

Cuts Not Easy, But Necessary, Hamre Tells Defense Managers

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DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE JOHN HAMRE

WASHINGTON — Newly mandated cuts won't be easy but are necessary to "eliminate the fat and save the muscle," Deputy Secretary of Defense John Hamre told Pentagon senior managers Nov. 13.

Hamre said DoD must be reshaped to meet new challenges. Among the initiatives he outlined were the creation of a new management council, a new threat reduction and treaty compliance agency, improved professional development education programs, and a greater role for the reserve components in DoD responses to domestic emergencies.

He briefed the senior managers on the defense reform initiative announced at the Pentagon Nov. 10 by Vice President Al Gore and Secretary of Defense William Cohen. The initiative outlines a business strategy to guide DoD into the 21st Century.

At the heart of the strategy are significant personnel cuts and transfers, coupled with a realignment and consolidation of responsibilities to make the Department "more agile and flexible," Hamre said. Success of the initia-

tive, he said, depends on "an integrated team" effort, guided by a new "board of directors."

The Deputy Secretary will head the new Defense Management Council that will serve as a board of directors to whom other components and agencies in the defense structure report. Besides Hamre, council members will include the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, DoD and Service Under Secretaries, and Service Vice Chiefs of Staff. Hamre said the council will steer DoD toward performance-based business practices that cut costs and streamline efficiency.

Meeting monthly, the council will immediately launch the departmental shape-up program, producing initial results possibly within the next three months. Hamre said he expects personnel transfers identified in the reform initiative to be completed "as soon as possible," and all cuts to be made within the next 18 months.

In all, DoD will downsize by about 30,000 positions through restructuring, transferring organizations or functions, and eliminating positions. Another 120,000 jobs will be opened to bids by private industry, according to an earlier report on the reform initiative. Details of the cuts and the complete text of the Defense Reform Initiative are on the Internet at [<http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/dodreform/report.html>].

While cutting DoD's size and otherwise streamlining operations are at the heart of defense reform, reducing the threat of conflict worldwide is equally important. He said the newly created Threat Reduction and Treaty Compli-

ance Agency will consolidate the efforts of several agencies, providing a single Assistant Secretary of Defense to oversee counterproliferation, cooperative threat reduction, and treaty compliance.

Another key to DoD's future success lies in the field of professional education, Hamre said. The reform initiative creates a Chancellor for Education and Professional Development that Hamre said mandates full accreditation of all DoD professional education programs by Jan. 1, 2000. The measure calls for maximum use of civilian university programs, but more significantly it requires organizations to measure the performance of graduates, Hamre said.

"In other words, was the education we paid for worthwhile in terms of output?" he said.

The reform initiative calls for the reserve components to serve as a "9-1-1 force" to respond to emergencies, Hamre said. The Directorate of Military Support will serve as the command center overseeing increased reserve component peacetime operations, he added.

Hamre reiterated Cohen's call Monday for two additional rounds of base closures in 2001 and 2005, but said Congress may agree only to one. Some additional changes and reductions in the reform initiative will require legislative action; Hamre said he's confident Congress will act favorably.

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