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Good morning ladies and gentlemen,

There will be no Early Bird today. The Early Bird website is experiencing technical difficulties.

In today's USSTRATCOM news briefs (attached and below), a report from Pentagon comptroller Bob Hale indicated the DoD had lost \$600 million in productivity during the shutdown that could result in the civilian workforce having to "get smaller-that will mean fewer civilians...I can't tell you how much." The article noted the \$600 million figure was "at a minimum" and did not include increased interest rates and the costs of canceled training classes and transportation.

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel issued a message yesterday to all Department of Defense personnel acknowledging the furloughs had been a "manufactured crisis (that was) an unwelcome and unnecessary distraction from our critical work of keeping the country safe."

A WND.com article published yesterday featured a denial from top military and congressional sources that unauthorized transfers of America's nuclear weapons had occurred, and recent high-level personnel removals were the result of these transfers. The reports allege an unauthorized transfer of nuclear weapons to South Carolina from Dyess Air Force Base in Texas. In the WND.com article, an Air Force Global Strike Command spokesperson was misidentified as a USSTRATCOM representative.

In Syria, the Wall Street Journal reported inspectors overseeing the chemical weapons stockpile destruction are on track to meet a November 1 deadline for disabling production equipment "despite violence in the area where the inspection team is staying." Also, CNN published a feature article yesterday spotlighting the training Organization for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) personnel are undertaking in Germany before they deploy to Syria to catalog and monitor the destruction of Syria's chemical weapon stockpiles. The training, administered by the German army, is teaching OPCW inspectors to identify dangerous situations, avoid getting kidnapped, and provide help if they witness a violent event.

As the North Korean crew and ship detained in Panama earlier this year prepared to depart Panama, an editorial published on Press-Telegram.com spotlighted the attempt to transport parts of a missile system on a ship traveling from Cuba to North Korea. The author called for continued U.S. investment in missile defense technologies and cited North Korea's history of using long-range missile technology to launch satellites into orbit.

In closing, the Wahoo Newspaper published an article featuring USSTRATCOM's Deputy Director of Plan and Policy, Rear Adm. Dave Kriete's appearance at a submarine veteran's memorial on the lawn of the Saunders County Courthouse.

US Strategic Command Today's News Briefs 18 Oct 2013

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ARTICLES OF INTEREST:

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Military.com, Richard Sisk

The government shutdown cost the Defense Department at least \$600 million in lost productivity and left DoD at funding levels that could force layoffs next year for the furloughed civilian personnel who just returned to work, Pentagon Comptroller Bo...

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[Message to Department of Defense Personnel from Secretary Hagel on Reopening the Government](#)

Defense.gov, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel

To All DoD Personnel: Today the Department of Defense is resuming normal operations across the world, now that Congress has finally restored funding for DoD and the rest of the federal government. This manufactured crisis was an unwelcome and unnec...

CWMD

[Syria's chemical weapons inspectors prepare for unprecedented mission](#)

CNN, Frederik Pleitgen and Nick Thompson

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[Arms Inspectors Say Syria Work Is On Track](#)

Wall Street Journal, Naftali Bendavid

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[U.S. nuclear arms modernization plan misguided: scientists' group](#)

Reuters, David Alexander

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[Editorial: Foiled North Korea plot shows importance of missile defense](#)

Press-Telegram.com, Seth M.M. Stodder

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Web Host Industry Review.com, David Hamilton

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[CDAC, Iann to set up cyberattack combat centre](#)

The Times of India, Kim Arora

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[World-Herald Editorial: Nuclear weapons issues call for attention](#)

Omaha World-Herald, Unattributed

Of all the weapons in America's military inventory, the most powerful by far are in our nuclear arsenal. The officers and enlisted personnel who oversee these weapons need to operate at the highest level of professionalism. There is no doubt about ...

[Top officials deny viral nuke story](#)

WND.com, F. Michael Maloof

Top military and congressional sources have denied reports that unauthorized transfers of America's nuclear weapons have occurred and that the suspension of a Navy admiral and firing of a top Air Force general followed a fight inside government rank...

