not going to want to pay for them either.

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1 This is going to be a blunt tool or blunt act
 2 by congress to try to make happen and if we
 3 can keep them flying, Belle Chasse would be a
 4 great spot to put them.

5 MR. SILBERT:
 6 Chris, you are talking about the
 7 growlers?

8 MR. GOODE:
 9 Yes, sir.

10 MR. SILBERT:
 11 And so the aircraft you have just
 12 referred to is just -- the other aircraft is
 13 just an interim solution, right?

14 MR. GOODE:
 15 Correct. You are getting an old T-38
 16 that has about an hour's worth of endurance.
 17 It is a good adversary aircraft, but it is
 18 probably -- it is not an optimal aircraft.
 19 By the time it gets up to your training
 20 spaces, it is basically going to have to come
 21 home, but it keeps the mission, keeps that
 22 BFA mission alive, but again it is not -- it
 23 is just not going to be a long-term solution.

24 This will be a great mission, but
 25 again, it is going to be -- it has to be an

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1 act of Congress. It has to be something that
 2 is going to be funded. It has to get
 3 transferred into the reserves and it
 4 ultimately has to come to Belle Chasse. So
 5 there are a lot of moving pieces in that
 6 equation, but without it, like I said, that
 7 T-38 is probably going to be a short-term
 8 situation.

9 There is no long-term adversary
 10 aircraft. You know, you can say the T-7, the
 11 Boeing aircraft will be one, that's way down
 12 the line. The house added eight more F-18s.
 13 That is an authorization, not an
 14 appropriation. The chances of that sticking
 15 around are zero. And then you have a pay
 16 increase, 4.6 percent; otherwise, not --
 17 again, not a lot of controversial areas in
 18 the authorization piece.

19 In terms of construction, Louisiana has
 20 the most MILCON of any state in the union and
 21 it has been that way for the last two years.
 22 The money is coming in and it is coming in at
 23 a high rate. You look at the Weapons
 24 Generation Facility, that's almost a \$300
 25 million project. It is fully authorized.

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1 There has been a lot of work put into this.
 2 We have 125 million just this year and we
 3 will get 70 million next year.

4 Every single project at Fort Polk is
 5 broken, every one. The bit busts are all
 6 over the map. The joint operations center
 7 was under priced by over a hundred percent.
 8 61 million was basically appropriated by the
 9 community project funding process. That
 10 project will go forward.

11 The other two are in limbo waiting to
 12 be conferenced. The SAC, the senate like
 13 they always do, they actually listen to the
 14 DOD, they typically fund everything that's
 15 been put on an unfunded priority list
 16 including all the MILCON. The House will
 17 wait and then they will probably decide to
 18 pivot to the Senate and they should all get
 19 funded, but I mean this is a joke. It has
 20 never been as bad in terms of where we're at
 21 with MILCON, and estimating them getting them
 22 done, you know, it's pretty pitiful frankly.

23 MR. REESE:
 24 You anticipate that being part of the
 25 end of the year budget resolution?

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1 MR. GOODE:
 2 Yes. The job gets done. It is
 3 appropriated on both sides, only because of
 4 the community project funding the requests.
 5 You only get so many bites at the apple.
 6 Congressman Johnson does not earmark except
 7 for the military. The senator didn't have to
 8 do anything because the committee did the
 9 work. So, you know, they would have
 10 ultimately, I think, but that's been done for
 11 us.

12 You know, other things of interest,
 13 they are pouring money into energy
 14 resilience. I mean this is a great place to
 15 be. This House readiness market, there is
 16 going to be two energy resiliency pilots per
 17 service, that's anything from plugging
 18 vehicles in to carbon sequestration. We're
 19 working with Danburdy. We're hoping we can
 20 do that project at Fort Polk. It would be a
 21 game changer for Fort Polk to be the Army's
 22 carbon capture base.

23 And then a lot of money for things like
 24 child development centers. You know, they
 25 are putting money into those areas. We're

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1 pretty good in those areas. Barksdale still
 2 needs a lot of work in that last category,
 3 and it has been a struggle frankly. I will
 4 talk a little bit more about that.

5 The DCIP, you know, I briefed this 10
 6 times, but this DCIP has gone from, you know,
 7 nothing to almost a hundred million a year.
 8 We jumped on this really early. We helped
 9 write this provision and got it into law.
 10 The committee likes it. Committees are
 11 catching on obviously, you know. We got on
 12 it early and we have got two DCIP awards in
 13 three years at Fort Polk alone, good ones, 7
 14 million, 2 million. So this is a program
 15 that is going to continue and we want to
 16 continue to be pro-active.

17 Tara Judd, Air Force civilian, he
 18 basically ran all of the community, shared
 19 services ran this program, we hired him, so
 20 the Air Force doesn't really have a DCIP
 21 office. It has been moved to the Roosevelt
 22 Group, and he has been real good. So we got
 23 the best guy in D.C. that understands this
 24 process and we want to keep hitting it hard.
 25 so Fort Polk, you know, again, a lot of

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1 money, a lot of positive things. The quality
 2 of life program is a real program. It is run
 3 by G-9. There are four bases in this quality
 4 of life bucket. It is not necessarily a good
 5 thing to be part of that quality of life
 6 program because it demonstrates you need
 7 quality of life improvements, but at the end
 8 of the day, the Army has put a lot of money
 9 into this program, mainly O&M, but they are
 10 making strides and I will just tell you that
 11 they are getting to a point that they are
 12 going to move on, they are going to
 13 remission quality of life, so it is on us to
 14 make sure that their commitments are kept.
 15 The good thing is we know every one of those
 16 commitments and the delegation knows them and
 17 we're going to watch it.

18 The name change has come up. We were
 19 in the Pentagon two weeks ago with the City
 20 Council, the mayor. In terms of the
 21 community of Leesville, the name change is a
 22 non-issue and it will maintain, it will
 23 continue to be a non-issue. They don't care.
 24 They care about Fort Polk, they care about
 25 the families and soldiers.

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1 Total Army analysis, we have no
 2 indications that the 310 is going be impacted
 3 or moved. If it is, that's a big problem and
 4 will continue to be a big problem.

5 The Army is moving to multi-force
 6 domain formations. That does potentially
 7 lead to some trickle-down opportunities.
 8 Again, long shots but something that we are
 9 informed of and we want to be continue to be
 10 in that conversation. We're working a new
 11 DCIP, getting three bites at that apple is
 12 going to be a challenge, but there is a good
 13 case to be made to extend the Leesville
 14 airport and we're going to try to take
 15 another hit at DCIP to do that.

16 I don't know what's going on with
 17 barracks. I do know that the professional
 18 staff informed us that there are problems at
 19 the barracks. We're working to understand
 20 what those are. You know, whether that's bad
 21 information or not, that came out of a recent
 22 professional staff meeting.

23 Next slide. Sorry. That's me.

24 So quality of life, if you look at
 25 this chart, it is pretty impressive in terms

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1 of, you know, what they the Army has really
 2 dedicated themselves to do in terms of, you
 3 know, physical fitness improvements,
 4 lighting, tracks, hotel, hoteling. You know,
 5 we went through these, you know, line by line
 6 in the Pentagon a couple of weeks ago, so
 7 again, you know, for Mike and others, you
 8 know, we just need to understand the process
 9 for this, the timeline, and ensure that these
 10 things really get over the finish line.

