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Moderator: Good morning everyone, and welcome to what I know is going to be a terrific session of the Defense Writers Group. I'm Thom Shanker, Director of the Project for Media and National Security at George Washington University and we have a terrific and timely guest today. It's Richard Kidd. He's the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Environment and Energy Resilience, and as you know a very timely and important report came out just yesterday.

Because the report just came out yesterday I'd invite Mr. Kidd to kind of open the session today with sort of an intro and sketch the landscape for us. So Mr. Kidd, the floor is yours, sir.

DepSec Kidd: Thank you, and good morning everyone. It's a pleasure to be here today and talk to you about the Department of Defense's Climate Adaptation Plan which is a very significant document in terms of charting the Department's way forward in regards to climate change adaptation.

We at the department know that climate change is a national security threat. It affects us every day. It affects our mission requirements, our installations, the welfare of our service members and our equipment. It is a destabilizing force in the world, expanding our mission set, creating new missions where there were none before, and impacting our operational environment. Given this trajectory, the demands and impact of climate change necessitate a change in the way we approach this issue.

The Defense Department's Climate Adaptation Plan takes a very forward-leaning, transformative look beyond the traditional definition of adaptation to transform the entire department. We're not just going to adapt our physical world which is one of the five lines of effort, but we intend to adapt the entire department. Our decision-making processes are training our equipment, our supply chain, and our partnerships with others.

I'll stop there. That's a quick summary. I'm happy to take your

questions and look forward to today's event.

Moderator: Thank you so much. I'll use the power of the chair to open with the first question, if I might.

The Pentagon is busy seven days a week, 24 hours a day. How much additional bandwidth, Mr. Kidd, will it take to balance these new adaptation requirements for a new era of really significant climate change and where will you find that extra bandwidth?

DepSec Kidd: We've got the bandwidth now. No entity can opt out of the effects of climate change. Climate change is going to be the context of the world that we live in from now on. Likewise, no entity can opt out of their responsibilities or requirements to take necessary steps at either adaptation or mitigation.

So going forward we're going to adjust and modify the existing programs in the department, whether it's military construction or some of our land management practices to adjust for climate change. We're going to adapt our training, we're going to adapt our plans, policies and procedures.

So we're going to pivot the entire department towards living and operating in a reality altered by climate change.

Moderator: Thanks. Some new national security threats are being blamed on climate change. The Syrian Civil War, people say has deep roots in the drought. Piracy off the Horn of Africa is often attributed to the fact that those fishermen there had no way to earn a living after Japanese over-fishing. What sort of new threats to our national security, unexpected threats, do you see from climate change?

DepSec Kidd: The threat of instability has been recognized for a long time as a threat to national security. What climate change does is it makes that insecurity/instability more pronounced. So the logic is that a state has some form of governance capacity and that it uses that capacity to meet the needs of its citizens.

If the needs become, they start to exceed the capacity of the government, if the government can no longer provide goods and services, then you have instability and insecurity. You could look at New Orleans here in this country where there was a breakdown in public security after a very significant extreme weather event.

I think that insecurity and instability will, while they've been in the world for a long time, they're going to become more pronounced in the years ahead.

Moderator: Thank you so much. Our first question from the correspondents is from Tony Bertuca of Inside the Pentagon.

DWG: Thank you very much. My question goes to some of the text in the report. It mentions that the Defense Department is going to start to rework its budget process with adaptation to climate change in mind, rework some of its acquisition policies. So my question goes to how will this new adaptation policy and plan change the Defense Department's relationship with defense contractors who provide the goods and services?

DepSec Kidd: That's a great question. One portion of the document outlines how we're going to leverage our procurement power and procurement position to address climate change, and primarily greenhouse gas emissions in our supply chains. We're going to do this, though, in a manner that reinforces other requirements that we have.