[Veterans, community gather to remember](#)

Wahoo Newspaper, Lisa Brichacek

Their heroics would make for a good movie plot today. That was Rear Adm. Dave Kriete's summation after reading one of the journal's from a U.S.S. Wahoo mission in World War II. Kreite is deputy director of Plan and Policy, U.S. Strategic Command O...

COMPLETE ARTICLES:

Shutdown Cost Military \$600M, Layoffs Looming

Military.com, 17 Oct 2013

Richard Sisk

The government shutdown cost the Defense Department at least \$600 million in lost productivity and left DoD at funding levels that could force layoffs next year for the furloughed civilian personnel who just returned to work, Pentagon Comptroller Bob Hale said Thursday.

"We haven't decided [on layoffs]," Hale said. "We're going to have to get smaller – that will mean fewer civilians. We're going to get smaller – I can't tell you how much."

Hale and Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said at Thursday's Pentagon briefing their major concern was the impact on the morale of the uniformed military and the civilian workforce from the repeated political cliffhangers on fiscal matters and the Congressional gridlock over budgets.

"I'm a lot more worried about the morale effects," Hale said. Many civilian personnel now have the attitude that "I'm not so sure I want to work for this government," he said.

Hagel said the uncertainty was brought home to him in one of his recent private meetings with enlisted troops.

One of the troops told Hagel that his wife wanted to know if their family had a future in the military.

"Do we have a future? What is the future for me as an E-5," Hagel was asked.

Hagel said he did not have a good answer for the soldier, partly because the last-minute agreement in Congress that ended the shutdown and lifted the debt ceiling "did not remove the shadow of uncertainty that has been cast over our department."

Hagel referred to the continuing resolution passed by Congress that left the Defense Department at current funding levels through mid-January while also facing another \$52 billion in cuts under the Budget Control Act's sequestration process.

Veterans groups echoed the warnings issued by Hale and Hagel.

"At the Pentagon, the short-term budget enables DoD to tread water, but the mandatory sequester continues to impact readiness across all the services. Planes are grounded, ships are in port, and our ground troops aren't training," said William A. Thien, national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

At the White House, President Obama sounded a similar theme on the impact on readiness and U.S. credibility worldwide from the shutdown and the threat of default.

"Probably nothing has done more damage to America's credibility in the world, our standing with other countries, than the spectacle that we've seen these past several weeks," Obama said. "It's encouraged our enemies. It's emboldened our competitors. And it's depressed our friends who look to us for steady leadership."

At the Pentagon, Hale said he had yet to make a full accounting of the costs of the shutdown.

"We know at a minimum it was \$600 million in lost productivity," he said.

The cost will go higher when increased interest rates and the costs of canceled training classes and transportation are figured in, Hale said.

Hale said he could not give an initial estimate on possible cutbacks and delays next year in major acquisitions programs or on whether planned drawdowns in the size of the Army and the Marine Corps might be speeded up.

Without giving specifics, Hagel said that the sequester cuts would force a "pull back on longer term investments."

Hale said that tuition assistance for the troops would continue but possibly at lower funding levels.

"There may be some trims. We'll continue to support the program," he said.

In an earlier message to all DoD personnel, Hagel said the government shutdown was "an unwelcome and unnecessary distraction from our critical work of keeping the country safe."

Hagel told returning workers that they will be paid in full for the time that they were furloughed during the shutdown.

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Message to Department of Defense Personnel from Secretary Hagel on Reopening the Government

Defense.gov, 17 Oct 2013

Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel

To All DoD Personnel:

Today the Department of Defense is resuming normal operations across the world, now that Congress has finally restored funding for DoD and the rest of the federal government. This manufactured crisis was an unwelcome and unnecessary distraction from our critical work of keeping the country safe.

I know that each of your lives has been disrupted and affected in different ways. I regret the impact that this shutdown had on so many of our civilian personnel, particularly those who I was previously unable to recall from emergency furlough.

Starting today, we will be welcoming all of our civilians back to their normal duties. To those returning from furlough: know that the work you perform is incredibly valued by your military teammates and by me. I appreciate your professionalism and your patience during this difficult period of time, which came on top of last summer's sequestration-related furloughs. Your managers will have more information about this, but I can assure you that you will be paid in full for the time you were furloughed during the shutdown.