11 And just another look at this. Some of
 12 these are actually MILCON, some O&M, but you
 13 add these numbers up through the FDEP
 14 (spelled phonetically), it is a large amount
 15 of money. So, you know, Mike remembers us 10
 16 years ago scrambling for MILCON. The Army
 17 did not put money into Fort Polk for a very
 18 long time and they have woken up and these
 19 charts prove it.

20 It is actually pretty fun to be able to
 21 see this, you know, after a long time
 22 struggling just to keep full structure there,
 23 begging to, you know, build the joint
 24 operations center, for example. But
 25 essentially the board itself is sort of

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1 migrating and not only modernizing but, you
 2 know, they are trying to position assets the
 3 right way where, you know, the
 4 administrative, the housing, the headquarters
 5 all move south. The actual operations all
 6 move north. So it is a good -- it is a good
 7 picture.

8 So Barksdale again, Weapons Generation
 9 Facility, that has been the biggest project,
 10 the one project, sort of the lynch pin to the
 11 future because without the WGF, the follow on
 12 MILCON projects don't come. 125 million this
 13 year, 40 million last year. You know, that
 14 project is going to get up and running and
 15 again, that's going to open us up for things
 16 like follow on barracks, security force
 17 training facilities, and probably some more.

18 The access gate and road, another sore
 19 piece of misery, black eye, done horribly,
 20 you know, that received 36 million this year
 21 in addition to 25.5 that was received three
 22 years ago maybe, two years ago.

23 The gate, the design is at 65 percent,
 24 so we haven't even broken ground on it.
 25 They will probably do a groundbreaking of

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1 start clearing brush and setting the
 2 conditions for construction in February of
 3 next year. There will be a groundbreaking to
 4 prove that the Air Force is going to build a
 5 road and gate to a bridge, but this was a
 6 tough, tough nut, and again, you know, people
 7 move in and out of positions, and I think --
 8 I think what was a good idea 10 years ago,
 9 Over time the Air Force said, you know, this
 10 is not a priority.
 11 The Air Force never budgeted this
 12 project. They never put it in a FDEP;
 13 meanwhile, the state spends hundreds of
 14 millions of dollars, gets garvee bonds,
 15 builds an overpass, there is no money. The
 16 delegation got this money. We got this on an
 17 unfunded priority list. We got 25 million
 18 which was what the Air Force asked us to get,
 19 and then it was under budget by \$36 million.
 20 I don't know who estimates MILCON
 21 projects. I would love to get that job
 22 because it sounds like it is a pretty easy
 23 one.
 24 Barksdale the going to get Igloo
 25 weapons Construction to support a hypersonics

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1 mission. That's a new mission and a good
 2 mission. B-52s are going to be around a long
 3 time. I think there is a potential in '24
 4 for DCIP at Barksdale. The question is does
 5 the community really need or want an aircraft
 6 museum or not because without a strong
 7 community support, a DCIP is not going to go
 8 forward but the aircraft museum and the
 9 security posture and the parking lot and the
 10 fence and the bridge is never going to happen
 11 on its own.
 12 So this could be a way to finally put
 13 that situation to bed. A DCIP may be a good
 14 way to do it. There are clearly security and
 15 force protection issues with a configuration
 16 of that aircraft museum today. DCIP would be
 17 -- DCIP would listen to those concerns. So
 18 that's one we're going to take a close look
 19 at.
 20 Housing is an issue unfortunately at
 21 barksdale. We will set the rat problem
 22 aside, that seems to have been stabilized,
 23 but there are a hundred houses that are
 24 uninhabitable at Barksdale. Thirty of them
 25 are going to be taken down. The base would

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1 like to have all hundred replaced.
 2 The Air Force's position is we don't
 3 build houses. They are out of that game.
 4 The Air Force's position is the community
 5 needs to step up and if the community doesn't
 6 step up, we're going to take your mission
 7 away. There was so much angst with mold and
 8 faulty housing that the Air Force after being
 9 taken up and dragged before Congress and
 10 beaten up, they took a knee on military
 11 housing. They are out. They won't build it.
 12 So if your community, you know,
 13 shame on you if you happen to be in a rural
 14 place where you don't have, you know, a lot
 15 of builders willing to take that risk, you
 16 know -- your mission is now jeopardized.
 17 That is Air Force policy.
 18 So only an act of Congress really is
 19 going to change that in my humble opinion.
 20 The Air Force has very -- has POM'd housing
 21 but in a very, very limited way. So to me,
 22 if you want housing, you got to get it
 23 through Congress, and I think we may need to
 24 take a hard look at that.
 25 The dorm, to support 600 new airmen is

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1 not in the FDEP. It needs to get in the FDEP
 2 the dorm, let so -- okay. So they start the
 3 WGF say now, that's probably a three or four
 4 year project. Dorm, the cost estimates on
 5 this initial dorm are through the roof,
 6 astronomical. So the Air Force has basically
 7 said talk to me later, but this is something
 8 that has to happen or we're going to be in
 9 that same situation as, you know, the gate
 10 and others.
 11 So there is some good projects ahead
 12 for Barksdale. Again, lots of good work in
 13 terms of the WGF. Hopefully this gate and
 14 this access road will be completed. In terms
 15 of new mission, it's pretty murky, you know.
 16 There is no -- it is not a lot of new
 17 aircraft up there. This tachymo and whatever
 18 this EAB replacement is, the decision on
 19 whether to keep that out of Offit (spelled
 20 phonetically) full time or to put it on the
 21 rotation has not been made. That's a
 22 potential Barksdale if they respond to that
 23 but that's nickel-dime stuff. It is not
 24 going to be a big economic impact, but
 25 outside of that, the Barksdale is a bomber

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1 base and it is going to continue to a bomber
2 base.
3 The real existential issue to me sort
4 of like the 310 is Global Strike. Now
5 whether Global Strike stays in good stead
6 with the Air Force or whether or not you see
7 a major MAJCOM reorganization. I don't see
8 it in the near term, but that's BRAC
9 territory. When you get your BRAC card, all
10 these ideas sooner or later are on the table.
11 Let's see here. Yeah, so I covered
12 that. Child Development Center Barksdale, I
13 think another potential issue. You know,
14 they have scraped and scratched and have
15 found enough money, they got about 15 million
16 to improve the West CDC. They are going to
17 demolish the East CDC, but when you get 600
18 more airmen in, they don't really have a
19 solution, so that's -- we tried really hard
20 on this one, you know. We wanted to get
21 community project funding for it, but those
22 things actually have rules unfortunately.
23 You know, you have to have 35 percent
24 design, you need a 1391, it has to be in a
25 FDEP. So they had a 1391 but they have done