Right now we can align our mission requirements around supply chain integrity with our climate adaptation requirements to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. By that I mean the department – let's take an issue of batteries. So the department is dependent on batteries in every vehicle, every ship, plane on our soldiers and marines. We cannot have these batteries made in foreign countries that we could become vulnerable to in the event of a supply disruption. By bringing that battery manufacturing on-shore to the United States we significantly reduce the carbon impacts while improving the integrity of our supply chain. And that sort of example cascades out through hundreds of items that we buy or purchase.

Also in terms of greenhouse gas calculations, greenhouse gases are calculated in terms of scope one emissions, what we generate directly. So burning fuel in a vehicle. Scope two, the emissions from primarily the electricity that we buy. And then scope three, these are the embedded emissions in our supply chain.

The department is estimated to be the 55th largest greenhouse gas emitter in the world, so if we were a UN nation we'd be in the

top third in terms of greenhouse gas emitters. So the point here is, we believe there's as much greenhouse gas emissions in our scope three category as there are in the scope one and scope two together. So we're going to work in tandem with our major suppliers to go after those scope three emissions.

Just a couple of weeks ago we issued an RFI, request for information, from suppliers about whether or not they are currently or could be capable of calculating greenhouse gas emissions within their own supply chains.

DWG: So do you have a sense right now that defense contractors need to step it up, to comply with this new vision? Or are they on the way?

DepSec Kidd: As you know, we have a wide range of defense contractors and I think that range of contractors is representative of the industry. Some of our contractors are in fact leaders in this area. They have very aggressive greenhouse gas reduction goals and can account for greenhouse gases through most of the steps in the supply chain. Other contractors are not quite there yet. Our goal is to bring all the contractors up to what is best practice.

Moderator: Thanks. Our next question is Dan Lamothe of the Washington Post.

DWG: Good morning, thanks for your time and thanks for doing this.

Reading the report I noted a couple of specific projects that the Defense Department apparently will be authoring or taking on as a result of climate change and trying to prepare. Paris Island comes to mind, the Naval Academy comes to mine. I was curious if anything else comes to mind, be it storm water, be it some sort of hardening of a given facility, anything like that that you could think of that wasn't in the report but maybe would also fall in that category.

Then more broadly, as the department's approaching future construction, future projects and trying to make sure it spends money in smart ways given sea change, sea rises, that sort of thing, what are you all doing to make sure you're spending your money wisely as the environment around you on especially bases at sea and on coast lines change? Thanks.

DepSec Kidd: Thanks for the question. The Department of Defense of course has a very large capital investment in our infrastructure and our installations and that investment is at risk from the effects of climate change.

What we're trying to do now is to build in resilience to our installations and infrastructure. If you look at the back page of the report there's a list of all the actions taken to date, and buried in there you'll see that we've updated a range of our unified facilities criteria in terms of making more resilient buildings, in terms of where we site them in regards to floods and sea level rise.

We also have the Defense Climate Assessment too which is mentioned in the report and can be located, the result of which can be found separately on-line, where we've gone through and we've taken a first order assessment of 1400 sites and installations, so we know what the effects of climate change are going to be at the installation level and we can start to plan accordingly. Whether that's sea level rise, heat, drought, floods, we're going to be able to factor that in from the beginning of our master planning process on our installations.

So we'll start with a climate assessment, we'll put in the planning process, we've got the facility criteria, we'll adjust the military construction siting accordingly.

DWG: Relatedly, some years back we saw Homestead Air Force Base disappear following a hurricane. We saw devastation with Hurricane Michael a few years back with another Air Force base. Do you see a place where the Defense Department may have to start looking at where the locations of the bases make sense at this point? Is that something that's at least on the table?

DepSec Kidd: Dan, you've asked a very hard question. We're not there yet but we know that the past is no longer indicator of the future, and if you look to the future we might get to the point someplace where we have to ask some hard questions about what mission sets are located at a particular installation. In that case you kind of have three choices. Move the mission someplace else, harden or adapt the installation to preserve the mission, or perhaps abandon in place or to scale back.

So those are the hard choices that could be out there in the

future for some of our installations, but we're not there yet on any specifics or any single installation.

Moderator: The next question goes to Kimberly Underwood of Signal.