Now that this latest budget crisis has come to an end, we have an opportunity to return to focusing on the critical work of this department. Unfortunately, Congress did not end the budget uncertainty that has cast such a shadow of uncertainty over this department for much of the year. In the months ahead, they will have an opportunity to do so. My hope is that they will realize that these kinds of crises do great damage to our people, our national security, our economy, and America's standing in the world. Congress has a responsibility to govern, and it must fulfill those basic responsibilities in order to keep our country strong.

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Syria's chemical weapons inspectors prepare for unprecedented mission

CNN, 17 Oct 2013

Frederik Pleitgen and Nick Thompson

A team of international investigators is exploring a site for chemical weapons when a sudden explosion rips through the air, scattering the workers and terrified civilians, who make a frantic run for cover in the ensuing chaos.

In a split second, this group of inspectors from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons have become de facto field medics, scouring the scene for survivors and administering first aid to those injured in the blast.

It is only after the inspectors have dressed the wounds of all the victims that an instructor appears and tells the men he is satisfied with their performance. And although this is merely a training exercise being acted out in a foggy field in central Germany, the lessons inspectors learn here could potentially save lives on their next deployment.

OPCW inspectors have been tasked with cataloguing and monitoring the destruction of all of Syria's chemical weapons. They have been in hostile environments before, but never as a war is still raging on the ground. The conflict in Syria has claimed at least 100,000 lives since 2011, and dozens more are being killed every day.

Franz Ontal is the head of training for OPCW inspectors in Germany. "We are performing our inspections in the middle of a conflict," he tells CNN. "We've never done this before. It's not something you could have foreseen two years ago and planned for."

This hostile environment training course, conducted by the German army, is teaching OPCW inspectors to identify dangerous situations and to avoid getting kidnapped, but also to help if they witness violent events -- knowledge that may be indispensable in war-torn Syria.

In August, snipers opened fire on a convoy of U.N. experts investigating a suspected chemical weapons attack in the suburbs of Damascus. One U.N. vehicle was disabled in the attack, and the inspectors were forced to turn back.

Reinhard Barz, the head of hostile environments training for the German army, believes the biggest threats could emerge when the inspectors move into areas contested between rebel fighters and the regime forces of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

"We have different players in Syria and I think [it will not be] easy for the trainees here," Barz tells CNN. "They have to be prepared for ambushes, but also fighting might break out in some areas. The key is to try and get out of those situations quickly."

The OPCW, which has been on the ground in Syria since October 1, was awarded this year's Nobel Peace Prize.

The organisation has two branches. One is comprised of the laboratory scientists who analyze field samples and send them to other independent partner labs for separate analysis.

The other branch is the inspectors who catalogue stockpiles of chemical weapons, oversee their destruction, take samples after alleged attacks and speak to witnesses on the ground.

Many inspectors have a background in science, but their ranks are also made up of logistics experts, weapons experts who identify munitions that may have been used to deploy chemical weapons, and health and safety experts to make sure the teams do not get overexposed to potentially dangerous chemicals.

Twenty-five inspectors from 17 nations have taken part in the training program in Wildflecken, Germany this week. The head of training tells CNN he is happy with their performance.

"They identified what had happened and quickly helped everyone. I think they did really well."

But as realistic as the training was, it was just an exercise. And the next stop for some of inspectors could be one of the most dangerous places in the world.

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Arms Inspectors Say Syria Work Is On Track

Wall Street Journal, 18 Oct 2013

Naftali Bendavid

Inspectors overseeing the destruction of Syria's chemical-weapons program said on Thursday that they are on track to meet a Nov. 1 deadline for disabling production equipment, despite violence in the area where the inspection team is staying.

A number of vehicle-bomb explosions and mortar attacks have occurred near the Damascus hotel where the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is based, but it isn't clear whether inspectors were the targets, the agency said.

On Oct. 12, "a number of vehicle-borne explosive devices went off," said Malik Ellahi, a political adviser to the OPCW's director-general. That was followed by mortar firings, including one late Wednesday. "Naturally this is a matter of concern for us, but the team remains determined and the morale is very high."

Still, the inspectors face obstacles in assessing how close they are to completing their work. Much of the country is in a chaotic state, inspectors are relying on Syria's own description of its chemical-weapons program, and there are reports that Syria may have moved some of its stockpile in recent weeks.