1 no work on it, no design, no nothing. So
2 we're sort of starting from scratch on a new
3 CDC, but I think they're going to need one or
4 they are just going to have to be an off-base
5 solution for child care, and I don't know
6 what that is. And I think that's -- yeah,
7 that's it on Barksdale.
8 All right. Let's move to New Orleans.
9 So I mentioned there are a couple significant
10 provisions in the 23 marks on the SASC site
11 again, you know, retain the growlers,
12 transfer them to the Naval Reserve. You
13 know, this was not like our idea. This came
14 from the SASC.
15 Actually, it is the professional staff
16 that were not comfortable with this decision
17 to divest these land-based growlers. They
18 came to the delegation and said what do you
19 think and then it was we're in. So
20 the delegation is going to support this.
21 Hopefully we can get this conference and
22 hopefully that maybe we can figure out a way
23 to resource it, but again, it is -- this is a
24 hard nut to crack.
25 The additional F-18s, the Navy is going

1 to absolutely push back on this, you know.
2 There are some folks in the Missouri
3 delegation that support it. You know, Boeing
4 wants to continue to build F-18's. That's
5 not really -- that's not really the debate.
6 The resourcing them, you know, figuring --
7 putting brand new F-18 EFs at a reserve base
8 that are never going to go to the boat, I
9 mean it is a waste of money. Okay. It is
10 just not the right fit. If you got them,
11 great, take the mission, but I think this is
12 going to be a hard, hard one and I wouldn't
13 rely on it but, you know, it is in there.
14 And then there is additional language
15 in the actual appropriations bill but it is
16 basically encouraging the reserves to recap
17 their F-18s with older models but viable
18 active duty E and Fs, so we will see.
19 MR. KELLER:
20 Chris, at the Naval Air Station, the --
21 literally the F-18s are gone. F-5s are
22 showing up next month.
23 MR. GOODE:
24 Yes.
25 MR. KELLER:

1 So that's kind of the replacement for
2 the time being.
3 MR. GOODE:
4 Yes. Yes. And you know, you may see
5 some Kuwaiti F-18s coming in for training,
6 but again, that's not a long-term, that's in
7 and out rotationally stuff. The General
8 mentioned that the recap, you know, it's --
9 we will see what happens after the election.
10 The Air Force, you know, we have talked
11 to the home we just left is the A-8s, the
12 secretary, you name it, and the basic
13 position has been stick to the plan, stick to
14 that enterprise. You want to break these
15 enterprises up afterwards, do whatever you
16 want, but what we're hearing is they are
17 going to make and basing a decision based on
18 this enterprise.
19 This enterprise could have been 25
20 bases. It is three. And than the guarantee
21 was everybody gets an aircraft, you know. We
22 represent Massachusetts. We represent
23 Louisiana. We have been working on this for
24 five years. No one gave a shit about the
25 aircraft, you know.

<p>1 Gary, you know, Gary wants F-35s, we 2 get it, but it was a pretty cut and dried 3 deal. You were going to get a good aircraft 4 and that all blew up about probably six 5 months ago when the Air Force realized we're 6 out of hardware. They're not only looking at 7 this enterprise, they have been looking at 8 decisions that have already been made, the 9 Jacksonville to get an F-35, in Alabama, in 10 Wisconsin, but the Air Force is in the hurt 11 locker when it comes to hardware. 12 They have problems out at Kadena with 13 their F-15s, you know. They are spitting out 14 F-35s but the last thing in the world I think 15 they want is to give you anything, but they 16 will because they have committed to this 17 enterprise. So these bases are going to get 18 something and California is probably going to 19 get something they don't want, but if the 20 secretary sticks to his word, he is going to 21 -- he is going to make a decision. He is 22 going to keep this three base enterprise 23 together and everybody is going to get an 24 aircraft. So we will see. 25 We're going to see, we're going over to</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 54</p>	<p>1 our base, and it is always -- I have been 2 around for 13 years as sort of a -- I can 3 still consider myself an outside observer of 4 the process but, you know, it is kind of out 5 of sight, out of mind. It is not top 6 priority. That's just reality and the 7 commanding officers of the base, it is not 8 really their job to gain missions per se. 9 So I thought that that, you know, the 10 4A or the work with Senator Kennedy's office 11 was a good opportunity to look and see, okay, 12 well how does it work from the congressional 13 level when they want to see something, what 14 does big Navy say about it and again, I 15 wasn't really part of the process. 16 It is based upon what I hear, it is a 17 thanks but no thanks. That was the read that 18 I got on it but, you know, the system is 19 working in that, you know, they got the 20 opportunity presented to them, so it is all 21 right, now what do we do. 22 MR. GOODE: 23 So the 30-second story on Belle Chasse 24 is pretty simple. You used to be a Navy Air 25 Reserve mission. You used to be able to fly</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 56</p>
<p>1 NIWC system center today. We haven't been 2 inside that building for maybe three years 3 with Covid and everything else, but we want 4 to do a check-in with the folks over there at 5 the University of New Orleans. 6 Pat Sullivan is here with me. Pat is 7 one of our key advisors, technical advisors. 8 He is the former executive director of NAWAR, 9 he oversaw all of NAWAR, Charleston, San 10 Diego, and New Orleans, so we are looking 11 forward to that check-in. Yeah. 12 And Bruce, you know, you got F-5s, 13 congratulations. Yeah. We don't get either, 14 you know. I mean there has got to be a 15 product play here, and I will tell you, you 16 know, the minority whip and the delegation 17 knows this very well. They are very much 18 focused on this. How that materializes, how 19 that, you know, what the end state is, I 20 think it is just early to say right now. 21 MR. KELLER: 22 If I could say something. I wasn't 23 part of that process but my inkling is it was 24 a good opportunity to see -- get a read on 25 where big Navy was without the base, without</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 55</p>	<p>1 to the boat and conduct combat operations 2 like you did in the Gulf War. Those days are 3 over. The aircraft you have, as you know, 4 they are not even configured to land on a 5 carrier and they are old and they break down 6 every time they go on the road. So it is a 7 traveling road show that goes up to Fallen, 8 goes to Key West, and those guys make good 9 money and they come home and they fix the 10 aircraft. 11 So the real question is do we want a 12 Naval Air Reserve or not. When we fight 13 china, when an aircraft carrier goes to the 14 bottom of the Sub China Sea, would it make 15 sense to have some commercial pilots that 16 know how to fly an E and F? I think so, but 17 again, the Navy turned the page on that 18 mission 20 years ago. 19 So now the question is oh, do we put in 20 brand new E and Fs down there? Of course 21 not, because no mission. So you're an 22 adversary mission that could be moved in 10 23 minutes to Key West. The Navy wants to move 24 that mission though. It is clear as day. So 25 when the F-5 came up, you know you had this</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Page 57</p>

1 poet society down here that was saying, oh,
2 who can never do that. I should take the
3 mission and run just to keep the mission
4 until you can, you know, hopefully do
5 something else.
6 It is not a good outcome right now but,
7 you know, until you get an F-18 like the
8 growlers or some other mission, that's it.
9 They try to put in Q-25s down there, that was
10 not even -- that was you were bid fodder,
11 right, and take a carrier around in the Gulf
12 to load FQs, I mean not going to happen. So
13 yeah, anyway, that's where we're at.
14 And then anyway, that's just the
15 language. So last slide --
16 MR. SILBERT:
17 So before you move on, I just,
18 Mr. Secretary, with the funding that we had
19 available, I just wanted to update you that
20 during the year, this past year, the request
21 of military missions here in this region we
22 did produce a quality of life video. It has
23 been very well received, particularly by Mar
24 Perez, of the missions in southeast
25 Louisiana.