DWG: Thank you, sir, for your time this morning.

I wanted to ask kind of a little bit further about what you were just speaking about, kind of the resiliency of your installations and to ask kind of about the energy and power piece. What are you looking at as far as how to kind of improve resiliency [inaudible] power installations kind of in the face of climate change? And I'm not sure how the report addresses that.

DepSec Kidd: Let me start with a couple of definitions, if I could, which are important.

Resilience is the ability to anticipate, prepare for and adapt to changing conditions and to withstand, respond to and recover. And resilience has many features. It has climate adaptation measures, and those adaptation measures are basically adjusting our natural or human systems in anticipation of a future impact and taking advantage of opportunities or reducing negative costs.

Mitigation, on the other hand, is measures to reduce the amount of greenhouse base emissions.

The report doesn't go into mitigation and there's a follow-on executive order and there will be more documents on that. But in terms of energy resilience, basically we get both adaptation and mitigation together. We'll be building and fielding micro-grids with on-site power management, on-site energy generation, on-site power storage. In some cases we will still have to rely on fossil fuels for a portion of that, but our intent over time is to reduce the fossil fuel component and get to the point that we can operate independent of the grid for 14 days on our sort of key sets of installations or the central mission portion of those installations.

I would just say that the energy resilience requirement is a statutory requirement from Congress and we consider that front and center.

And this is a great example of where we have a mission and how it

directly overlaps with our climate ambition, right? The mission is to preserve the resilience of our installation which matches perfectly with climate ambition.

DWG: How about not on the installation level but maybe for military exercises. How are you looking at power and energy needs there kind of related to climate change for, you know, global exercises that DoD conducts around the world?

DepSec Kidd: The Climate Adaptation Plan has five lines of effort. The second one is to train and equip a climate-ready force. So we have to have a force that is capable of operating in an environment affected by climate. And so that means both being able to train safely in the heat as well as being able to assess our current and future equipment, and to make that equipment more functional and adaptable in an environment affected by climate.

So again you've asked a question a little bit about mitigation, right? Another great example of where our mission and our climate ambition align. If we can reduce the fossil fuel consumption of our forward forces, we reduce our supply chain vulnerability. If we reduce the fossil fuel consumption of our forward forces, then we reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

Moderator: The next question goes to Ellen Knickmeyer of the Associated Press.

DWG: Thank you very much for doing this, Mr. Kidd.

Could you expand a little bit on what the mitigation part of the review is going to look like? Who's going to be doing that, and when is it going to happen? And are there timelines or dates associated with any of this such as being able to operate 14 days independently of the energy grid? Are you shooting for a date that the Defense Department will be able to do that?

DepSec Kidd: Lots of good questions in there. Let me sort of unpack. This is about adaptation. The mitigation efforts are to follow. There's another executive order being drafted by the White House which will come forth and sort forth a number of the department's mitigation goals. If you go to the CEQ web page right now, you can get a little bit of a foreshadowing of what's going to be in that executive order. But it builds on past statutes. So we have EPACT of 2005, Energy Policy Act; Energy

Independence and Security Act; a new Energy Policy Act of 2020. All of that statute sets out targets for greenhouse gas reductions which will be followed shortly by a new executive order from the White House. So that will set forth our targets.

And I think our targets will be in line with many of the things you've already heard from the administration. I think the science is very clear. We have to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions to zero and we have to do it before 2050 if we want to avoid the most pronounced effects of climate change. And all agencies in the federal government are expected to contribute to that objective within our mission set and parameters.

So we're going to be part of that effort and in terms of who's going to do it, our team's doing that one too, so we're busy as Thom said earlier. I look forward to being able to talk to you in more detail about mitigation plans when the time is right.

But the department does have a long record of mitigation. Again, if you go to the White House web site you can see our trends in terms of reduced energy consumption, in terms of increased greenhouse gas emissions, in terms of reduced petroleum consumption or non-taxable vehicle fleet,

The department has a ten-year record of progress in these areas and we're just going to accelerate that going forward.