Hopes for an end to the conflict were raised Thursday after Syria's Deputy Prime Minister Qadri Jamil was quoted by Russia's RIA Novosti news agency as saying an international conference on a political solution to the Syrian conflict could take place Nov. 23-24. This is the first mention of possible dates for the conference and it isn't yet clear whether any other parties to the conflict have agreed on these dates.

Separately, state-run Syrian television reported on Thursday that Gen. Jameh Jameh, a top army officer, was killed in fighting with rebels in eastern Syria, but didn't say when he died.

The 27 chemical-weapons inspectors in Syria have visited 11 of the more than 20 chemical-weapons sites disclosed by the regime of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, the OPCW said.

OPCW officials entered Syria on Oct. 1 with the cooperation of Syrian officials and the goal of verifying the regime's chemical-weapons disclosure by month's end and eliminating all production, mixing and filling equipment by then. About 50% of that work is done, officials said.

"What we can say at this point is that we are on track, and that the work on the ground is proceeding smoothly," Mr. Ellahi said.

This is the first mission the OPCW has undertaken in a war zone, and it isn't clear whether inspectors can reach, by month's end, a handful of sites that are in violently contested areas. OPCW Director-General Ahmet Üzümcü said recently his group's work would be greatly enhanced by temporary cease-fires between the Assad regime and opposition forces.

Once this first phase of identifying weapons and destroying the capacity to make them is complete, the OPCW – which last week won the Nobel Peace Prize – faces the more-elaborate task of supervising the destruction of the weapons stockpile itself, estimated at roughly 1,000 tons, within the first half of 2014.

In addition to sealing and tagging the chemical weapons at the 11 sites they have visited, OPCW experts have begun overseeing destruction activities in six of those sites.

At this stage, that largely means the crude disabling of production equipment with tools like cutting torches and angle grinders.

"Cheap, quick and low-tech – that's the destruction techniques at this stage," said OPCW spokesman Michael Luhan. "Nothing fancy."

The OPCW is conducting the Syria mission jointly with the United Nations, which is providing security, transportation and other support. U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Wednesday named Dutch diplomat Sigrid Kaag to head the joint mission.

The U.N. is now talking with rebel groups about gaining access to chemical facilities in sensitive outlying areas, but no agreements have been reached.

Mr. Ellahi played down the risk of not visiting every site by Nov. 1.

"It should not be taken as something of an utterly serious magnitude, given the fact that our work at the moment is proceeding rather smoothly," he said. He said inspectors have tackled challenging sites, saying, "It's not just the low-hanging fruit."

The OPCW was created in 1997 as the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention, the international treaty banning the use and possession of such arms.

The treaty's 190 signatories – with Syria becoming the latest on Wednesday – comprise the membership of The Hague-based OPCW.

The agency's workers don't destroy chemical arsenals themselves, but verify and supervise countries' elimination of their own stockpiles. That work won the OPCW the Nobel Peace Prize.

The prize wasn't awarded solely for the group's work in Syria, but its mission in that country has elevated the OPCW's profile. Mr. Ellahi said OPCW inspectors have unearthed little that deviates from Syria's own disclosures.

"We have not found anything of significance which we should be worried about," Mr. Ellahi said.

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U.S. nuclear arms modernization plan misguided: scientists' group

Reuters, 17 Oct 2013

David Alexander

An Obama administration plan to spend \$60 billion over the next 25 years to modernize the U.S. nuclear arsenal is misguided and violates the spirit of its pledge not to develop new nuclear arms, a Union of Concerned Scientists report said on Thursday.

The 81-page report by the independent nonprofit said the \$60 billion for upgrading warheads is a fraction of what Washington plans to spend on its nuclear deterrent in the coming decades, on top of billions for new manufacturing facilities and billions more for delivery systems like submarines.

The spending comes despite President Barack Obama's endorsement of the goal of a world without nuclear weapons and his negotiation of the "New START" treaty with Russia, which committed the former Cold War rivals to reducing deployed strategic nuclear weapons to 1,550 each by 2018.

But Obama also has insisted that the United States must be confident that its remaining weapons will work as it attempts negotiate smaller and smaller nuclear arsenals with other atomic weapons states.