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1 It's the read that they get is it is
2 kind of a hardship assignment to come here
3 and they were looking for something to help
4 influence folks they wanted to recruit to
5 come to work here on Perez and feedback that
6 I had is that they are very pleased with the
7 video and it really is, it works with both
8 industry and military to really kind of give
9 a better view of quality of life here and so
10 that was completed.
11 And just FYI, we have had some changes
12 in command at both Mar Perez and at Belle
13 chasse. So we have the base commanders there
14 and otherwise, it is pretty much business as
15 usual.
16 MR. GOODE:
17 So last slide. So, you know, you never
18 want to like surprise the TAG or the governor
19 and BRAC is a bad surprise. Everybody always
20 talks about BRAC. We haven't been on BRAC
21 since 2005, right, you know. If we had to
22 rely on BRAC, we would be out of business.
23 So we don't -- we haven't really cared about
24 it because it was never really serious as
25 long as you had, you know, Enhost and a

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1 couple other people would just say don't even
2 send me a request, we're not going to
3 authorize it.
4 Brac is a creation of a department that
5 gets authorized by Congress, so, you know.
6 Enhost moved on. Kendall, Setgaff and
7 others, you know, they are slowly talking
8 about BRAC, and when they talk about it, I
9 just you have to listen. You know, the
10 delegation, every time we talk to the
11 delegation, we say, hey, BRAC sounds good but
12 it is going to cause you a lot of pain and
13 some new collateral duty for your staff and,
14 you know, Louisiana is just not really a good
15 place for BRAC for a lot of reasons, and I
16 think the delegation generally agrees with
17 that. I really do.
18 You know, when I talk to them, it is
19 pretty much BRAC is bad and, you know, and
20 that's good. You just don't want to vote for
21 it. So it is interesting though. I think
22 there are a few tools out there. You can put
23 bases on lists, you know, you can ask to
24 close bases. That was going to be the Air
25 force's plan for '24, I think it backed down

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1 from that.
2 They had a list of about 16 bases we
3 were told that they were going to try to
4 close just in their requests which is
5 perfectly fine, they can do that. There is a
6 provision that allows them to do that. I
7 think that they backed off that because they
8 have just, you know, they have got well and a
9 few categories somehow they have figured it
10 out moneywise, but they are now talking about
11 -- and this is an interesting thing. There
12 is a self-closure provision in law. It is
13 like 2887 or something, I forget. I can get
14 you the provision.
15 But with the governor's approval, you
16 can close a base, and with that, you know,
17 there is some back and forth negotiations in
18 terms of how that's done, and it is not a bad
19 provision, you know, because it actually, it
20 is not blunt force. You can -- the State
21 sort of has to be your partner to do it, but
22 we have heard that that's where the Air Force
23 is trying to go, and they actually want to
24 try to nominate a couple bases. The ones we
25 have heard, Hanscom and LA Air Force base,

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1 east coast, west coast. One other base
2 somewhere in the middle and I am not sure
3 which one that is. I don't think it is -- it
4 is not a Louisiana base, but again, it just
5 gives you the temperature inside the
6 building, especially in the Air Force who
7 still feels there is a lot of excess capacity
8 out there.

9 So anyway, I think -- I don't think you
10 are going to see BRAC in the request in the
11 '24 president's budget which typically comes
12 out in February, but it certainly is becoming
13 -- there are normal audible around BRAC than
14 I have heard in a long time.

15 And I think that's it unless you have
16 questions.

17 MR. ELDER:

18 Chris, I didn't want to interrupt you
19 before but it wasn't the tackable that they
20 were looking to possibly doing Marksville to
21 do SAP missions. The Navy is looking to put
22 the tackable using Tinker remaining as a
23 separate base but then actually deploying
24 them to the two coasts when they go to the
25 130s and what's called Abgader (spelled

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1 phonetically) where command post them today.

2 They haven't figured out what they
3 are going to do with it yet, if they are
4 going to put it on the SAP, there is a chance
5 it will go or something like go to Barksdale.
6 They are so costly that they are trying to
7 figure out a way to do it with few number of
8 airplanes. I think if it is under six, then
9 often they can handle them all.

10 MR. GOODE:

11 So that's it. So it has been a, you
12 know, a busy year. I think again in terms of
13 recap money, it is coming in to the state for
14 sure. In terms of some of the things on the
15 edge, quality of life pieces, there's a lot
16 left to do. There really is. Anyway, thanks
17 for listening.

18 MR. ABBOD:

19 Thank you very much, Chris, we
20 certainly appreciate the comprehensive
21 updates activity giving us line sight on the
22 important work being done. I will just take
23 a brief moment. I know we have a few more
24 reports to get to.

25 Chris had mentioned our work with the

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1 DCIP grant through OLDCC. We have one
2 iteration that's currently underway. It is
3 five learning centers in Vernon Parish in
4 partnership with the Vernon Parish School
5 board. That program LAD serves as the
6 primary delegating authority for that grant
7 so overseeing a lot of the work that's being
8 done.

9 We are vertical at all five sites now
10 out there, so we continue to press and to
11 work to complete that activity. And Chris
12 also referenced a second round of DCIP that
13 we were successful with going after. That
14 one is a north apron wash rack, so rotary
15 wing wash station with this most recent round
16 which was announced maybe a month ago. So
17 we're fresh off that.

18 So we will begin to work in partnership
19 with England Air Park to stand that program
20 up and get underway with that. So again,
21 just demonstrating ways in which we continue
22 not only to leverage partnerships, but to go
23 after these opportunities as them become
24 available and present.

25 So just one additional update typically

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1 for these meetings, I like to just provide a
2 line of sight on some of our veteran business
3 initiative programs we currently have going
4 on. For the sake of time, I will just kind
5 of jump right into the current status.

6 Three of our primary veteran programs
7 are Veterans First Business Initiative which,
8 of course, is around the certification of
9 promotion of Veteran, active duty, reserve
10 military, and gold star spouse businesses and
11 allows those businesses to be promoted.
12 They're within a database and can be
13 leveraged and promoted.

14 We're currently sitting at 913
15 certified businesses in that program and
16 that's significant because as we continue to
17 press, we're close to a significant benchmark
18 which is a thousand, and we're hoping that we
19 can line that up next month with Veterans
20 day. So we have launched or preparing to
21 launch some boosted promotional ads, a few
22 promotional materials that we can leverage
23 around that significant benchmark to
24 highlight that achievement, and certainly, it
25 is a great program that we have there.