Moderator: The next question is Patricia Kime of Military.Com.

DWG: Good morning. Thanks for having me.

The report mentions that you're striving for a climate literate workforce. Can you sort of tell us how that's going to transpire? Does that involve training? Is that going to be by just the fact that you all are readying for this and it's going to be learned just by process? Tell us what you mean by climate literate workforce and how that's going to happen.

DepSec Kidd: That is a great question. Adapting to the reality of climate change will be accomplished through a series of human decisions. Humans will have to make decisions about climate in all levels, in all echelons across the department.

So earlier I said no entity has the ability to opt out of the effects of climate change. No entity in the pentagon has the

option of opting out of responding.

So in order to properly respond we need to have the knowledge, the tools and the ability to make climate-informed decisions at all echelons.

I was talking about this with some junior officers on a podcast a couple of days ago and they said what can I do as a relatively junior officer?

So here's what we're going to do. We're going to go through sort of the levels of decisions that are being made in the department. We're going to look at those decision-makers and what knowledge do they have to have to make a climate-informed decision. We're going to look to see if they have the right tools and information in place, so borrowing from corporate America or from the White House. One tools is the social cost of carbon. What does it mean if you avoid a ton of carbon emissions and how you factor that into the decision-making? So they have the tools and the knowledge to make the decision at their level. We'll do a gap analysis, and we'll start to adjust our training program accordingly.

So for example, an Army transportation convoy leader should understand that not letting the trucks idle is both good operational sense as well as good climate sense. A civilian energy manager on an installation may need to know what's the return on investment of solar panels vice combined heat power plant. So across the department we're going to look at the skills that are needed, the skills that we have, do a gap analysis and use both the military and the civilian education system to fill that gap.

DWG: The last I checked the services did use burn pits in some areas. Does this mean that you all will be changing the way you handle waste in combat? And will that kind of thing, will we never see any more burn pits, which obviously put a lot of carbon into the air?

DepSec Kidd: In regards to carbon emissions, burn pits are very, very far down the ladder in terms of the department's emissions profile. But they're a very significant issue and they also happen to be inside the environmental side of the office that I'm privileged to be part of right now. And we're looking at a range of options in terms of both policy and technology to reduce the

need for burn pits overseas. So it's an important issue. It's one that we take seriously. The technological solutions in many ways have been funded by our team, the ESTCP [Certa] program. We can follow up and give you information there. But just last month a video was given to me of a working prototype of a field incinerator that would replace the burn pit and eliminate a lot of the concerns that folks have about burn pits.

The interesting thing, one of the reasons about burn pits, the actual carbon reduction, we generate a lot of carbon, scope three emissions, when we cart trash out of an installation someplace else. So there are transportation costs.

So if we can get the incineration right. We can reduce a lot of carbon effects.

Moderator: If I can use the power of the chair to follow up on the first part of her question, sir. The Defense Department and the military is drawn from our nation and reflects the national view. There are still a lot of people out there who are climate agnostic or even climate change deniers. How much of your time do you have to spend convincing people in the building of this priority?

DepSec Kidd: Unfortunately there's a lot of disinformation out there right now that's complicating decision-making across the country, both at the individual and national level. But fortunately within inside the department, we're a fact-based organization that makes rational decisions based on observed reality and risk profiles.

So if you look at the effects we've had from climate change., it's observable, it's real and no one in the department denies it. Particularly the new people. The younger folks, the folks that are coming in. This is part of their life, it is part of their future and they care and they're ace for change inside the department. And frankly, as you said, they're representative of America and they're a force for change across America.

Moderator: The next question is Valerie Insinna of Breaking Defense.

DWG: I wanted to ask about sort of the money side of this. Where does the department need to make investments to implement this plan and will we see the impact of this report in the FY23

budget with potentially larger investment in certain areas? If you could guide us on where we might see some of that.

DepSec Kidd: The largest investment stream is going to be the existing investment streams, right? So as I mentioned earlier, we're going to modify the military construction investment stream. As we buy equipment we're going to look for equipment that is either more fuel efficient, has greater operational capability. So the existing streams are going to be adjusted and won't necessarily stand out.

