

## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TALKING POINTS

### Topline:

- The Department of Defense embraces diversity and inclusion as the largest meritocracy in the country, comprising more than 3 million Service members and civilians.
- While the military has been a leader in racial integration and inclusion, we are not immune to the perils of bias and prejudice, whether visible or invisible, conscious or unconscious.
- Civil unrest and protests in recent weeks are a call for action. As one of America's most respected institutions, we must reaffirm and strengthen our efforts to provide a model workplace.
- The Secretary of Defense has expressed his commitment to diversity and inclusion and has directed a comprehensive review to identify and develop options for addressing shortcomings.

### Initiatives:

- On June 18, the Secretary announced three new initiatives to build a stronger military:
  - Establish an internal Defense Board on Diversity and Inclusion in the Military to conduct a comprehensive 6-month study and develop concrete, actionable recommendations to foster equal opportunity, diversity, and inclusion among all ranks.
    - This board will report directly to the Secretary of Defense
    - This board must bring its findings and recommendations to the Secretary by December
  - Charter an independent advisory committee of experts from outside the Department, the Defense Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion in the Armed Services, as an enduring source of expertise and new ideas.
    - This board will be comprised of experienced and talented Americans of diverse view points and backgrounds and will have access to necessary resources
    - This board will report directly to the Secretary of Defense; the goal is to have the advisory committee formed and operating before the end of the year
  - Direct senior military and civilian leaders to develop recommendations for immediate action.

## **Talking Points:**

- Our diverse military represents the best of American values: courage, honor, commitment, duty, teamwork.
- Ensuring our ranks reflect and are inclusive of the American people is essential to the morale, cohesion, and readiness of the military.
- Our different races, ethnicities, religions, sexual orientations, and other attributes distinguish us as individuals and make us stronger when combined together in an inclusive environment.
- Every leader at every level must make equal opportunity and inclusion a priority.
- Over the coming months, the Secretary will visit with Service members – both officers and enlisted - in the field to hear their views and concerns about race in the military.
- All members of the Department of Defense community are invited to be part of this important, enterprise-wide conversation.