

Statement

of

**The Honorable Michael L. Dominguez
Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness)**

Before the

**Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce,
and the District of Columbia**

**Lost in Translation: A Review of the Federal Government's Efforts to Develop a
Foreign Language Strategy**

January 25, 2007

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman and members of this distinguished committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

I will discuss two efforts in which the Department of Defense is engaged. First, I will detail our significant actions in transforming language capability within the Department. Our internal efforts lead us to the requirement to increase the language talent pool within our country, from which we can recruit or harness during times of surge. In light of this need to expand the national talent pool, I will describe our contributions to the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI), launched by President Bush in January, 2006.

Foreign language skill, cultural awareness, and regional expertise are emerging as core competencies for our 21st Century Total Force. The Active and Reserve Component military personnel and our Department of Defense civilians who make up the Total Force, as well as our supporting contractor personnel understand that these are essential war-fighting skills and vital force capabilities for mission accomplishment. We have made significant progress on a number of fronts, and the transformation that has occurred is very apparent.

Today I will discuss the significant steps the Department of Defense has taken to promote and improve language capacity and capability within the force. We have overcome many obstacles and made good progress to date, but we still face more challenges. Language skills are not easily acquired and once acquired, are not

universally applicable to all regions and situations. As prudent planners and good stewards we constantly assess the relevance of what we are doing now to what we might be called upon to do in the future.

Before proceeding, I want to thank the Congress for its continued support of Defense Language Transformation. The Fiscal Year 2007 National Defense Authorization Act provided the means for several important initiatives that will help us to attain our goals. Congressional action for Fiscal Year 2007 supported enhancements in Department of Defense Language Programs such as the Army Heritage Speaker (09L) Program, Service Academy Language Training Programs, Foreign Language Proficiency Pay, ROTC Language Training Grants, Accession Screening Program, the Language Corps, National Security Education Program, and the Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC).

THE NEED TO REFORM— IMPLEMENTING NATIONAL GUIDANCE

Current military operations demand different skills than those we mastered to win the Cold War. Today's operations increasingly require our forces to operate with coalition and alliance partners and interact with foreign populations of diverse languages and cultures. Our enemies blend in with these populations, making their defeat more difficult. To be effective in supporting Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction operations as well as other counterinsurgency measures, and to prevail in the Global War on Terrorism, we must be able to communicate effectively with and gain the support of the local population within the regions in which we operate.

We responded to this shift in the demands of warfighting with a shift in strategy. Language and Regional Expertise had to be recognized as critical war-fighting skills. Operational lessons learned and studies stressed the need for the Department to create and maintain language capabilities within the force and be able to surge these capabilities on demand to meet unexpected developments. The Strategic Planning Guidance for Fiscal Years 2006 through 2011 directed development of a comprehensive roadmap to achieve the full range of language capabilities necessary to carry out national strategy. The result was the 2005 Department of Defense Language Transformation Roadmap (DLTR) that continues to guide our work today.

Since then, leadership of this Department has continued to reinforce the importance of foreign language and cultural awareness within the 21st Century Total Force. The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review stressed that “Developing broader linguistic capability and cultural understanding is . . . critical to prevail in the Long War and to meet 21st Century challenges.” The Strategic Planning Guidance for Fiscal Years 2008 through 2013 outlines the national commitment to developing the best mix of capabilities within the Total Force and sets forth a series of Roadmaps that support the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap.

MANAGING CHANGE

The Defense Language Transformation Roadmap, signed by the Deputy Secretary of Defense on February 14, 2005, is our management tool for building language skills and regional expertise into the 21st Century Total Force. Its goals are to accomplish the following by the end of 2008:

- To create foundational language and regional expertise in the officer, civilian, and enlisted ranks for Active and Reserve Components,
- To create the capacity to surge language and cultural capabilities to meet unanticipated requirements, and
- To develop a cadre of skilled language speakers that allows us to place the right people in the right place at the right time.

To ensure oversight, execution, and focus for the transformation we are undertaking, the Department appointed the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Plans as the Department of Defense Senior Language Authority responsible for the Defense Language Program. We required the appointment of Senior Language Authorities in the Military Departments, the Defense Staff, Defense Agencies, and the Defense Field Activities at the Senior Executive Service, General Officer, and Flag Officer ranks to ensure senior-level involvement in the effort. We established the Defense Language Steering Committee, consisting of Senior Language Authorities to act as an advisory board and guide the implementation of our Roadmap. We rewrote the Department of Defense Directive for the Defense Language Program and established the Defense Language Office to ensure oversight and execution of the Defense Language Transformation Roadmap and to institutionalize the Department's commitment to this critical capability.