And he has come under pressure from Republicans to address the problems of the aging U.S. nuclear complex.

The Pentagon and the National Nuclear Security Administration, which is responsible for the maintenance and reliability of the arsenal, did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the report.

The United States produced its last nuclear weapon, based on 1970s technology, in 1990 and halted underground nuclear testing in 1992. Since then it has relied on computer simulation for testing and has refurbished older weapons to extend their life.

But concern about security and reliability has prompted the NNSA and the Pentagon to push for additional efforts to modernize the weapons. A plan released in June by the NNSA, which is part of the Department of Energy, calls for a new manufacturing complex to reconfigure and upgrade the arms.

The United States has seven warhead types. The new program would reduce the number of types and make some interchangeable on different weapons. There would be three warhead types for long-range missiles and two for bombs and cruise missiles.

"NNSA's plan violates the spirit if not the letter of the administration's pledge to not develop new nuclear weapons. It sends the wrong message to the rest of the world," said Philip Coyle, a researcher at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation who co-authored the report.

Lisbeth Gronlund, a co-director of UCS's Global Security Program who worked on the report, said in an interview that modernization efforts by NNSA could undermine confidence in the reliability of the arsenal.

Weapons in the U.S. arsenal have elements for a primary and secondary explosion. Under the new approach, Gronlund said, some primary and secondary elements would be mixed and matched, even though they may not have been physically tested together.

"People could well raise this as a concern and suggest we need to resume testing," she said. "So I don't see any reason to go down that road."

Gronlund said the idea behind moving to a smaller number of interchangeable warheads was that it would make it easier to reduce the size of the nuclear "hedge," the non-deployed warheads that are held in reserve.

The United States is thought to have as many as 2,650 non-deployed warheads, plus about 3,000 waiting to be dismantled, according to The Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation.

"The claim is that this (modernization) would allow them to eventually reduce the hedge," Gronlund said, but that would only be done after 25 years, which she described as "a little lame."

With the United States already cutting deployed warheads under New START, it is a "very realistic assumption" that Washington would reduce the number of non-deployed weapons over the next 25 years as well, she said.

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Editorial: Foiled North Korea plot shows importance of missile defense

Press-Telegram.com, 17 Oct 2013

Seth M.M. Stodder

This summer, Panamanian authorities discovered parts of a missile system hidden in a ship traveling from Cuba to North Korea.

The incident underscores two important points about North Korea. First, one of America's most unpredictable enemies is committed to developing and distributing missile technology. More disturbing still, the totalitarian nation is capable of transporting weapons in the Western hemisphere.

In recent years, the threat of a missile strike from adversarial regimes like North Korea as well as non-state terrorist actors has become more acute. In light of these developments, it's imperative that the United States and its allies continue to invest in missile defense technologies.

The North Korean government has been working to improve its missile capabilities for decades. The nation began developing tactical artillery rockets in the 1960s and 70s and moved on to short- and medium-range missiles in the 1980s and '90s.

Last December, North Korea successfully launched a satellite into orbit using long-range missile technology known as Taepodong-2. A fully functioning Taepodong-2 missile is capable of reaching the United States. And in April, the Defense Intelligence Agency's announced that North Korea likely has a nuclear weapon small enough to deliver with a ballistic missile.

What makes North Korea's missile program even more dangerous is that, for years, the country has supplied ballistic missiles to Iran and other American adversaries. According to the Council on Foreign Relations, Pyongyang has made hundreds of millions of dollars in recent years exporting ballistic missiles to such countries as Syria as well as other nations known for supporting terrorists and other enemies of the United States.

The Panama episode is merely the latest example of Pyongyang's efforts to help anti-American regimes improve their missile capabilities.

For the United States and its allies to remain secure in a world where oppressive regimes and terrorist organizations have greater and greater access to sophisticated ballistic missiles, a strong system of missile defense is an absolute necessity.

In the last three decades, research into missile defense technologies has yielded remarkable results.

Just this year, American military personnel teamed up with Israeli defense forces to successful test cutting-edge interceptors over the Mediterranean Sea. Shortly after that, the U.S. Navy's shield program intercepted a fast-moving test target over the Pacific Ocean.