I think that going forward, we have identified a couple of areas that we could use some significant increases in, and Congress has talked to us about those. I don't want to get ahead of the budget process, but we have an account, the Energy Resilience Conservation Improvement Fund, ERCIF. We have the [REPI] program which helps ERCIF invest in the micro-grids that I talked about earlier. We have the [REPI] program which helps to build strong ecosystems on or adjacent to our installations, using sort of natural ecosystems as a means for climate adaptation. So those might be some of the areas I would watch for major increases going forward. But most of the investment will come from existing budget streams.

DWG: If I could ask sort of a devil's advocate type of question. The United States near peers, China and Russia, they might not be leaning as far forward as we are on battling climate change, especially their militaries. So how do you sort of balance the need for environmental concerns with the area of strategic competition?

DepSec Kidd: I don't want to get ahead of my friends in OSD policy when they come out with their Climate Risk Assessment and some of their other policy documents where they address climate change as a factor of geopolitical competition.

I'd just say a couple of things. We know we are transitioning to a carbon-free future so the country that gets there first wins. So if China and Russia aren't working to get there, they're going to lose.

Moderator: The next question is from Jeff Seldin of VOA.

DWG: Good morning. Thanks very much for doing this. A couple of questions.

Where is the need to implement this Climate Change Adaptation Plan most [inaudible] in the sense of where climate change is creating or exacerbating threats to the U.S. or U.S. interests, and the Pentagon, DoD, is having trouble keeping pace?

And the second question, and maybe this is too far of a stretch, but are there any concerns that U.S. adversaries or other players on the global stage are starting to or trying to use climate change as a weapon against the U.S. or U.S. forces that are positioned around the globe?

DepSec Kidd: In terms of overseas threats, the department is working on a Climate Risk Assessment which will come out in the not too distant future so I'll let them talk about that.

We have done the Defense Climate Assessment Tool, which I mentioned earlier, we have taken a look at 1400 installations and sites across the department. We've looked at two timeframes, and two emissions scenarios and examined eight areas of effect. And from that we're able to identify both the most likely effects at an installation and the broadest effects across the department.

Frankly, for the continental United States, the top effect will be drought and how drought will affect our training lands. If you have drought plus heat, which creates the potential of fire hazards, you can no longer do the things that we need to do to train our soldiers and marines in particular. So drought is the most likely pronounced effect.

In terms of international competition on climate change, I ended my last remark with kind of a strong statement, but there's no areas where cooperation among states is more necessary for the common good, and there's a tremendous amount of cooperation ongoing right now. There will be more hopefully in Glasgow coming up soon at COP, and this administration is committed to cooperating with other nations to address the realities of climate change.

Within the Defense Department's climate adaptation plan, our fifth line of effort is focused on collaboration both with other federal agencies, with state governments and with other nations.

I do think there have been examples where climate change or the U.S.' past posture on climate change was used as sort of an

informational warfare, a foil against us in terms of the fact that we came out of Paris, handed our detractors a line of attack that says look, the United States doesn't care about you, fill in the blank.

Fortunately that's changed. We now have to back that up with words and actions. I think we're on the way of doing that.

DWG: Can you tell us a bit more about where you saw some of that informational warfare and what steps are being taken right now, especially with smaller countries that perhaps don't have as many resources to take on climate change even if they may be getting hit harder than others, what steps you're taking to try to get back on track. Can you elaborate on that at all?

DepSec Kidd: That's really not part of my current official portfolio. I mean I follow this topic quite avidly at the State Department, at the Department of Energy. These are prior places where I've served in the government. So there have been some press reports about how the Taliban leveraged floods in Pakistan to discredit the United States. There have also been other reports of other nations sort of taking a shot at us around the world. I wouldn't use me as a source for that, though. I'd go after some other references.

Moderator: The next question goes to Jim Garamone of DoD News.