Create Foundational Expertise: Building Competencies into the 21st Century Total Force

One of the initial Defense Language Transformation Roadmap undertakings involved determining what capabilities we needed to support operational and contingency planning. The Combatant Commands, Military Services, Defense Agencies, and Defense Field Activities began identifying the language and regional expertise requirements necessary to support their operational and contingency plans as well as ongoing operations. The Civilian Personnel Management Service also conducted a zero-based review of all civilian positions within the Department that required language skills.

The Services and Joint Staff initiated reviews of all relevant doctrine, policies, and planning guidance to ensure that they incorporated language, regional expertise, and cultural awareness. These documents outline the approach for how to develop and, more importantly, employ these capabilities. This in turn drives planners' assessments on how many capabilities they require to support their plans and operations.

When the Department of Defense initiated language transformation, there were no accurate figures on what capabilities already existed with the Total Force. The Services screened their personnel, asking them to report (self profess) the languages they were able to speak. The Department learned that it had a significant in-house capability not apparent to our management systems. For example, even though our assessment is not yet complete, as of the beginning of the current fiscal year, the Department had 141,887 Active Component; 77,319 Reserve Component; and 23,849 civilian members of the Total Force who professed to have foreign language skills, which represent 10, 7, and 4

percent, respectively. Until we undertook this assessment, the Department did not have any way to identify this capability. To date, there are over 243,000 Total Force members identified as possessing more than 294,000 language capabilities (some members professed more than one language).

In order to encourage service members to identify, improve, and sustain language capability we implemented a new Foreign Language Proficiency Pay (FLPP) policy, and, with the support of Congress, increased the proficiency bonus from \$300 maximum per month, up to \$1,000 maximum per month for uniformed members. The maximum FLPP rate increased from \$150 to \$500 per pay period for eligible Department of Defense civilian employees performing intelligence duties. Department of Defense policy allows payments of up to five percent of civilian employees' salary for those civilians who are assigned to non-intelligence duties requiring proficiency and who are certified as proficient in languages identified as necessary to meet national security interests. We are currently finalizing the Department of Defense Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus policy to align payment for Reserve and Active Components by increasing Reserve proficiency pay ceiling from \$6,000 to \$12,000, consistent with Section 639 of the Fiscal Year 2006 National Defense Authorization Act.

Building A "Learning" Organization to Strengthen the Foundation

Of the many competencies taught to our personnel, language skills are among the most difficult to address in a systematic manner. Learning a foreign language is difficult and language skills deteriorate rapidly if not used frequently. Frustratingly, there is risk associated with selecting which languages should be emphasized or taught. Unlike other

primary skills, language skills do not necessarily transfer from one theater of operations to another. To acquire and sustain language capabilities, the Department of Defense must commit itself to building a “learning” organization—one that offers mission -focused instruction to all personnel at the appropriate times, and continues to support our personnel in maintaining hard-won skills. This “learning” begins even before people join the Total Force.

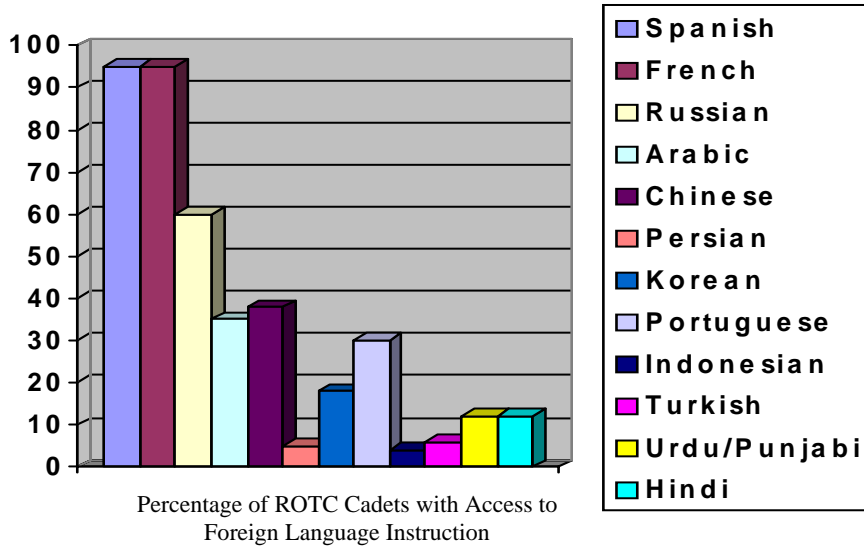
The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), after careful review, concluded that there was insufficient time available for officers not going into language-required specialties to acquire language skills after they were accessioned into the force. The QDR recommended that the Services focus on conducting initial language training prior to accession. This would allow the Services to concentrate on providing formal, post-accession language training to language professionals and allow them to reach advanced language levels more quickly in their careers. At the same time, a broader base of capabilities would be achieved by having increased numbers of personnel within the force who possess language skills and cultural awareness even though they are not language professionals.