Back in the 1980s, when missile defense was first considered by the United States, many skeptics believed that destroying an enemy missile mid-flight was a pipe dream. Today, they've been definitively proven wrong. One shield program alone — the Patriot Air Defense Missile System — has completed more than 2,500 successful search and track tests. The Patriot is just one part of the U.S. Missile Defense Agency's proven "family of systems."

As the missiles available to unfriendly regimes and terrorist groups become more advanced, so too must systems for defending against them. It's for this reason that the Department of Defense is looking for new, more effective ways to intercept missiles, whether by unmanned aerial drones or even space-based assets that can sense and destroy incoming threats.

Investments in these and other technologies for strengthening American missile defense aren't just prudent — they're essential.

The United States and its allies must be prepared for the unique security challenges we will face in the coming years. While North Korea's latest plot may have been foiled, the proliferation of ever more powerful missile systems will continue. We must be prepared.

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Arbor Networks Reports Alarming Increases in DDoS Attack Size in 2013

Web Host Industry Review.com, 17 Oct 2013

David Hamilton

Distributed denial-of-service (or DDoS) attacks have accelerated rapidly over the course of 2013, with the number of attacks monitored at over 20Gb/sec so far already growing by more than 350 percent over last year's total numbers.

This is one of the trends discovered in new data released by Arbor Networks on DDoS trends for the first three quarters of 2013. Arbor Networks provides DDoS and advanced threat protection solutions. The data analyzed was derived from Arbor Network's own data as well as information gathered by ATLAS, a collaborative effort that includes anonymous traffic and attack data reporting from more than 275 service providers.

Researchers found that the average DDoS attack for 2013 is now 2.64Gb/sec, a 78 percent increase from 2012. And the largest attacks are getting larger, with an enormous 191Gb/sec being the largest monitored and verified DDoS attack.

Another key finding was that 87 percent of all attacks monitored so far this year last less than one hour, and while these shorter attacks aren't necessarily harder to detect, they can be harder to mitigate.

These trends should be especially troubling to web hosts. According to Arbor Networks, cloud and data center operations are often targeted because of the collateral impact that hits others on the network. This has contributed to a dramatic rise in DDoS attacks targeting cloud and hosting service providers.

What is driving these large DDoS attacks? Gary Sockrider, solutions architect for the Americas, Arbor Networks told Dark Reading: "First, there is increased availability of simple-to-use tools for carrying out attacks with little skill or knowledge. Second, there is a growing proliferation of DDoS-for-hire services that are quite inexpensive. Third, increasingly powerful workstations and servers that get compromised also have significantly faster connections to the Internet from which to generate attacks."

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CDAC, Iann to set up cyberattack combat centre

The Times of India, 18 Oct 2013

Kim Arora

The Center for Development and Advanced Computing (CDAC) has joined hands with the US-based agency, International Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (Iann), to set up a research facility that will help tackle cyber attacks and online security threats.

The institution has been named, Center for Excellence in DNS Security. Officials from the CDAC, an agency of the union ministry of communications and IT, and the Iann signed an expression of intent regarding the same on Thursday.

Iann allocates web addresses and assigns unique protocol numbers on the internet. A non-profit body, it functions under a contract with the US government, where the US department of commerce vets changes and additions to top level domain names (for example, country codes like .in or .pk).

"We are always in doubt when accessing the internet whether whatever is being shared is visible to someone else. We need to dispel this fear, which is associated to the internet," said J Satyanarayan, secretary, department of telecommunications.

Much of the conversation around Thursday's announcement focused on the Iann's role in the governance and management of the internet infrastructure, and the need for an equal participation of other countries in the same. At the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (Ficci) conference where the announcement for the center was made, Union communications and information technology minister Kapil Sibal stressed on a "consensual approach" in deciding the institutional framework of the internet.

"India is a natural multi-stakeholder society. It shouldn't be a huge effort [for India] to lead us in this space of multi-stakeholderism," Icann president and CEO Fadi Chehade said at the Ficci conference, later in the afternoon.

The Icann has been on the receiving end of criticism for its US-centric nature of operation. The organization has stepped up its drive for international engagement since the revelations of the US surveillance program by whistleblower Edward Snowden in June this year. They recently also announced three new panels on resource management and internet governance with a studied cosmopolitan constitution of members.

