

(b)(6)

CTR OSD PA (USA)

From: OSD Pentagon PA Mailbox Duty Officer Press Operations
Sent: Monday, March 4, 2024 4:33 PM
To: (b)(6) USN (USA); (b)(6) CIV OSD PA (USA); (b)(6)
(b)(6) USN OSD PA (USA)
Subject: FW: Scientific American: AARO Media Event 3/6/24

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Categories: UAP AATIP Elizondo UFO, Press Queries

I think this is one of you

From: (b)(6)
Sent: Monday, March 4, 2024 3:21 PM
To: OSD Pentagon PA Mailbox Duty Officer Press Operations (b)(6)
Subject: Scientific American: AARO Media Event 3/6/24

To: OSD / Public Affairs
From (b)(6), Scientific American

I'm an editor at Scientific American. I'd like to be added to your press list for any AARO related events. You are listed as the press contact for this office. We understand from reporting that a media event is planned from this office this week.

Thanks,

(b)(6)
Senior Opinion Editor
Scientific American
1100 15th St., NW
4th Floor
Washington DC 20005

(b)(6)

CTR OSD PA (USA)

From: (b)(6) CIV OSD PA (USA)
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 5:25 PM
Subject: OSD(PA) COB
Signed By: (b)(6)

DOD RELEASES

* SECDEF Call with Kuwait. Posted a readout of Secretary Austin's call today with the Kuwaiti Acting Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Defense, and Minister of Interior, His Excellency Sheikh Fahad Youssef Al-Sabah, to reaffirm the strong bilateral defense partnership between the U.S. and Kuwait. SECDEF congratulated the Minister on his recent appointment as Minister of Defense and thanked Kuwait for longstanding and critical hospitality in hosting U.S. forces. Secretary Austin also acknowledged Kuwait's leading role in working to achieve regional stability and security. The readout is posted here: <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3698567/secretary-of-defense-lloyd-j-austin-iiis-phone-call-with-the-kuwaiti-minister-o/>

* DSD Visit to California. Posted a readout on Deputy Secretary Hicks visiting Camp Pendleton and Fort Irwin, California, on March 4-5 to engage with senior Army leadership running Project Convergence Capstone 4 (PCC4) and participating in the Global Information Dominance Experimentation (GIDE) series. The readout is posted here: <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3697112/readout-of-deputy-secretary-of-defense-kathleen-hicks-visit-to-california/>

* DSD Statement on PPBE Final Report. Posted a statement by Deputy Secretary Hicks on the Commission on Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution (PPBE) Reform final report. The Implementation Plan, led by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/CFO (OUSD(C)) in conjunction with stakeholders across the Department, addresses the implementation of the 13 near-term recommendations. DSD's statement is posted here: <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3698304/deputy-secretary-of-defense-kathleen-hicks-statement-on-the-commission-on-plann/>

The final report is posted here:

<https://media.defense.gov/2024/Mar/06/2003407506/-1/-1/0/DOPSR-CLEARED-2-21-2024-PUBLIC-RELEASE-VERSION-IMPLEMENTATION-PLAN-PPBE-COMMISSION-RECOMMENDATIONS.PDF>

* U.S.-Oman Joint Military Commission. Posted a readout on the U.S.-Oman Joint Military Commission in Muscat, Oman, on March 5-6. DASD(ME) Amb. Shapiro led the U.S. delegation. Secretary General, His Excellency Dr. Mohammed Bin Nasser Al-Za'abi, led the Oman delegation. The readout is posted here: <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3698420/readout-of-us-oman-joint-military-commission/>

* SECDEF Call with Germany. Posted a readout of Secretary Austin's call Monday with German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius to reaffirm the strong transatlantic alliance in the face of Russian attempts to sow disunity. Both agreed that ensuring that Ukraine has what it needs to defend itself against Russia's onslaught remains a top priority for the U.S. and Germany. The readout is posted here: <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3697566/readout-of-secretary-of-defense-lloyd-j-austin-iiis-call-with-german-minister-o/>

* Papua New Guinea. Posted a readout of ASD(IPSA) Dr. Ratner's meeting today with Papua New Guinea's Deputy Prime Minister John Rosso at the Pentagon. The two officials discussed how the U.S. and PNG have deepened their defense and security ties to further advance a shared vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific, including peace, stability, and prosperity in the Pacific Islands region. The readout is posted here:

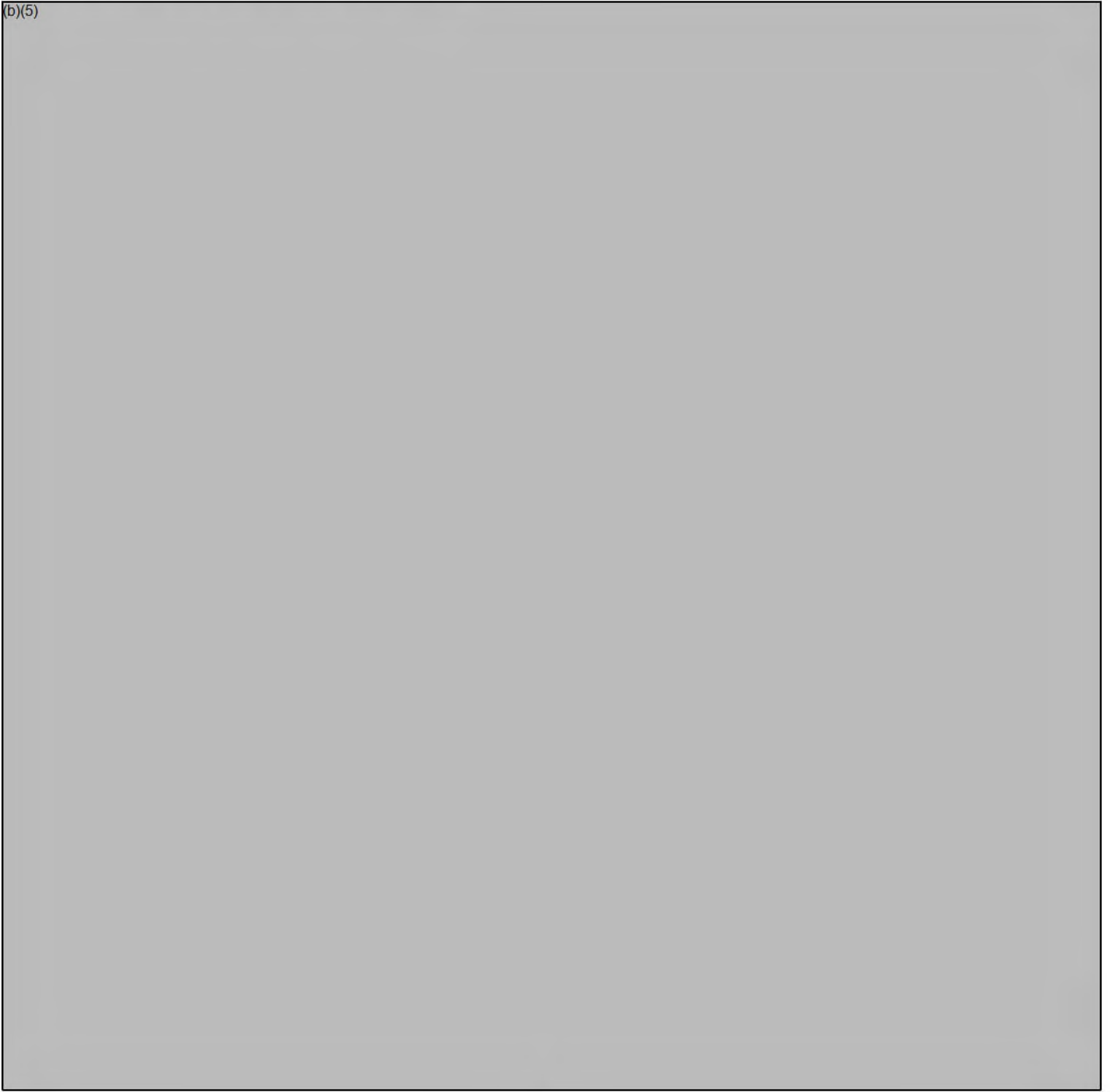
<https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3697791/readout-of-assistant-secretary-of-defense-ely-ratners-meeting-with-papua-new-gu/>