DWG: Thanks Mr. Kidd. And by the way, don't call Glasgow Glasgow when you go there. The Scots will throw you in the sea.

For at least the last decade DoD has been discussing this and I remember Admiral Mullen being among the first to really talk about the problems associated with climate change and he was talking at that point about drought in the Middle East and what a [DM] in Turkey would mean to the folks downstream. But I just wonder how is DoD compared to the rest of the government? Are we ahead of the power curve? Are we behind it? And it's a whole of government approach. How are you working with the interagency people? That's a long, drawn-out thing but you see where I'm trying to get you.

DepSec Kidd: Thanks, and thanks for tour pronunciation correction. I've got a whole list of words that my family makes fun of that I can't quite get right.

One advantage the department has had is that we've had strong bipartisan support in our authorizing committees around the issue of climate change adaptation, climate change resilience and energy resilience. So if you look at the NDA bills that have come out over the last ten years or so, there have been requirements on the Department of Defense to plan and to be prepared. So thanks to that bipartisan support we had people and staff and structures in place that were able to receive this mission from the new administration. So just a shout-out to our friends in Congress on that one.

In terms of the interagency, the Department of Defense is part of it. We work very hard across the interagency with our colleagues at CEQ, at the National Climate Task Force which is Headed by Honorable Gina McCarthy and Honorable Carey. So we're part of that effort.

I've worked the interagency now for 17, 18 years and this interagency, this administration, we're all in. All agencies are contributing and working together.

DWG: You didn't really answer if we're ahead of the power curve or are we hopelessly behind here?

DepSec Kidd: We being the Department of Defense?

DWG: Yes.

DepSec Kidd: I'm not inclined to make interagency comparisons. I would just say that the Department of Defense was able to get a running start when the administration came in with these requirements thanks to the support we've had from Congress.

Moderator: Christopher Woody of Business Insider.

DWG: Thank you for your time today, Mr. Kidd.

I wanted to ask a more forward-looking question here. We've seen the climate change effects on military installations and we've seen military had to get involved on the ground in the U.S. to help recover from climate-change related events. And climate change and its related effects are only going to intensify.

If the department and the U.S. government as a whole doesn't get moving quickly enough on adapting and building resilience, is

there a risk that dealing with these events will demand so much of the department's time and resources that it will have a detrimental effect on the Pentagon's primary focus of preparing for and fighting wars?

DepSec Kidd: At the beginning of the document or from the remarks from the Secretary and introduction of the document, I think it's there, if not stated then implied, that there's a recognition that climate change is going to expand our operational requirements. So the short answer would be yes. Climate change is going to force us as a department to make hard choices about where we allocate our forces and assets.

An interesting statement by General Dan Hokanson who runs the Guard Bureau a few weeks ago, and it was published by one of the organizations here, I think Tony you guys published this article, where General Hokanson said the National Guard no longer prepares for fire season. The National Guard prepared for a fire year. That's a very telling quote.

That means the National Guard is already adjusting its planning, its headquarters assets and its units and formations to be prepared to support, to provide defense support for civil authorities, to fight wildfires year round. Twenty years ago, 30 years ago, that was not the reality. It's the reality today.

Also as we look at 2021 we say wow, this was a really bad year for forest fires. Twenty years from now we may look back and say that year wasn't that bad. That's the unfortunate reality and already on the ground indicators, the answer to your question is yes.

Moderator: Scott Maucione of Federal News Network.

DWG: Thanks for doing this.

The question I head was one of the lines of effort, I think it's the fourth one, says that you will leverage your ability as one of the largest buyers to really push companies to try and fall in line, to do something different, right? What kind of opportunities do you have to do that? And how would you do that in the future?

DepSec Kidd: I don't think we're going to push or we're going to make anyone fall in line, we're going to cooperate with our

supply chain to address embedded greenhouse gas emissions in a way that improves supply chain integrity and reduces the total greenhouse gas emissions on the part of the department.