Last week, they urged Brazil president Dilma Rousseff to take on a more prominent role in evolving a new model of internet governance. The announcement of the India center is the latest in the series of the Icann's efforts.

Civil society activists do not read much political significance in the development. Sunil Abraham, executive director of the Center for Internet and Society acknowledged Icann's "accelerated globalization" post Snowden, but saw little political impact of this move.

"It's a small, very technical research center. It's good as long as it doesn't mean that India is okay with US oversight over the Icann. There are still several public interest issues with the Icann," says Parminder Jeet Singh, executive director, IT for Change, a Bangalore-based NGO involved in research and advocacy.

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World-Herald Editorial: Nuclear weapons issues call for attention

Omaha World-Herald, 17 Oct 2013

Unattributed

Of all the weapons in America's military inventory, the most powerful by far are in our nuclear arsenal. The officers and enlisted personnel who oversee these weapons need to operate at the highest level of professionalism.

There is no doubt about the overall competence of our nuclear forces. "I still have 100 percent confidence that the nation's nuclear deterrent force is safe, secure and effective," the commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, Air Force Gen. C. Robert Kehler, told the Associated Press.

But recent events do point to problems that need to be remedied.

Last Friday, the Air Force removed Maj. Gen. Michael Carey, who was in charge of its nuclear missiles, from his post in the wake of an inspector general's investigation into his conduct.

Two days before that, Vice Adm. Tim Giardina, the second-in-command at U.S. Strategic Command, was removed from that position amid an investigation to the alleged use of counterfeit gambling chips at a Council Bluffs casino.

Meanwhile, the Air Force is working to remedy major subpar performance by nuclear missile crews at bases in North Dakota and Montana.

This string of missteps deserves a strong, effective response from our military.

First, the word needs to come down strongly from the top brass that the highest standards of conduct are required of senior officers. Kehler commendably communicated that by suspending Giardina from overseeing nuclear weapons and recommending his dismissal from the position.

Second, procedures and communications should be overhauled so that all personnel involved in nuclear operations get the message firmly and clearly: The recent missteps and inadequate performance must come to an end.

It's true that the Cold War is now history and our nuclear forces are not in the forefront of attention as during the last half of the 20th century. But the mission — albeit with a reduced nuclear inventory and adjusted strategies — remains critical.

So does the need for our nuclear forces to operate at the standard that military necessity and public expectations demand.

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Top officials deny viral nuke story

WND.com, 17 Oct 2013

F. Michael Maloof

Top military and congressional sources have denied reports that unauthorized transfers of America's nuclear weapons have occurred and that the suspension of a Navy admiral and firing of a top Air Force general followed a fight inside government ranks about the alleged situation.

Several publications have carried reports on the topic in recent days, including concerns expressed by Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., over nuclear weapons in his state as well as the removal of several military officers.

There have also been stories about the reported transfers of nuclear weaponry.

One example was Storyleak, where author Anthony Gucciardi reported a "secret and unsigned nuclear weapons transfer" from Dyess Air Force base to South Carolina.

He also reported that two of the nation's top nuclear commanders were suspended and fired following the report.

"What this means," he wrote, "is that the nuke commanders were terminated behind the scenes in a move that was not meant to hit the public eye – especially not the fact that the second in command was fired on the same day of the leaked nuclear transfer. More importantly, shedding light on the secret transfer of nuclear weapons and the numerous red flags that prove its validity is key in stopping the psychopathic control freaks in government from going through with Graham's 'warnings' of a nuclear explosion that would lead to a war with Syria."

But U.S. Strategic Command spokesman Charles Ramey told WND the dismissal and suspension of the two flag officers from that agency were for personal reasons and that no transfers of nuclear weapons from Dyess Air Force Base in Texas to South Carolina occurred.

Ramey said there was no connection between personnel actions against the flag officers and any movement of nuclear weapons.

He acknowledged a 2007 incident in which nuclear weapons went missing for some 36 hours at Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota.

In that case, cruise missiles still armed with nuclear warheads were mistakenly loaded on a B-52H bomber at Minot and transported to Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana.

The warheads were supposed to have been removed prior to the transport of the missiles.

The investigation that followed this "Bent Spear" episode – meaning a nuclear weapon incident – determined that nuclear weapons handling procedures had not been followed by numerous Air Force personnel.

