Weekly Report

National Security Division

Week ending 24 Jan. 2020

National Security Strategy:

1. **Protect the homeland, the American people, and the American way of life**
2. **Promote American prosperity**
3. **Preserve peace through strength**
4. **Advance American influence**

Click here to read more.

National Defense Strategy:

1. **Rebuilding military readiness as we build a more lethal Joint Force**
2. **Strengthening alliances as we attract new partners**
3. **Reforming the Department's business practices for greater performance and affordability**

Click here to read more.

Iran Conflict Could Shift To Cyberspace, Experts Warn

Experts in cyberspace and U.S. government officials warn against Iran hackers probing American companies for vulnerabilities. This all coming after the drone strike that killed a top Iran General. The warnings suggest that the next phase of hostilities between both nations is likely to play out in cyberspace.

The Iranian regime is accused of being behind some high-profile cyberattacks in recent years. Some of the attacks targeting large American banks such as JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, and capital One. A few of the ways these attacks take place include flooding their networks with traffic and knocking them off-line costing millions of dollars in lost business. One such case included a ransomware attack hindering the city of Atlanta in 2018. It left police officers to hand write reports and city workers punching in and out of work with time clocks. In all cases they were linked to Iranian nationals that were indicted.

A more high profile case included billionaire Sheldon Adelson in Las Vegas. Sheldon is the owner of the Sands casino in Las Vegas where hackers destroyed data on their computers costing the company millions of dollars.

Click Here To Read More

Catching Up: China's Developing Military Power

For years the Chinese have been playing catch up with the United States in military capabilities. China's ballooned defense spending has reached as much as a 620 percent increase since its 1990 level. It is at this point in time they are finally seeing it pay off years later.

China understands the long game and they have played it well and to their advantage. Their military might, technology, and doctrine are tailored around overpowering the U.S. military in a short, sharp conflict in the Eastern Pacific. Their strategy of "informationized" warfare is first focused on eroding U.S. situational awareness, communication, and precision targeting capabilities.

For the U.S. to stay competitive in Asia, it must adapt capabilities and posture for impact from Beijing's military developments. This can include hardening battle networks, increasing redundancy within its information, surveillance, and reconnaissance. To include a more formidable air and missile defense.

Click Here To Read More

The Kremlin's Expanding Media Conglomerate

The Kremlin has been steadily building a global media conglomerate to pull other countries into Russia's information space. This is all in an attempt to expand their influence around the world, mask their aggression, and spread disinformation while undermining the west.

Russian President Vladimir Putin prioritized a growing outreach to influence Russian media throughout his two decades in office. In 2015 the media was partnered with outlets around the world to expand their influence and disruption of western governments. The Kremlin launched a campaign to cultivate partnerships with local media outlets around the world simultaneously with its revision of Russia's information security doctrine. The Doctrine defined "growing bias with regards to Russia in the foreign media" and "international efforts to block the activity of Russian media." Although Rissa has made stride in their quest they have received setbacks as well over the last 5 years. Many western nations are unwilling to partner with the Kremlin because of the disinformation campaigns that have been aimed at western nations. Estonia, Lithuania, Bolivia, and Latvia shut down Sputnik offices (Media outlets) and television outlets.

Although there have been set backs the Kremlin will continue to prioritize building out its information space in an effort to expand its global outreach, narratives, and gain acceptance for Russia's illegal behavior.

Click Here To Read More

More U.S. troops to leave Iraq for medical treatment after Iranian missile attack, Pentagon says

The Pentagon has confirmed that U.S. service members have been transported out of Iraq following the missile attack carried out by Iran. The initial reports stated that no service members were harmed after the attack. Last Friday the Pentagon confirmed that there were 11 service members that required medical treatment outside of Iraq.

While there are 11 U.S. service members seeking medical treatment the Pentagon has stated that the numbers could increase in the coming days. "The health and safety of all service members is the greatest concern for all Department leadership and we greatly appreciate the care that these members have received and continue to receive at the hands of our medical professionals," Army

Maj. Beth Riordan, a military spokeswoman, said in a statement. “As medical treatment and evaluations in theater continue, additional service members have been identified as having potential injuries.”

Riordan’s statement continued: “These service members — out of an abundance of caution — have been transported to Landstuhl, Germany for further evaluations and necessary treatment on an outpatient basis. Given the nature of injuries already noted, it is possible additional injuries may be identified in the future.”

As of right now the medical conditions of U.S. troops are concussion like symptoms, which do not always manifest themselves immediately. These symptoms are what have prompted an increase in the amount of medical attention.

Click Here To Read More

1st Case Of New Coronavirus Detected In U.S.

A contagious mild to moderate upper-respiratory tract illness has killed at least 17 people over the last week in China. It has sparked a scare within the communities effect by the sickness. This week the first case has been reported in the U.S. in the state of Washington. A man returning from a trip to Wuhan, China last week is now in quarantine at Providence Regional Medical Center in Everett, Washington.

Around 300 cases have been reported with 17 deaths in the past week, leaving health providers there and around the world to ramp up precautions to stem the spread. Many of the symptoms are pneumonia in nature. If exposed and contracted the patient will experience runny nose, headache, cough, sore throat, and fever. If contracted treat it as you would an acute case of the flu.

Click Here To Read More

U.S. drinking water widely contaminated with "forever chemicals': environment watchdog

Washington reports contamination of U.S. drinking water with manmade "forever chemicals" is far worse than originally thought. Some of the highest levels are found in Miami, Philadelphia, and New Orleans.

The chemicals in question are resistant to breaking down in the environment, and are known as perfluoroalkyl substance or commonly known as PFAS. This chemical can cause cancers, live3r damage, and low birth weight. David Andrews a senior scientist stated that it can be, "Nearly impossible to avoid contaminated drinking water from these chemicals."

PFAS is used in common household items such as, scotchguard, non-stick cook wear, Teflon, and firefighting foam. They are used in a variety of professions in the industrial industry and their replacements with PFAS may not be the best alternative, experts warn. The dangers of PFAS have been known by the EPA since 2001, but so far there have been no process to set limits on these chemicals (PFAS and PFOA).

Click Here To Read More

POW/MIA Update

This week, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency. Click on the links to read more:

News Releases

January 21, 2020
Soldier Accounted For From World War II (Phillips, J.V.)
January 22, 2020
Soldier Accounted For From Korean War (Ramirez, A.)
Soldier Accounted For From World War II (Middleton, H.)

Staff Activity:

- Staff attended "The Role of Satellites in Enabling Emerging Technologies."
  Over the next decade, technologies that were once thought to be futuristic will play an increasingly important role in shaping our economy and basic way of life. These technologies – including autonomous vehicles (cars, trucks, farm equipment, maritime), drones, and even autonomous landing technology for general aviation aircraft – will need to rely on a suite of satellite-based capabilities to function properly. Broadband satellite communications, GPS (position, navigation, and timing signals), and satellite imagery will all play a vital role in enabling these emerging technologies.

Freddy Gessner, Deputy Director
National Security Division