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1 The two other programs we have,
 2 veterans Initiative which is assisting
 3 businesses with increased purchasing and
 4 contracting opportunities. We're currently
 5 over 350 Veteran Initiative certified
 6 companies in the state. And finally, what we
 7 call PAVE or Pathway to Assist Veteran
 8 entrepreneurs, we have over 40 participants
 9 that have gone through that program thus far
 10 and that's a virtual entrepreneurship
 11 training program, kind of provides tools for
 12 Louisiana veterans to start or manage
 13 businesses through these virtual classes.
 14 So just a quick overview of the work we
 15 do in leveraging these programs but also
 16 continuing to push on some of those digital
 17 ads and promotional materials and collateral
 18 that we can use.
 19 From October of 2020 to August of 2022,
 20 we have seen 8.3 million impressions. So
 21 when we talk about impressions in terms of
 22 these digital ads, that's how often an ad
 23 supporting these initiatives will be
 24 displayed on a screen so a user will see
 25 these ads pass by. So we have had 8.3

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1 million impressions since October of 2020.
 2 We have also, that has led to 12,000
 3 site visits and just under 400 apply and
 4 registered clicks within those promotional
 5 ads. So again, just to give you an idea of
 6 the impressions and also ultimate outcomes
 7 and clicks and registrations within those
 8 initiatives and kind of the impact that this
 9 effort leads to.
 10 So with that said, I will kind of just
 11 keep pressing on here and we will kind of
 12 move on to our other business. Again, we
 13 have a few more reports that we would like to
 14 get to. I would like to call on Mr. Jerry
 15 Hilton here. He is the South Central
 16 regional liaison for the defense state
 17 liaison office. The DSLO provides state
 18 policy makers with expert insight on issues
 19 affecting military families and their quality
 20 of life.
 21 This initiative is part of the Defense
 22 Department's efforts to identify and address
 23 the most pressing needs of service members
 24 and military families.
 25 so with that, I would like to invite

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1 Mr. Hilton up for a few remarks.
 2 MR. HILTON:
 3 Thank you, Secretary Pierson, and I
 4 don't know about you, but after listening to
 5 Chris, I need a Xanax. So I am going to try
 6 to liven it up a little bit. Again, thanks
 7 so much for the introduction. I am so
 8 relatively new to the job.
 9 As Chris mentioned, I am the South
 10 Central Regional liaison and the defense
 11 state liaison office. Our office works for
 12 the deputy assistant secretary of defense for
 13 our military community and family policy.
 14 She works a couple of levels up for the
 15 undersecretary of defense for personnel
 16 readiness.
 17 We work with state lawmakers and policy
 18 makers like Secretary Pierson and Senator
 19 Reese to introduce legislation in the state
 20 to improve military family quality of life.
 21 There is a handout. I have walked
 22 around and I have given Robbie my cards if
 23 you didn't already get it. We generally work
 24 within a what we call a 10 key issues list
 25 every year. It is updated every year so what

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1 you will see eventually, if you haven't
 2 already, is we work within kind of three
 3 buckets.
 4 We work on spouse licensure, spouse
 5 employment types of issues. Licensing
 6 compacts is one of the things that the
 7 secretary of defense has recently highlighted
 8 in a September 22nd memo as being an
 9 important aspect.
 10 Louisiana has already done a number of
 11 these compacts working with folks again like
 12 Senator Reese, Senator Peacock, and so, you
 13 know, Louisiana has already made great
 14 strides on a lot of these quality of life
 15 issues, but we continue to update this list
 16 as we continue to hear from both our
 17 families, our commands, as well as our
 18 communities on what those issues are.
 19 And I will just give you a quick
 20 example. So I was at Tinker Air Force Base
 21 which is one of the states I work with, and
 22 -- back up, I will mention I work with
 23 Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri,
 24 Texas, and Oklahoma.
 25 In Oklahoma, the Tinker Air Force Base

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1 commander said look, I have an issue with
 2 family child care out in the community. I
 3 said okay and we worked with the state
 4 legislator to pass a bill. Now those family
 5 child care providers out in the community are
 6 exempt from state child care licensing laws
 7 allowing us to put folks in those homes off
 8 the installation faster. And so we were able
 9 to turn around fairly fast and include that
 10 in last year's session. That issue is now on
 11 our top 10 key issue list as we try to role
 12 that best practice out to other states.

13 The second issue that we kind of
 14 generally follow or work with on our 10 key
 15 issue list as it relates to education, you
 16 know, there is lot of issues with military
 17 kids and as they transfer a PCS from duty
 18 location to duty location. I happen to be in
 19 the state, I am actually going to Baton Rouge
 20 right after this to Baton Rouge is hosting
 21 the Military Interstate Compact Commission
 22 today and tomorrow for their annual business
 23 meeting. So I will be speaking there this
 24 afternoon and providing them an update on our
 25 list as well.

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1 The MIG 3 implements the education
 2 compact which is Louisiana has obviously
 3 signed on to which we greatly appreciate and
 4 put in place a lot of really great
 5 improvements for our families as they again
 6 as they PCS.

7 We have kind of a third bucket on our
 8 top 10 key issue list which is relates to
 9 kind of a health and wellness set of
 10 initiatives, and these vary from year to
 11 year. We have worked on state Medicaid
 12 policy in the past. We're working on a
 13 jurisdictional issue right now that relates
 14 to problematic sexual behavior in youth and
 15 trying to insure that they have access to the
 16 state juvenile justice system when necessary.

17 So those are kind of the broad sweeping
 18 issues that we generally work with. As you
 19 come across an issue that impacts in the
 20 state, please let me know about that and I am
 21 happy to take that aboard to try to fix
 22 whatever that looks like. Sometimes we're
 23 successful; sometimes we're not. And if we
 24 fix it in Louisiana, perhaps it is something
 25 we need to fix nationwide.

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1 So with that, that's kind of the brief
 2 30-second pitch. Again, thank you very much
 3 for having me and I would like to open up the
 4 floor to questions.

5 (No response.)

6 MR. HILTON:
 7 None.

8 SENATOR REESE:
 9 I would just add I appreciate the
 10 support that you provide and I think that in
 11 general, we found our legislature incredibly
 12 -- and our governor incredibly receptive to
 13 anything and everything that we can do to
 14 make Louisiana the most friendly state to our
 15 military, active duty, and reserve, national
 16 guards that are stationed here, and I think
 17 we have done some good work in the area of
 18 licensure, but as I said to you earlier
 19 before the meeting, you know, we want to lead
 20 the way in that effort.

21 So as you see best practices around the
 22 country, I think we're ready, willing, and
 23 able to implement those in Louisiana and we
 24 really get limited to no resistance in the
 25 legislature when it is targeted at our

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1 military families.

2 MR. HILTON:
 3 Yes, sir. Louisiana has been a great
 4 partner in a lot of different efforts to
 5 improve our quality of life for our families,
 6 so it is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

7 MR. ABOUD:
 8 I will now call on General Elder who
 9 would like to now report out and provide a
 10 presentation entitled Comprehensive Command
 11 And Controls. I will go ahead pull your
 12 slides for you.