Pre-Accession Language Training

Pre-accession language training will focus the Department’s effort on building language skills in future officers prior to commissioning. The three Service Academies enhanced their foreign language study programs to develop pre-accession language skill and cultural awareness competencies. They expanded study abroad, summer immersion and foreign academy exchange opportunities; and added instructor staff for strategic

languages. The United States Military Academy and the United States Air Force Academy now require all cadets to complete two semesters of language study; and the United States Naval Academy requires its non-technical degree-seeking midshipmen to take four semesters of language study. The United States Military Academy and the United States Air Force Academy also established two new language majors of strategic interest specifically, in Arabic and Chinese. The United States Naval Academy, for the first time in history, will offer midshipmen the opportunity to major in a foreign language. In Fiscal Year 2007, \$25.57 million was directed to the Service Academies to develop and implement their language programs, including curriculum development and hiring of staff and faculty to teach more strategic languages.

The Academies are aggressively pursuing increased opportunities for their cadets and midshipmen to study abroad and currently have programs available in 40 countries. Four-week summer language immersion programs are offered as well as semester exchanges with foreign military academies. The Fiscal Year 2007 National Defense Authorization Act allows the Academies to expand these exchanges from 24 exchanges to 100 exchanges per academy per year, and this Congressional support is greatly appreciated. Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) cadets and midshipmen also have expanded opportunities to learn a foreign language. The Air Force and Navy often have ROTC students accompany their academy counterparts during familiarization and orientation travel opportunities. Of the 1,321 colleges and universities with ROTC programs, 1,148 offer languages as noted on this chart. Significantly, many of the languages we need for current operations are not widely offered at this time.



Additionally, we are beginning a pilot program to provide grants to select colleges and universities with ROTC programs to incentivize them to offer foreign language courses in languages of strategic interest to the Department and the national security community. Increasing the number of less commonly taught languages in college curricula remains a challenge in which our Senior Language Authority is actively engaged.

Primary Skills Language Training

There are dramatic changes in how the Department is training its personnel who require language skills to perform their primary jobs. The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center (DLIFLC) currently has an enrollment of 4000 students a year. Since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, we have reoriented our training to strategic languages, increasing education in languages such as Arabic and Farsi. The Institute’s budget climbed from \$77M in FY01 to \$203M in FY07. One of the major programs implemented in FY06 by DLIFLC is the Proficiency Enhancement Program

(PEP). PEP changed the basic foreign language course by reducing the student to instructor ratio, increasing the number of classrooms, and creating improved expanded curricula, and expanding overseas training. PEP is designed to graduate students at increased proficiency levels.

Support To Deploying Forces

The Department recognizes that not all personnel will be required to demonstrate intermediate or advanced level language skills and regional expertise. However, all deploying personnel do need fundamental information, especially concerning cultural norms and simple phrases to aid in interacting with the regional populations. We are well aware of the instantaneous nature of our environment, how the act of an uninformed person can be seized upon by our enemies and ruthlessly exploited. Knowing the cultural “do’s and don’ts” supports the mission, protects our members and helps build relations with the population. Department policy, therefore, requires that military units deploying into, or in transit through foreign territories shall be equipped, to the greatest extent practicable, with an appropriate capability to communicate in the languages of the territories of deployment or transit. Getting this information to the troops in time to be useful, but not so early that it is forgotten before they arrive is “just-in-time” training.

