



**Congressional
Research Service**

Informing the legislative debate since 1914

Defense Primer: A Guide for New Members

Lawrence Kapp

Specialist in Military Manpower Policy

Updated June 10, 2019

Congressional Research Service

7-....

www.crs.gov

R44757

Contents

Introduction	1
Congress and the Armed Forces	1
Congress’s Constitutional Authority with Regard to the Armed Forces	1
The NDAA Process	1
Navigating the NDAA.....	1
Defense Appropriations Process.....	1
The Executive Branch	2
President’s Constitutional Authority with Regard to the Armed Forces	2
The Department of Defense	2
The Military Departments	2
Department of the Army.....	2
Department of the Navy	2
Department of the Air Force	2
Defense Strategy and Budget	2
Geography, Strategy, and U.S. Force Design	2
Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution Process (PPBE).....	2
Future Years Defense Program (FYDP).....	2
DOD Transfer and Reprogramming Authorities	3
Defense Working Capital Funds.....	3
People	3
Military Officers.....	3
Military Enlisted Personnel.....	3
Personnel Tempo	3
Regular Military Compensation	3
Military Pay Raise.....	3
Military Health System	3
Commissaries and Exchanges	3
Exceptional Family Member Program	3
Military Retirement.....	3
DOD Contractors	4
Equipment	4
Procurement	4
Defense Industrial Base.....	4
Emerging Technologies.....	4
Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation	4
Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering.....	4
The Berry and Kissell Amendments.....	4
Types of Forces.....	4
Ground Forces	4
Airpower	4
Naval Forces.....	5
Special Operations Forces.....	5
Strategic Nuclear Forces	5
Ballistic Missile Defense.....	5
Reserve Forces	5

Employment of Forces	5
Legal Authorities for the Use of Military Forces	5
Commanding U.S. Military Operations	5
Command and Control of Nuclear Forces.....	5
Cyberspace Operations.....	5
Information Operations	5
Electronic Warfare.....	5
Military Use of the Electronic Spectrum.....	6
Intelligence Community	6
National and Defense Intelligence	6
Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence).....	6
Intelligence Support to Military Operations.....	6
Budgeting for National and Defense Intelligence	6

Contacts

Author Contact Information	6
----------------------------------	---

Introduction

The Constitution provides Congress with broad powers over the Armed Forces, including the power “To raise and support Armies”, “To provide and maintain a Navy”, “To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces”, and “To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States.... ”

CRS has developed a series of short primers to provide Members of Congress an overview of key aspects of the Department of Defense and how Congress exercises authority over it. A consolidated list of these primers is contained in this report, along with links to each document.

For a pdf compilation of all the primers as of January 4, 2019, see *Defense Primer, A Guide for New Members*.

For additional information on these issues, please contact the authors of the individual reports. Their contact information is listed at the end of each document.

Congress and the Armed Forces

Congress’s Constitutional Authority with Regard to the Armed Forces

CRS In Focus IF10535, *Defense Primer: Congress’s Constitutional Authority with Regard to the Armed Forces*, by Jennifer K. Elsea

The NDAA Process

CRS In Focus IF10515, *Defense Primer: The NDAA Process*, by Valerie Heitshusen and Brendan W. McGarry

Navigating the NDAA

CRS In Focus IF10516, *Defense Primer: Navigating the NDAA*, by Brendan W. McGarry and Valerie Heitshusen

Defense Appropriations Process

CRS In Focus IF10514, *Defense Primer: Defense Appropriations Process*, by James V. Saturno and Brendan W. McGarry

The Executive Branch

President's Constitutional Authority with Regard to the Armed Forces

CRS In Focus IF10534, *Defense Primer: President's Constitutional Authority with Regard to the Armed Forces*, by Jennifer K. Elsea

The Department of Defense

CRS In Focus IF10543, *Defense Primer: The Department of Defense*, by Kathleen J. McInnis

The Military Departments

CRS In Focus IF10550, *Defense Primer: The Military Departments*, by Heidi M. Peters

Department of the Army

CRS In Focus IF10544, *Defense Primer: Department of the Army and Army Command Structure*, by Barbara Salazar Torreon and Andrew Feickert

Department of the Navy

CRS In Focus IF10484, *Defense Primer: Department of the Navy*, by Ronald O'Rourke

Department of the Air Force

CRS In Focus IF10547, *Defense Primer: The United States Air Force*, by Jeremiah Gertler

Defense Strategy and Budget

Geography, Strategy, and U.S. Force Design

CRS In Focus IF10485, *Defense Primer: Geography, Strategy, and U.S. Force Design*, by Ronald O'Rourke

Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution Process (PPBE)

CRS In Focus IF10429, *Defense Primer: Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution (PPBE) Process*, by Brendan W. McGarry and Heidi M. Peters

Future Years Defense Program (FYDP)

CRS In Focus IF10831, *Defense Primer: Future Years Defense Program (FYDP)*, by Brendan W. McGarry and Heidi M. Peters

DOD Transfer and Reprogramming Authorities

CRS In Focus IF11243, *Defense Primer: DOD Transfer and Reprogramming Authorities*, by Aaron D. Walenga and Brendan W. McGarry

Defense Working Capital Funds

CRS In Focus IF11233, *Defense Primer: Defense Working Capital Funds*, by G. James Herrera

People

Military Officers

CRS In Focus IF10685, *Defense Primer: Military Officers*, by Lawrence Kapp

Military Enlisted Personnel

CRS In Focus IF10684, *Defense Primer: Military Enlisted Personnel*, by Lawrence Kapp

