SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000

AUG - 4 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EMPLOYEES

SUBJECT: Ethical Standards for All Hands

Those entrusted by our nation with carrying out violence, those entrusted with the lives of our troops, and those entrusted with enormous sums of taxpayer money must set an honorable example in all we do.

I expect every member of the Department to play the ethical midfield. I need you to be aggressive and show initiative without running the ethical sidelines, where even one misstep will have you out of bounds. I want our focus to be on the essence of ethical conduct: doing what is right at all times, regardless of the circumstances or whether anyone is watching.

To ensure each of us is ready to do what is right, without hesitation, when ethical dilemmas arise, we must train and prepare ourselves and our subordinates. Our prior reflection and our choice to live by an ethical code will reinforce what we stand for, so we remain morally strong especially in the face of adversity.

Through our example and through coaching of all hands, we will ensure ethical standards are maintained. Never forget, our willingness to take the Oath of Office and to accept the associated responsibilities means that even citizens who have never met us trust us to do the right thing, never abusing our position nor looking the other way when we see something wrong.

I am proud to serve alongside you.

cc:
Deputy Secretary of Defense

OSD009354-17/CMD012701-17