13 GENERAL ELDER:
 14 Thank you. I will wait for the slides
 15 to come up and thank Secretary Pierson and
 16 Robbie for a chance to talk to the group here
 17 and since Murray is not here, I thought I
 18 should mention General Cotton was confirmed
 19 and will go to StratCom. We don't have a
 20 date yet for when that's going to happen and
 21 his replacement who is currently the deputy
 22 at StratCom has been nominated and going over
 23 to the senate for confirmation. That's Tom
 24 Bousy (spelled phonetically), so he is -- he
 25 will be the new Air Force Global Strike

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1 Command commander.
2 He has been at Barksdale before and I
3 think you will find him a great person to be
4 able to work with. And initially I called
5 this the comprehensive command and control
6 for the topic, but I actually changed the
7 title a little bit to make it perhaps a
8 little more relevant for this group which is
9 to say what are the things going across the
10 state that we see could potentially be an
11 opportunity for these military organizations
12 to work together and collectively improve the
13 different organizations but also bring in
14 some economic development activity.
15 So I don't need the slides while he is
16 working that. Background, this is the Air
17 force Global Strike Command has been around
18 now for about 12 years and one of the
19 misperceptions that we get and I think is
20 worthwhile to bring to your attention is when
21 they stood the command up, it was done very
22 quickly. It
23 Was a quote three star command and it
24 was like every position in the command was
25 like one grade level below what it was at the

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1 other MAJCOM, major command, particularly at
2 the air combat command. So now it is a four
3 star command and so in the general officer
4 position, it is pretty much things are
5 equivalent.
6 Where there is a real problem quite
7 frankly is numbers of people. So right now,
8 the modernization programs that are being run
9 out, the Air Force Global Strike Command to
10 double what they have here in combat command
11 have half the staff and then the members of
12 that staff are typically one grade level
13 below what they would have been at ACC, Air
14 Combat Command.
15 And the reason that that's a problem
16 and it causes some misperceptions by the way
17 is we will hear people say well, people don't
18 want to come to Louisiana or they leave
19 Louisiana when they go to say Air Force Global
20 Strike Command. The reason is that they come
21 to Air Force Global Strike Command as say a
22 GS-12 or GS-13 and they are doing the same
23 work that somebody else is being paid at
24 Langley and they are being paid at 14 or 15,
25 substantially higher salary. So where would

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1 you go?
2 So I bring that to your attention
3 because it is you will hear that and that I
4 think is really for that every chance we get,
5 we correct that misperception, so. For Air
6 Force Global Strike Command, the stuff that
7 they are really working trying to do is bring
8 technology into this Air Force Strike mission
9 and if you give me the next slide, Robbie, I
10 will talk fast and this way you can read it,
11 but what you see listed there is all the
12 different technologies the Air Force Strike
13 Command is attempting to work with to bring
14 into this mission set and it is things like
15 autonomy and human machine teaming and
16 artificial intelligence, machine learning,
17 virtual reality, augmented reality.
18 This is where the comprehensive CT
19 comes in. The Comprehensive means that it is
20 both conventional and nuclear, all the way
21 from strategic down to the tactical level.
22 They are very much interested in both
23 expeditionary and beyond line of sight
24 communications. They are interested in
25 directed energy and they are interested in

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1 hypersonics.
2 Now, the last one I mentioned is
3 probably the one that really is somewhat
4 exclusive I would say to the commission there
5 at Barksdale as opposed to the other
6 organizations on base, but our hypothesis is
7 that whether you are at Fort Polk with the
8 JRTC or you are at -- you are down in here in
9 New Orleans, that these same types of
10 technologies are going to be equally useful.
11 And one of the problems you
12 have for Air Force Global Strike is because
13 they don't have -- they are undermanned as
14 it is, and then on top of that, they don't
15 have an ecosystem of vendors outside the gate
16 that perform this work. So people come in
17 and visit them but you don't get the constant
18 collaborative type environment that you would
19 have at say at Air Combat Command where, you
20 know, all the big vendors are located there.
21 So what we're trying to do is figure
22 out ways to get the vendors to want to come
23 and settle in Louisiana where it is easy for
24 the people at Barksdale who are working these
25 programs to meet with them.

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1 So you know, the next chart talks about
2 some of the things we're working on right now
3 in terms of some immediate opportunities.
4 And you recall that what we're trying to do
5 here is to make it attractive or useful for
6 these businesses to sell in Louisiana and so
7 to want to settle here, they have to think
8 that it is going to improve their ability to
9 sell products to the departments of defense
10 obviously, right, so -- and one of the issues
11 with a major command, and I think this is
12 true for the other services, it is not an
13 acquisition command. It is they do
14 requirements. They call it an organized
15 training equipped command.
16 So they set the requirements and the
17 acquisition is typically down somewhere else.
18 What we're trying to do is see if we can't
19 get more of the acquisition work at least
20 fields offices here in Louisiana which would
21 make it useful for these businesses because
22 they are going to want to be there to be able
23 to interact with the acquisition
24 organizations.
25 So the ones we're working on right now

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1 is a -- really it is unique to Northwest
2 Louisiana, unique to Barksdale is
3 conventional nuclear ops. There is no other
4 place in the country that does both of these
5 things. It is very important obviously, so
6 we're promoting with -- actually with the OSD
7 funnel to be able to get a development center
8 there that looks at that.
9 They set up a new office in the
10 Pentagon. There used to be a thing called
11 the Joint Artificial Intelligence Center.
12 They merged a couple different organizations
13 together. It is now called the Chief Digital
14 and Artificial Intelligence Officer and we're
15 looking to bring in some work there.
16 We have some projects that are being
17 done with this, this CDAO organization to be
18 able to do prototyping and experimentation
19 and it focuses on, in this case, primarily
20 the long range strike mission but because it
21 applies more broadly, it could have other
22 opportunities.
23 We have been trying to get the 5G
24 prototype center here. The base competed to
25 have a what -- one of their prototype

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1 locations here. We actually were selected
2 but they ran out of money, and so we continue
3 to try to go after sources of funding for
4 that and that we actually think that there is
5 a possibility that this, what we talked about
6 before with the chief digital and the AI
7 office may be willing to do this.
8 And then we are also doing some work
9 with it is the Strategic Capabilities Office
10 at OSD and we're working with STRATCOM to try
11 to get some funding to do that. And I should
12 point out, when we talk about 5G
13 technologies, we're not necessarily talking
14 about a cell phone. We're talking about the
15 technologies that are inherent in 5G that
16 allow you to do things that you can't do with
17 your -- with 4G, and a lot of it has to do
18 with security things and increased capacity
19 for moving data and better visualization and
20 then the reduced latency that you need to do
21 things like smart cars, things like that that
22 have huge applications in the military as you
23 might expect.
24 And then the last one is the work with
25 -- this is really this whole idea of

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1 comprehensive C2 which is the joint all
2 domain C2, battle management, and effect
3 change development, that's the lower level,
4 and then on top of that, we're also trying to
5 bring in the new command and control and the
6 national level command and control and
7 they're doing that at Barksdale now and we
8 think that that area particularly is one that
9 could be worked with the people at Fort Polk
10 and here down in Louisiana.
11 So the next slide we talk so what could
12 we do possibly to exploit these
13 opportunities? Well, the fact is what we
14 point out to people, it does resonate well
15 with the folks in OSD is all the great things
16 we truly have here in Louisiana. Amazingly,
17 when you talk to people in the Washington, DC
18 area, they just think that we have hurricanes
19 like every week and floods and you can't do
20 anything and so we have to -- we are
21 continually reminding them that that is not
22 true, and particularly in northwest Louisiana
23 where we try to do some of this stuff. We
24 say basically you have the same weather that
25 you have in Dallas/Ft. Worth and they don't