The importance of getting the cultural part of the language transformation right cannot be overemphasized. Through experience we have learned that a single individual can impact operations drastically with a single act. The term “Strategic Corporal,” used frequently in the Department refers to a member who possesses the least amount of experience and training but can wield huge influence by doing the right thing, or

committing an improper act and draw either the support or anger of the local population. The Services have undertaken great efforts to guard against the negative and prepare members to achieve a positive outcome by understanding cultural differences. All the Services have established centers to oversee the efforts to impart cultural training to their service members. The Army Training and Doctrine Command Culture Center, the Navy Center for Language Regional Expertise and Culture, the Air University Cultural Studies Center, and the Marine Corps Center for Advance Operational Culture and Language all focus on the offering the training that best supports their deployment model and is compliant with Joint Professional Military Education guidelines. Since Service missions differ, this approach is logical and effective.

We have significantly improved our means to provide language and regional familiarization training to units during their deployment cycles. DLIFLC's foreign language and cultural instruction extends beyond the classroom to service members preparing for deployment by offering Mobile Training Teams, video tele-training, Language Survival Kits, and on-line instructional materials. Since 2001, the DLIFLC dispatched 300 Mobile Training Teams to provide targeted training to more than 32,000 personnel. Deploying units received over 200,000 Language Survival Kits (mostly Iraqi, Dari, and Pashto). Field support modules outlining the geo-political situation, cultural facts, and fundamental language skills, key phrases and commands are available for 19 countries in 17 languages on the DLIFLC website. There are 31 on-line language survival courses. Computer-based sustainment training is available as well via the Global

Language On-line Support System, which supports 12 languages and 6 more language sustainment courses are available on the DLIFLC LingNet website.

Heritage Recruiting

Part of ensuring we have a strong foundation in language and regional expertise involves drawing personnel who already possess these skills into our Total Force. All of our Military Services have developed heritage recruiting plans to bring language-skilled personnel into the force. These plans focus on reaching out to our heritage communities and their children who possess near-native language skills.

One particularly successful program is the Army's 09L Interpreter/Translator Program. The Army launched a pilot study in 2003 to recruit and train individuals from heritage Arabic, Dari, and Farsi communities to serve in the Individual Ready Reserve and support operations in Afghanistan. The program was hugely successful. Originally intended as a way to build surge capability, the Army concluded that the program should be expanded and made a permanent part of the Army. In 2006, the Army formally established the 09L Translator Aide as a military occupational specialty that will have a career path from recruit through sergeant major. To date, more than 317 native/heritage speakers have successfully graduated and deployed; an additional 175 personnel are in the training pipeline. The Army continues to expand and develop the program in response to the positive feedback from the commanders in the field

Ensuring Surge Capability—Generating Competencies to Meet the Unexpected

As we evaluated our operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, it was very obvious that we did not have sufficient language capability to meet demands. The Department

appointed the Army to be the Executive Agent for coordinating contract linguist support. Thousands of contract linguists have been made available to commanders in theater. This is one example of how we can generate a surge capability. We are developing appropriate processes to maintain contact with our military and civilian retirees and separatees. The goal is to maintain a personnel database with language and regional experience information that would allow us reachback for possible voluntary recall. While current surge capability is obviously focused on ongoing operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, we are also focused on the future and potential or emerging areas of concern in which the Total Force might be called upon to operate. The DLIFLC is developing language and cultural preparation materials for many regions of the world, to be available to deploying forces. Surge is also enhanced through creation of inventories of current language qualified employees (military and civilian).

Build Experts

Post 9/11 military operations reinforce the reality that the Department of Defense needs a significantly improved organic capability in emerging languages and dialects. A higher level of language skill and greater language capacity is needed to build the internal relationships required for coalition/multi-national operations, peacekeeping, and civil/military affairs. In 2005, the Department began building a cadre of language specialists possessing high level language proficiency (an Interagency Language Roundtable Proficiency Level 3 in reading, listening, and speaking ability). We are working with the DoD Components to identify the tasks and missions that will require 3/3/3 and determine the minimum number of personnel needed to provide these language

services., We have recognized the value of personnel achieving and maintaining the highest levels of proficiency in critical languages by paying a substantially increased Foreign Language Proficiency Bonus.

Managing the Professionals

The Department has spent a great deal of effort in managing its regional expert cadre—the Foreign Area Officers. Department of Defense Directive 1315.17, “*Foreign Area Officer (FAO) Programs*,” updated in April 2005, established a common set of standards for FAOs. Most importantly, the new policies all require the Services to establish FAO programs that “deliberately develop a corps of FAOs, who shall be commissioned officers with a broad range of military skills and experiences; have knowledge of political-military affairs; have familiarity with the political, cultural, sociological, economic, and geographical factors of the countries and regions in which they are stationed; and have professional proficiency in one or more of the dominant languages in their regions of expertise.” The purpose of this approach to the FAO Program is to build a corps of FAOs who are capable of operating in a joint environment, because they have similar training, developmental experiences, and expertise.