Personnel Tempo

CRS In Focus IF11007, *Defense Primer: Personnel Tempo (PERSTEMPO)*, by Kristy N. Kamarck

Regular Military Compensation

CRS In Focus IF10532, *Defense Primer: Regular Military Compensation*, by Lawrence Kapp

Military Pay Raise

CRS In Focus IF10260, *Defense Primer: Military Pay Raise*, by Lawrence Kapp

Military Health System

CRS In Focus IF10530, *Defense Primer: Military Health System*, by Bryce H. P. Mendez

Commissaries and Exchanges

CRS In Focus IF11089, *Defense Primer: Military Commissaries and Exchanges*, by Kristy N. Kamarck and Barbara Salazar Torreon

Exceptional Family Member Program

CRS In Focus IF11049, *Defense Primer: Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP)*, by Justin D. Ellsworth and Bryce H. P. Mendez

Military Retirement

CRS In Focus IF10483, *Defense Primer: Military Retirement*, by Kristy N. Kamarck

DOD Contractors

CRS In Focus IF10600, *Defense Primer: Department of Defense Contractors*, by Heidi M. Peters and Moshe Schwartz

Equipment

Procurement

CRS In Focus IF10599, *Defense Primer: Procurement*, by Heidi M. Peters and Brendan W. McGarry

Defense Industrial Base

CRS In Focus IF10548, *Defense Primer: U.S. Defense Industrial Base*, by Moshe Schwartz and Heidi M. Peters

Emerging Technologies

CRS In Focus IF11105, *Defense Primer: Emerging Technologies*, by Kelley M. Sayler

Research, Development, Test, and Evaluation

CRS In Focus IF10553, *Defense Primer: RDT&E*, by John F. Sargent Jr.

Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering

CRS In Focus IF10834, *Defense Primer: Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering*, by Marcy E. Gallo and Moshe Schwartz

The Berry and Kissell Amendments

CRS In Focus IF10609, *Defense Primer: The Berry and Kissell Amendments*, by Michaela D. Platzer

Types of Forces

Ground Forces

CRS In Focus IF10571, *Defense Primer: Organization of U.S. Ground Forces*, by Barbara Salazar Torreon and Andrew Feickert

Airpower

CRS In Focus IF10546, *Defense Primer: United States Airpower*, by Jeremiah Gertler

Naval Forces

CRS In Focus IF10486, *Defense Primer: Naval Forces*, by Ronald O'Rourke

Special Operations Forces

CRS In Focus IF10545, *Defense Primer: Special Operations Forces*, by Barbara Salazar Torreon and Andrew Feickert

Strategic Nuclear Forces

CRS In Focus IF10519, *Defense Primer: Strategic Nuclear Forces*, by Amy F. Woolf

Ballistic Missile Defense

CRS In Focus IF10541, *Defense Primer: Ballistic Missile Defense*, by Steven A. Hildreth

Reserve Forces

CRS In Focus IF10540, *Defense Primer: Reserve Forces*, by Lawrence Kapp

Employment of Forces

Legal Authorities for the Use of Military Forces

CRS In Focus IF10539, *Defense Primer: Legal Authorities for the Use of Military Forces*, by Jennifer K. Elsea

Commanding U.S. Military Operations

CRS In Focus IF10542, *Defense Primer: Commanding U.S. Military Operations*, by Kathleen J. McInnis

Command and Control of Nuclear Forces

CRS In Focus IF10521, *Defense Primer: Command and Control of Nuclear Forces*, by Amy F. Woolf

Cyberspace Operations

CRS In Focus IF10537, *Defense Primer: Cyberspace Operations*, by Catherine A. Theohary

Information Operations

CRS In Focus IF10771, *Defense Primer: Information Operations*, by Catherine A. Theohary

Electronic Warfare

CRS In Focus IF11118, *Defense Primer: Electronic Warfare*, by John R. Hoehn

Military Use of the Electronic Spectrum

CRS In Focus IF11155, *Defense Primer: Military Use of the Electromagnetic Spectrum*, by John R. Hoehn

Intelligence Community

National and Defense Intelligence

CRS In Focus IF10525, *Defense Primer: National and Defense Intelligence*, by Michael E. DeVine

Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence)

CRS In Focus IF10523, *Defense Primer: Under Secretary of Defense (Intelligence)*, by Michael E. DeVine

Intelligence Support to Military Operations

CRS In Focus IF10574, *Defense Primer: Intelligence Support to Military Operations*, by Michael E. DeVine

Budgeting for National and Defense Intelligence

CRS In Focus IF10524, *Defense Primer: Budgeting for National and Defense Intelligence*, by Michael E. DeVine

Author Contact Information

Lawrence Kapp
Specialist in Military Manpower Policy
-redcted@crs.loc.gov-....

EveryCRSReport.com

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) is a federal legislative branch agency, housed inside the Library of Congress, charged with providing the United States Congress non-partisan advice on issues that may come before Congress.

EveryCRSReport.com republishes CRS reports that are available to all Congressional staff. The reports are not classified, and Members of Congress routinely make individual reports available to the public.

Prior to our republication, we redacted phone numbers and email addresses of analysts who produced the reports. We also added this page to the report. We have not intentionally made any other changes to any report published on EveryCRSReport.com.

CRS reports, as a work of the United States government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.

Information in a CRS report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to members of Congress in connection with CRS' institutional role.

EveryCRSReport.com is not a government website and is not affiliated with CRS. We do not claim copyright on any CRS report we have republished.