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1 have any problems with that, but there is
2 good work force availability there.
3 You got all the universities here that
4 are producing students or graduates in these
5 specialties and we're telling the veterans,
6 they would love to stay in the state if you
7 put something here, and our proof to them, in
8 fact, a good example is that, you know, a
9 GDIT that was originally computer science
10 corporation put a headquarters there and
11 they're paying competitive salaries and as a
12 result, they are able to get people to come
13 there and people when they get there, they
14 love to stay there.
15 So it is one of these good examples
16 that we think we can get people to understand
17 and then Bossier Parish Community College,
18 for example, has been very good in that terms
19 of work force development, but LSU
20 Shreveport, Louisiana Tech, Northwestern
21 State, there is Southern University in
22 Shreveport, it is really powerful in terms of
23 what they can do for these vendors.
24 When they actually see it, it is like
25 we never knew you had this. I only bring

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1 this up because if you are talking to someone
2 outside of the state and they don't know that
3 we have all this, and the only way they are
4 going to know it is if we tell them that. So
5 we actually think that forming of
6 relationships could help make the whole State
7 of Louisiana look more powerful.
8 There has always been a good
9 relationship with the JRTC in Fort Polk in
10 general in terms of the training for the
11 bombers. It was even better when we had the
12 8-10s there but in the past, we have had
13 people from the 159th come over. We actually
14 had some Naval Reserve people when we were
15 doing the cyber division that came to help
16 looking for ways to reenergize this and I
17 bring it to this group because you might have
18 some ideas that we haven't thought about.
19 And then the last one I am glad that
20 Chris and Pat are going to talk to NIWC
21 Atlantic. I know that they tend to do
22 enterprise software but they do have
23 acquisition warrants there. A lot of work
24 that we do in the Air Force, we actually we
25 do stuff through the Navy and then that's

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1 pretty typical by the way as the services we
2 use are contract vehicles from another
3 service to get things done. We would love to
4 explore the possibility that Air Force Global
5 Strike Command could have some kind of a
6 partnership with NIWC Atlantic to go here in
7 New Orleans to be able to take advantage of
8 their warrants to be able to do contracting
9 and therefore help us to bring some of these
10 businesses into Louisiana.
11 So the next slide there is just some of
12 the things that we have been looking at where
13 these opportunities exist. We have been
14 working really hard to get people to
15 understand the vision of the Air Force Global
16 Strike Command. It is not well understood in
17 the Air Force much less beyond and we're
18 making some improvements.
19 As we make improvements, it actually
20 help us to get the funding that we need. So
21 most people don't realize the Air Force
22 global Strike Command is one of the most
23 heavily tasked organizations in the
24 Department of Defense because everybody wants
25 a bomber these days to go show up somewhere

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1 and whether it is, you know, the people in
2 china that you are trying to influence or you
3 want the people in Japan to know that we have
4 the capacity to get there or it is in Europe,
5 Africa, South America, there is the demand
6 signal is really incredible.
7 So the -- I mentioned earlier about the
8 manning. We keep trying to make that point
9 because realistically some of the things
10 people almost say about Louisiana comes from
11 the fact that they, you know, for example Air
12 Force Global Strike Command is not sending
13 people to some meetings. Well, the reason
14 they don't is they are only one deep and for
15 if there are two meetings at the same time,
16 guess what, you can only go to one.
17 I talk about the contracting
18 capabilities to Barksdale working through
19 these other acquisition organizations and we
20 gradually are looking to try to bring some
21 Air Force organizations in and we're making
22 some progress on that, but if we can partner
23 with somebody that's already here, that would
24 be really useful.
25 We have been working hard to promote

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1 our venture capital and other funding
2 sources. This is more for the small
3 businesses. It turns out when you have the
4 small businesses here, it actually helps you
5 attract the larger businesses and the reason
6 is for a lot of the contracts that they
7 compete for, they have small business
8 set-asides that are built in. So when you
9 have small businesses that they can work with
10 that are nearby, they can -- it makes it
11 easier for them to compete.

12 So we have been working with the small
13 business office in OSD and Air Force trying
14 to promote that kind of an idea. And of
15 course, the last, that's the opportunity I
16 kind of mentioned is we really think that if
17 we can look for some ways to work -- they
18 already do this from an operational
19 standpoint but in terms of how we promote
20 Louisiana and working with the JRTC and down
21 here with the Navy Region Southeast.

22 I thought I would conclude with just
23 some of the, just some initiatives we have in
24 work just so you know about it. So BRF
25 established an organization called

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1 Collaboration Link. It was basically set up
2 to be able to be that flag pole, if you will,
3 if you are trying to connect to an
4 acquisition organization. It is set up, it
5 has got, you know, the secret or the
6 classified security clearance to be able to
7 do the things. It works with some of the
8 other things that are in the area. So that
9 thing has been useful and we're working to
10 set up some consortia.

11 There is already a, works with a group
12 call Tech By 20 that it is along the I-20
13 corridor, but also looking to set up some
14 partnerships even with the organizations that
15 are outside the state. We have built some
16 relationships obviously with Air Force Global
17 Strike Command but with US Strategic Command,
18 the Air Force Research Lab, and then Air
19 force PEO digital which it hands government,
20 as a number of program offices that could
21 benefit by having at least a field office if
22 not a major part of the program there at
23 barksdale, and we're in discussions with them
24 to try to get them to put that there.

25 I already mentioned about how we're

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1 tying to foster these relationships between
2 the government prime vendors and small
3 businesses. That's one of the things the
4 Collaboration Link works to do and we have
5 had some success with that. And we also have
6 people who can help with the businesses to
7 want to pursue the Small Business Innovative
8 Research or the STTR, the Science and
9 Technology Transfer.

10 On STTRs, we can help them link up with
11 the universities, with the SBIRs, we know how
12 to help them field and compete to get those
13 funds. So we hope to be able to work that.

14 And then the last thing which is more
15 of an education, we have been trying to bring
16 some conferences and large symposia into
17 Louisiana and allow those symposia to focus
18 on things that are important. Air Force
19 global Strike Command recently did a triad
20 symposium there in the Shreveport area.

21 In March, we're going to be doing a
22 global power conference and we're looking to
23 some other examples of that, but the reason I
24 wanted the opportunity, Robbie, to be able to
25 do this is we're looking for other

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1 opportunities and figured that this group
2 here might have some ideas, maybe not today,
3 but you know how to find me and we would love
4 to hear your ideas and look for ways that we
5 could work together to promote Louisiana.