All Foreign Area Officers must be qualified in a principal military specialty. Studies undertaken by the Department have confirmed qualification in a principal military specialty as an absolute prerequisite for FAOs, regardless of Service. Whether serving as a Service or Defense Attaché, as a political-military planner in a Defense Agency or Service staff, as an arms control treaty inspector, as a liaison officer to a host nation or coalition ally, or as a political advisor to the commander of a Service

component command, a FAO must serve as a Soldier, Sailor, Airman, or Marine first. The experience gained as a junior officer serving as an infantry unit commander, a ship's navigator, a logistics staff officer, or a Harrier pilot is not only invaluable, but also based on our analysis, is an irreplaceable prerequisite for successful service as a FAO. Each of the Services agreed that it is imperative for a FAO to first be qualified in their basic Service specialty before transitioning to the FAO program. This is the rationale for why the Services bring FAOs into the program in the seventh to twelfth year of service, rather than at initial commissioning.

In FY2006, over 150 new Foreign Area Officers were selected and are in training, and the Services have planned to recruit, train and employ over 900 new FAOs over the next five years who will meet a common set of training guidelines, developmental experiences and language and regional expertise standards.

The Department is ensuring that career paths allow FAOs opportunities to advance in rank and levels of responsibility to include general or flag-officer level. The lack of career opportunities was a major factor in the early departure of FAOs and the resulting shortages. The Department has made great strides in retaining these highly trained officers. In fact, for the Army, which has the most established FAO program, its retention and promotion rates are at or above the Army average for all officers.

Supporting National Security and Intelligence Efforts

The Defense Intelligence Community is playing a vital role in improving language skills at the Department of Defense and throughout the national security community. In particular the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence has established and staffed

focal points for oversight and management of foreign language capabilities within Defense intelligence components. DoD professionals are working with the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) on improving intelligence community language capabilities, conducting workforce and workload sharing across Federal agencies, and targeting recruiting efforts for their civilian hires to ensure they have the human capital needed to carry out their missions. DoD and the Military Departments participate in the ODNI Foreign Language Executive Committee (FLEXCOM), which is the major senior-level interagency advisory body on foreign language issues and policy for the Intelligence community. DoD has been active in working with ODNI and the FLEXCOM members in development of the new intelligence community Foreign Language Human Capital Plan. Another transformational shift is using Intelligence language specialists in non-traditional roles as interpreters and translators in direct support of general force operations, as well as encouraging higher-level foreign language proficiency by offering increased pay to civilian employees with demonstrated proficiency in a wide variety of languages,.

The Intelligence arms for each of the Military Departments have initiated changes to refine their programs to better meet the needs of this Century. The Navy is realigning the career path of its Cryptologic Technician Interpretive rating to optimize the language capability and capacity of its force. To concentrate capability, Navy's voice analysts will begin to spend the majority of their careers at a National Security Agency Center and their initial training will focus on one of six languages – Chinese, Korean, Arabic, Persian-Farsi, Russian and Spanish, with the goal of having 50% of the force qualified in

a second regionally focused low density language. Air Force Intelligence has placed top-down emphasis on continuous language training across the enlisted Cryptologic Language Analyst (CLA) force, increasing the frequency of 4-week Significant Language Training Events (SLTE) by 50%. Air Force Intelligence provided significant language training events for 44% of CLAs in FY2006 despite increased operations tempo, resulting in a 50% increase over FY2005 and a 700% increase over the 10-year average. Air Force intelligence is planning a sweeping restructure of CLA force beginning in FY2008. This is the first significant revision of accession and multi-language processes in a generation, and transforms a legacy Cold War enlisted structure into a flexible, agile CLA force capable of responding to the increasingly dynamic language requirements of the Long War on Terror. The Army serves as the executive agent for language contracts in support of deployed personnel as well as providing digital connectivity with operating forces for timely access to translation services.

OUR EFFORTS ARE NOT ENOUGH

Early on, as we engaged in planning for our language transformation effort, we realized that if the Department is to increase its language capability and train service members to higher level of proficiency, we needed to encourage greater emphasis on language education in the American population as a whole. In June 2004, we convened a National Language Conference to begin dialog and stimulate thinking to this end. We also worked with other federal agencies to develop a White Paper for public consideration.

