



SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

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MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
DEPUTY CHIEF MANAGEMENT OFFICER
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
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DIRECTOR, OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION
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ASSISTANTS TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT
DIRECTOR, NET ASSESSMENT
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Policy on Senior Mentors

The use of senior mentors by the Department of Defense (DoD) enhances the readiness of our Armed Forces across a wide range of strategic, operational, joint, functional, technical, managerial and developmental issues. The relevant prior service, joint force experience, and unique expertise of these senior consultants provide senior leadership with valuable insights and contribute to the continuous improvement of the Department's operations. To ensure consistency and transparency across the Department in this important program, I am directing the adoption of a uniform hiring process.

For the purposes of this policy, "senior mentor" means a retired flag, general or other military officer or senior retired civilian official who provides expert experience-based mentoring, teaching, training, advice, and recommendations to senior military officers, staffs and students as they participate in war games, warfighting courses, operational planning, operational exercises, and decision-making exercises. It is important that DoD be able to secure the kind of specialized expertise required for these operational exercises. At the same time, it is imperative that the experts we hire be subject to certain ethics laws and regulations that apply to Federal employees to avoid any perception of impropriety. To that end, it is the policy of the Department to hire all senior mentors as highly qualified experts (HQE) under 5 U.S.C. § 9903 and require that they comply with all applicable Federal personnel and ethics laws and regulations. As a



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part-time Federal employee, among other obligations, an HQE is required to file a financial disclosure report and may not divulge nonpublic information or participate in official matters that raise a financial conflict of interest. Holding senior mentors to such ethical standards promotes public trust and confidence in the integrity of the Department's programs and operations. To the maximum extent practicable, current senior mentors should be converted to HQE's within 90 days.

The Department is grateful for the patriotic service that many former officers give to the senior mentors program. They continue to serve the Department with integrity and greatly contribute to the continuous improvement of all of our operations.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert M. Gates". The signature is written in black ink and is centered on the page.

Senior Mentors Policy FACT SHEET

Need for Senior Mentors. The use of senior mentors enhances the readiness of our Armed Forces across a wide range of strategic, operational, joint, functional, technical, managerial, and developmental issues. The prior service, joint force experience, and unique expertise of these consultants that can be leveraged during operational exercises provide senior leadership with valuable insights and contribute to the continuous improvement of DoD's operations. DOD is grateful for the patriotic service many former officers give to the senior mentor program as they continue to serve us with integrity, and greatly contribute to the improvement of our operations.

Definition. "Senior mentors" are retired flag, general or other military officers or retired senior civilian officials who provide expert experience-based mentoring, teaching, training, advice, and recommendations to senior military officers, staffs and students as they participate in war games, warfighting courses, operational planning, operational exercises, and decision-making exercises.

Policy. Because of DoD's increased need for senior mentors to participate in warfighting exercises, the Secretary of Defense has directed the adoption of a uniform hiring process that will provide consistency and transparency to the mentors program. The new policy balances the need for DoD to secure the specialized knowledge required for operational exercises with the need to hire such experts in a manner that promotes public trust and confidence. To this end, the Secretary has directed that all senior mentors be hired as "Highly Qualified Experts" (HQEs).

HQE Description. Generally, an HQE is hired as a Federal employee because he or she is a leading authority in an area of expertise needed by the Government to satisfy emerging and non permanent requirements. HQEs work within the following established framework:

- Standard Rates of Pay: DoD may authorize basic pay of up to the amount authorized for the Executive Schedule Level II, which in 2010 is \$179,700. This is the equivalent salary authorized for 3- and 4-star flag and general officers on active duty.*
- Financial Disclosure Reports: HQEs who serve more than 60 days in a calendar year and earn at or above \$119,554, must file a public financial disclosure report. Others file the confidential financial disclosure report.
- Conflicts of Interest: HQEs cannot participate in an official capacity in any particular matter in which he or she has a conflict of interest. An HQE who serves more than 60 days in a 365-day period may not represent another party back to DOD on matters pending at the Department.
- Non-Disclosure of Nonpublic Information: HQEs cannot disclose nonpublic information to outside entities, including a private sector employer.
- "Cooling Off" Period: Senior HQEs (earning \$155,440 or more) who serve 60 days or more are subject to a one-year "cooling-off period" that restricts them from representing clients and other entities back to DOD for one year.

* In the future, HQEs may benefit from a new 35% Danger Pay that applies to civilian employees in the General Schedule who serve temporarily in zones of armed conflict.