6 That concludes and thank you so much
7 for allowing me to present.

8 Any questions?

9 MR. GOODE:
10 I see you have SCIF capability.

11 MR. ELDER:
12 There are -- there is SCIF space in the
13 CIC but it is controlled by the Air Force.

14 MR. GOODE:
15 At what level?

16 MR. ELDER:
17 SCI.

18 MR. GOODE:
19 NOSAP (spelled phonetically)?

20 MR. ELDER:
21 NOSAP, but that's a certification thing
22 and of course, there is the new building
23 there which it is on the same campus which
24 because it is newer, it may be actual easier
25 to certify to do some of these things that

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1 they changed the SCIF. SCIF is Sensitive
 2 Compartmental Information Facility. They
 3 have changed the standards it seems like
 4 every three or four years for the past 12
 5 years and makes it harder and harder to be
 6 able to meet it and so when you have a change
 7 or you try to get -- might have had a
 8 building that was, that they would have
 9 called SCIF'able meaning it was set up to be
 10 -- meet a SCIF now but you would have to
 11 comply with the new standards. So it takes
 12 more effort to get it to do a retrofit to
 13 make it work.

14 Well, thanks. I appreciate talking to
 15 -- the opportunity to talk to you.

16 MR. ABBOUD:
 17 Any other items to come before the
 18 counsel today? Any other business?

19 (No response.)

20 MR. ABBOUD:
 21 Okay. I am hearing none, so we can go
 22 ahead and move forward with the agenda. The
 23 next step here is just to open the floor for
 24 any questions or comments from the public
 25 that may be in attendance at today's meeting.

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1 (No response.)

2 MR. ABBOUD:
 3 Okay. I am hearing none, so I believe
 4 that covers all of our items on the agenda
 5 today. I would like to call on LMAC chair
 6 Secretary Don Pierson for a few closing
 7 remarks.

8 SECRETARY PIERSON:
 9 Thank you, Robbie, and thank you to all
 10 our presenters today. As Jeremy said, if
 11 there are any additional Xanax available, I
 12 will see maybe after the meeting, a little
 13 whiskey.

14 But the reality is I think some of you
 15 know the governor is a former 82nd Airborne
 16 Division officer. I am a former 82nd
 17 airborne Division paratrooper, and one of the
 18 things in our culture is comfortable being
 19 uncomfortable and this fluid environment that
 20 we're in right now certainly reminds me of
 21 that. The big challenges that are facing our
 22 state, our nation, our military, our military
 23 installations are indeed just that,
 24 challenges.

25 The good news is that we're effectively

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1 addressing a host of these kinds of issues.
 2 We have the support of our governor. I
 3 appreciate Senator Reese pointing that out as
 4 well. The support of our delegation, they
 5 are responsive. We go to them and ask them
 6 for a letter to the Secretary of Air Force or
 7 a meeting. We got a team on the ground
 8 that's ready to engage and it is at least
 9 comforting to know that we can and will
 10 address these issues.

11 Thank you for that comprehensive list
 12 of sort of a dashboard, if you will, of
 13 issues that we are addressing on behalf of
 14 military families. We're not done yet.

15 Thank you to Senator Reese for his call
 16 for adopting best practices where we can
 17 identify those either through the association
 18 of defense communities or other networks that
 19 we have out there.

20 Great partnership up in northwest
 21 Louisiana. Thank you General Albert for
 22 being a part of that. We are working closely
 23 to help develop both the private sector and
 24 the public sector assets up there. Very
 25 pleased with the arc of progress by General

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1 Dynamics IT as roughly 1400 software engineer
 2 workers in that area that really wasn't a
 3 host to that kind of work force a number of
 4 years ago.

5 Pleased to be looking at this NWIC
 6 asset that we have here in New Orleans
 7 associated with the University of New
 8 Orleans. It did have a more robust presence
 9 there at one time. We believe the capacity
 10 is there. Gary, I don't know if you get to
 11 go on that meeting today or not, but
 12 certainly pleased to integrate that GDIT has
 13 also introduced a significant service group
 14 here anchored out on that campus that's doing
 15 work for the U.S. Navy as a project
 16 fulfillment center, and so maybe that will
 17 also speak to the great potential that we
 18 have to further develop those issues.

19 The legislature did take some
 20 aggressive steps to strengthen SBIR and STTR
 21 in this most recent session and we're fully
 22 engaged in those programs and through the
 23 university system, it is largely where we put
 24 boots on the ground in that regard.

25 So a number of really good things

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1 happening. Thank you for the opportunity to
 2 highlight those and to also gain more
 3 situational awareness about the challenges we
 4 have so that, you know, as we move forward as
 5 a team to address these things, whether
 6 that's instate, in Baton Rouge, in
 7 Washington, or wherever the mission takes us,
 8 we have this group and the connectivity here
 9 that's going to make our efforts not only
 10 strong but successful.

11 So thank you for your time today. Safe
 12 travels back to where your domiciles are and
 13 I appreciate your service to this
 14 organization and our state. Thank you.

15 MR. ABBOUD:

16 Thank you, Mr. Secretary. And again,
 17 thank you all for joining us for today's
 18 meeting. So with that, just a reminder, any
 19 handouts in your packets that may be the
 20 missing or if we can help send you anything
 21 else electronically, you prefer PDF copies,
 22 wherever that might be electronically, please
 23 let me know and I am happy to circulate that
 24 as needed.

25 So with that, are there any motions to

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1 adjourn today's meeting?
 2 MR. ELDER:
 3 So moved.
 4 MR. ABBOUD:
 5 Any seconds?
 6 MR. KELLER:
 7 Second.
 8 MR. ABBOUD:
 9 All in favor say aye.
 10 (All participants said aye.)
 11 MR. ABBOUD:
 12 Thank you.
 13 (Meeting adjourned.)
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1 REPORTER'S PAGE
 2
 3 I, LISA LANATA, Certified Shorthand
 4 Reporter, in and for the State of Louisiana, the
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 7 That due to the spontaneous discourse of
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 2
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 5 and original stamped seal on this page.
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 9 certify the testimony as set forth in the
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Louisiana Code of Civil Procedure

Article 1445 and 1446

Art. 1445. Submission to Witness; Changes; Signing
When the testimony is fully transcribed the deposition shall be submitted to the witness for examination and shall be read to or by him, unless such examination and reading are waived by the witness and by the parties. Any changes in form or substance which the witness desires to make shall be entered upon the deposition by the officer with a statement of the reasons given by the witness for making them. The deposition shall then be signed by the witness unless the parties by stipulation waive the signing or the witness is ill or is absent from the parish where the deposition was taken or cannot be found or refuses to sign. If the deposition is not signed by the witness within thirty days of its submission to him, the officer shall sign it and state on the record the fact of the waiver or of the illness or absence of the witness or the fact of the refusal to sign together with the reason, if any, given therefor; and the deposition may then be used as fully as though signed unless on a motion to suppress under Article 1456 the court holds that

the reasons given for the refusal to sign require rejection of the deposition in whole or in part. A video deposition does not have to comply with the requirements of reading and signing by the deponents.

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VERITEXT LEGAL SOLUTIONS
COMPANY CERTIFICATE AND DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Veritext Legal Solutions represents that the foregoing transcript is a true, correct and complete transcript of the colloquies, questions and answers as submitted by the court reporter. Veritext Legal Solutions further represents that the attached exhibits, if any, are true, correct and complete documents as submitted by the court reporter and/or attorneys in relation to this deposition and that the documents were processed in accordance with our litigation support and production standards.

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