THE NATIONAL SECURITY DIVISION

# WEEKLY REPORT

## *Terror Groups in Afghanistan Could Attack the U.S. Next Year, Pentagon Policy Chief Says*

Islamic State terrorists in Afghanistan could be able to launch attacks against the United States within as few as six months, the Pentagon's policy chief told senators Tuesday.

At the Senate Armed Services Committee hearing, lawmakers expressed concern at the short timeline and asked Colin Kahl what the Pentagon is doing about it. The defense undersecretary for policy, Kahl, declined to answer in detail during the unclassified portion of his testimony. Broadly, he assured senators that the Defense Department is working to make sure the terrorist group and others do not regain their ability to attack abroad.

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# TRENDING ISSUES

The National Security Division monitors various issues that impact multiple aspects of the portfolio as it applies to the American's Legion's posture on matters of interest. Currently, the following topics are being tracked by staff and Commission / Committee leadership:

- COVID Vaccine DoD-mandated implementation and impacts on personnel and readiness
- Progress to the passage of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022
- Monitoring security situation in the western Pacific
- Food Insecurity in the Armed Forces of the United States of America
- Hearings on extremism in America and its potential impact on the military community, including active duty, Guard/Reserve forces, and veterans.
- Immigration, including illegal immigration and its impact on Homeland Security
- Citizenship through military service
- Tricare changes or improvements in access to the military community
- Cyber Security threats and risks
- Military Sexual Trauma and efforts within Department of Defense

# STAFF ACTIVITY

- Staff attended a virtual meeting with Booz Allen Hamilton to discuss "The digital Battlespace." Throughout the session, they emphasized that yes, all battles will be fought by land, sea, and air to some extent, but they will be won where information lives. Topics included fragile information chains, lack of actual connectedness, proprietary designs, hardware-centered acquisition, and data overload. The final takeaway is we must meet our lofty goals of becoming a more effective fighting military force on all fronts; on all domains. The tried-and-true methods will never leave our military (fitness, function, weapons proficiency, etc.), but we need to be leaps and bounds ahead of adversaries in the cyber realm with next-generation solutions. America needs to meet these changes head-on to field a more lethal fighting force. Embracing the Digital Battlespace vision opens the path to get there.

- Staff engaged in Legislative bill assessment / reviews and writing proficiency training.

- Staff is closely monitoring DoD and Service Component actions and accountability involving servicemembers who have refused the COVID-19 vaccination as ordered by the Secretary of Defense.

- Staff met with Dr. Lynette Fraga, Executive Director, Child Care Aware, regarding the lack of affordable & availability of childcare providers, an issue plaguing our lower-ranking enlisted servicemembers.

- Staff is working with the Legislative division in coordinating future meetings on Capitol Hill regarding food insecurity and the hardships military servicemembers endure as a result of these matters.

- Staff spoke with Blake Hite, Legislative Assistant, Office of Representative Jennifer Gonzalez-Colon, Puerto Rico. We discussed the unequal access to TRICARE Prime and Select, including her legislative priorities for DHA, National Guard, and Army Reserves.

- Staff Continued preparation and work for the upcoming Commander's Far East Trip, the National Security Summit, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Centennial events and Veteran’s Day wreath laying ceremony at the Vietnam Wall Memorial on Nov. 11, 2021.

DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING AGENCY
FULFILLING OUR NATION'S PROMISE

DPAA hosted a Joint Repatriation Ceremony with the Republic of Korea's Ministry of National Defense Agency for KIA Recovery and Identification (MAKRI) at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, on September 22. His Excellency Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea (RoK), was the principal speaker, the senior U.S. representative, Adm. John C. Aquilino, Commander, Indo-Pacific Command.

November 1, 2021:

USS Oklahoma Marine Accounted For From World War II (Collier, W.)

November 3, 2021:

Soldier Accounted For From Korean War (Turbeville, M.)
USS Oklahoma Sailor Accounted For From World War II (Talbert, E.)

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