Ultimately, four Air Force commanders were relieved of their commands over the incident.

The recent viral Internet postings, however, have reported that Graham was concerned over nuclear weapons in South Carolina – and that nuclear weapons had been transferred to South Carolina from Dyess Air Force Base in Texas.

The reports tied the alleged unauthorized transfer of the nukes to South Carolina with the firing of an Air Force top general and suspension of a Navy admiral who held command authority over the nation's nuclear ballistic missiles under USStratcom.

Those viral online postings referred to the firing of Air Force Maj. Gen. Michael Carey, which actually appears to have been over "personal misbehavior" while on temporary duty at an unspecified location outside his usual command.

In addition, they referenced Navy Vice Adm. Tim Giardina's demotion, after he apparently was relieved of his post as second-in-command at USStratcom as a result of a separate gambling investigation.

The senator's statements also originally expressed his opinion that without a U.S. military response to Syria's alleged chemical weapons use, a country such as Iran would not believe America's resolve to block Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

The senator then added that nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists could result in a bomb coming to Charleston Harbor.

But the reports made connections between the senator's statements and other reported situations, resulting in the suggestion of a nuclear terror threat against Charleston over nuclear warheads being shipped there from Texas.

"Graham is quite literally saying that if we do not launch a war with Syria, South Carolina may be nuked," said one report.

The online reports did include statements from an unidentified military source who claimed the weapons transfers were being done with no signature.

In response to a WND inquiry, Kevin Bishop of Graham's office said that linking the senator's comments with alleged "loose nukes" was inaccurate.

"They ... are conflating different statements Sen. Graham has made," Bishop wrote in an email to WND. "He talked about his fear of a nuclear weapon making its way from someplace like Iran and being put on a ship which ends up in Charleston Harbor. ... Alex Jones was talking about some loose nukes in Texas."

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Veterans, community gather to remember

Wahoo Newspaper, 17 Oct 2013

Lisa Brichacek

Their heroics would make for a good movie plot today.

That was Rear Adm. Dave Kriete's summation after reading one of the journal's from a U.S.S. Wahoo mission in World War II.

Kreite is deputy director of Plan and Policy, U.S. Strategic Command Offutt Air Force Base and was the special speaker for Sunday's submarine veteran's memorial on the lawn of the Saunders County Courthouse.

He said it was the legacy of the brave men who served aboard the U.S.S. Wahoo and the other World War II submarines that continue to make a strong foundation for today's Navy.

"It's a legacy founded in the heroic submariners like you," he told the small group of submarine veterans and members of the public who gathered to pay tribute to the lives and submarines lost in World War II.

Kriete said today's Navy consists of 285 submarines, of which 95 are currently deployed.

The admiral who has served onboard the U.S.S. Finback, U.S.S. Flying Fish U.S.S. Kentucky and was the commanding officer of the U.S.S. Rhode Island said he has often read passages to his men about the exploits of the U.S.S. Wahoo.

The World War II submarine credited for its numerous successes in battle was sunk by the Japanese on Oct. 11, 1943. All 80 men aboard the GATO class submarine, including Bob Jasa from Wahoo, went to their watery grave with her in the La Pérouse Strait.

Kreite said it is important to remember the actions of the World War II submariners because they set the bar high for the "fighting spirit" that carries over to today's sailors.

The new class of sailors not only embraces their heritage, he added, they are up to the challenge. "They are willing to accept the risks as well as the responsibilities."

This was the 51st year for the submarine veterans memorial service. The annual service was started by the Wahoo Chapter of the U.S. Submarine Veterans of World War II. Due to the aging membership of this group, the chapter has collapsed into the Nebraska Base of the U.S. Submarine Veterans Inc.

Three members of the Wahoo Chapter of the U.S. Submarine Veterans of World War II were still able to attend Sunday's service. Howard Mace of McCook, who served as commander of Wahoo Chapter of the U.S. Submarine Veterans of World War II for many years, said he was pleased to see the service held in the shadow of the torpedo monument continue.

Other weekend activities for the submarine veterans' groups included meetings and fellowship. Following the service, those

attending went to an area restaurant for lunch, comradeship and sea stories.

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Very Respectfully,



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