In January 2006, the President announced the National Security Language Initiative. The Initiative was established to dramatically increase the number of Americans learning critical need foreign languages such as Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Hindi, and Farsi. The Department of Defense joined the Secretaries of State and Education, and the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) to develop a comprehensive national plan to expand U.S. foreign language education beginning in early childhood (Kindergarten) and continuing throughout formal schooling and into the workforce.

The focal point for the Department's role in the National Security Language Initiative is the National Security Education Program (NSEP). NSEP represents one of the national security community's most important investments in creating a pipeline of linguistically and culturally competent professionals into our workforce. NSEP provides scholarships and fellowships to facilitate student study abroad in return for federal service. NSEP has also worked with universities, providing grants for the development of National Flagship Language programs, specifically designed to graduate students at level three language proficiency in today's critical languages. These programs provide a major source of vitally needed language expertise in the national security community. As part of the DOD contribution to the NSLI, the NSEP has expanded the National Language Flagship Program to establish a new Flagship program in Arabic, Hindi and Urdu at the University of Texas, Austin. We have also expanded our Russian Flagship to a Eurasian Flagship Program that will focus on critical Central Asian languages.

The Flagship effort serves as an example of how NSLI links Federal programs and resources across agencies to enhance the scope of the Federal government's efforts in foreign language education. For example, the Flagship program is leading the way in developing model pipelines of K-12 students with higher levels of language proficiency into our universities. I am very proud to tell this committee that we launched a Chinese K-16 pipeline with the University of Oregon/Portland Public Schools in September, 2005. We have also awarded a grant to the Chinese Flagship Program at Ohio State University to implement a state-wide system of Chinese K-16 programs. And, finally we awarded a grant to Michigan State University to develop an Arabic K-16 pipeline project with the Dearborn, Michigan school district, announced in conjunction with a Department of Education Foreign Language Assistance Program grant. With the President's FY 2007 budget request for NSLI, the Administration proposed to expand significantly the number of K-16 pipeline models in critical need languages by including \$24 million for the Department of Education's Advancing America Through Foreign Language Partnerships program.

Our second commitment to the President's National Security Language Initiative is the launching of the Civilian Linguist Reserve Corps pilot program, now renamed The Language Corps. Authorized by Congress, this effort promises to identify Americans with skills in critical languages, and develop the capacity to mobilize them during times of national need or emergency.

A three year pilot has been initiated with a major marketing and recruitment plan as we seek to meet our goal of 1,000 Language Corps members. We are confident that a

successful Language Corps will not only address serious gaps in federal preparedness but also serve to reinforce the importance of language learning in general.

In Spring 2006, the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Dr. David S. C. Chu, invited the Federal Chief Human Capital Officers to join the Department of Defense in building the Language Corps. We will continue to engage the federal community as we proceed with the three year pilot.

In addition, DoD has collaborated with the ODNI in sponsorship of a new program in summer language education for students and teachers, called STARTALK, which is part of NSLI. STARTALK will hold pilot programs in Chinese and Arabic in the summer of 2007. We are on track to exceed our initial goals of enrolling 400 students and 400 teachers in programs in five states this summer; we now expect enrollments of 650 teachers and more than 1100 students in 19 states.

The Department's contributions to the National Security Language Initiative reflect the significant amount of coordination among the Department of Defense staff, our National Security Language Initiative partners, other federal agencies, and state government and local education systems. The NSLI was built so that programs belonging to the Departments of State, Education, Defense, and National Intelligence, if funded and executed, would improve the national language capacity.

Finally, the Department intends to convene a series of regional summits to engage state and local government, education institutions, school boards, and parents and business at the local level in addressing foreign language needs. We will capitalize upon DoD's National Security Education Program Flagship Universities to convene regional

summits to ensure, from the onset, potential participants can identify with a nearby institution of higher learning. The goal of each summit is to create a regional action plan to increase investment in critical foreign language skills. We hope to garner best practices and ideas to advance this process in more communities.

CONCLUSION

In closing, I want thank you for the opportunity to share our accomplishments and plans for the future. I hope to leave you with the understanding that we take the role of building foreign language and culture knowledge within the Department as a critical 21st Century core competency. I have dedicated staff at senior levels in the Department to ensure focus and transformation has occurred. I appreciate your continuing support through legislative and appropriation of our efforts. Our journey has just begun but we must do it right as our nation, future generations and our national security depend on successful strategy and execution.