Most smart companies recognize that greenhouse gas disclosure and accounting is the reality of the future There's a movement afoot to make climate change vulnerabilities a material weakness in financial reports across companies and there's a tremendous set of initiatives and momentum in the private sector already to look at greenhouse gas emissions. We're just going to get in line with that momentum. We're going to work with the private sector. We're going to work with our partners to go after those scope 3 emissions.

DWG: Is there any idea how much these companies are putting out when it comes to greenhouse emissions? You talked about how the Defense Department is 55th, I believe, in the world. These companies clearly put out a lot of emissions especially when it comes to you rely on energy companies, you rely on a lot of tests and evaluation, all that kind of stuff. How much of an impact may they have?

DepSec Kidd: A simple estimate. If you compare the Department of Defense to another sort of large industrial conglomerate, our scope 3 emissions in the supply chain are probably equal to our scope 1 and 2 emissions combined. So about half of the department's emissions are probably in our supply chain, but we don't know for sure.

A number of our companies are publishing greenhouse gas emissions, or have engaged in greenhouse gas accounting. I would just refer you to the ESG reports of major defense contractors to do a little digging and find out which ones are doing that and which ones have made actual commitments to reductions or actually accounting and reporting. But there's a number out there in our supply chain.

We frequently meet at the highest levels with these companies, the CEOs and others come in and talk to our senior leadership. As part of those meetings now we're asking them about what their greenhouse gas emissions profile is like and what their climate commitments are like. So that's part of the discussion that we're having.

Moderator: Our last questioner of the day is Ellen Milhiser of

DepSec Kidd – 10/8/21

Synopsis.

DWG: Good morning, thank you so much for doing this.

Were you working with the emissions, climate change and everything with the Defense Health Agency and military treatment facilities? And that goes in a couple of ways. First of all for installation self-resilience, ensuring that there are medical facilities on base just in case they need to have this 48 hours of self-resilience.

Secondly, in terms of the hospitals incineration facilities and eliminating medical waste.

DepSec Kidd: The medical system is part of the overall resilience and the medical facilities have to comply with the same resilience standards and expectations as the rest of the department. Medical facilities are difficult because they are so energy intense, so water intense, so resource intense. But we have some great examples of where we've managed to harden those facilities.

The Army out at Fort Irwin, California has a lead platinum hospital in the middle of the desert as an example of what we can do when we work to address these issues.

In terms of medical waste incineration, much of that is not done on-site. It's done at commercial incinerators that have been sanctioned and permitted by other federal agencies.

DWG: In terms of having the entire installation be self-resilient and reliant for 48 hours, is the DHA required to have any plans in place to ensure that medical care would be ready for a surge if they can't go out into the community for that period?

DepSec Kidd: I honestly cannot answer your last question. I don't know. We can sort of try to take a look at that.

I do know that our medical facilities are part of an integrated region-wide medical response network. We do have sort of shared services agreements with hospitals and medical services outside of the installation.

We've also done a number of exercises where we call them a black start exercise or where we disconnect the installation in its

entirety from the power grid to see what happens and to observe whether we do in fact have the level of resilience that we want.

We've had some tremendous successes. Some installations have disconnected from the grid and no one knew because everything just worked. We've had some others which have been problematic and we've had some hospitals that could not meet their anticipated resilience requirements and we've learned from that exercise and we've taken corrective actions.

Moderator: Mr. Kidd, as we approach the end of our time I wanted to invite you to offer any final wrap-up thoughts that you may care to.

DepSec Kidd: First of all, thanks everyone for your time. My humorous thought is if you guys all publish something my mom's going to spend a lot of money buying all your articles and magazines. So that's my humorous thought for the day.

But my serious thought for the day is look, climate change is here. It's going to affect everything we do. It's going to set the context for the department, for our government, for our country and for ourselves. It can no longer be ignored, and the Department of Defense takes this issue very seriously and we're going to be part of the solution.

Moderator: Mr. Kidd, I thank you so much for sharing your time and wisdom on this very important topic today. And to all the correspondents who joined the Defense Writers Group meeting, thank you as well.

Everyone have a terrific weekend.

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