* Press Briefing Transcript. Posted a transcript of Tuesday's press briefing with Pentagon Press Secretary Maj Gen Ryder. Read the transcript here:

<https://www.defense.gov/News/Transcripts/Transcript/Article/3697048/pentagon-press-secretary-air-force-maj-gen-pat-ryder-holds-a-press-briefing/>

THREE DAY FORECAST (All events subject to change)

(b)(5)



QUERIES OF NOTE

* CDAO IG Evaluation. Brandi Vincent, Defense Scoop, reached out to ask about an OIG evaluation of the Chief Digital and AI Office that OIG announced in January. Coordinated with CDAO: "The CDAO routinely works with the DOD IG on evaluations of our core processes and capabilities. As a new organization, only about two years in existence, we are particularly interested in how we can continually improve and make our efforts more effective and efficient. We welcome this evaluation and look forward to their recommendations."

* DOT&E F35 Report. Tony Capaccio, Bloomberg, asked whether the most recent DOT&E report on the F35 is provided to allies and FMS partners. Provided the following response, coordinated with DOT&E and F35 JPO: "The F-35 Initial Operational Test and Evaluation (IOT&E) was conducted under the auspices of a Department / Ministry of Defense level Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the United States, United Kingdom, Australia and Netherlands governments. The IOT&E MOU participants were instrumental in the successful completion of testing and have access to information from IOT&E in accordance with the MOU."

ADDITIONAL ITEMS OF INTEREST

* Army War College Podcast. PTDO DUSD(P) Ms. Dalton joined U.S. Army War College Professor of History Dr. Granieri for a conversation on DoD's priority to defend the homeland, paced to the growing multi-domain threat posed by the People's Republic of China. PTDO DUSD(P) provided insights on the recently signed Homeland Defense Planning Guidance and the foundational concept of resilience. Link to the podcast: <https://warroom.armywarcollege.edu/podcasts/melissa-dalton/>

* USC Annenberg Off-Record Roundtable. A/USD(P) Ms. Baker joined Barbara Starr of the USC Annenberg Center on Communication Leadership for an off-record roundtable with Pentagon Press Corps members, academics, and defense analysts. The discussion covered a range of topics to include humanitarian assistance for Gaza, Ukraine security assistance, Western Hemisphere security, and ongoing dialogue with allies and partners.

* MCEIP Director Interview. Manufacturing Capability Expansion & Investment Prioritization (MCEIP) Director Mr. Di Stasio conducted a background interview, attributed to a Defense Official, with Drew Fitzgerald, Wall Street Journal, regarding U.S. and global production and testing of ammonium perchlorate (AP) - a chemical used in solid rocket motor propellant. Anticipate coverage will be balanced and incorporate DoD perspectives and efforts to ensure access to this critical materiel. WSJ publication date is TBD.

Defense Press Operations

(b)(6) **CTR OSD PA (USA)**

From: (b)(6) CIV OSD PA (USA)
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:52 PM
To: (b)(6) USAF OSD PA (USA); (b)(6) USAF OSD PA (USA)
Subject: FW: Following up from Unders
Signed By: (b)(6)

Keeping you in the loop...especially since this the summary below Mr. Meagher's email is primarily about a Hill engagement led by an OSD(P) principal not in my portfolio....

From: (b)(6) CIV OSD PA (USA)
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:43 PM
To: Meagher, Christopher M SES (USA) (b)(6); (b)(6)
(b)(6)
Subject: RE: Following up from Unders

Thanks! (b)(6)

(b)(5)

Regards,

(b)(6)

From: Meagher, Christopher M SES (USA) (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:35 PM
To: (b)(6) CIV OSD PA (USA) (b)(6); OSD Pentagon PA List Press
(b)(6)
Subject: FW: Following up from Unders

(b)(6) – just flagging this chain below.

Chris

From: Bodian, Lane A SES OSD OASD LA (USA) (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:28 PM
To: Wirkkala, Rheanne E HON OSD OASD LA (USA) (b)(6); Meagher, Christopher M SES (USA) (b)(6); King, Heather SES SD (b)(6); Waibel, Carlie S SES (USA) (b)(6)
Cc: Mancinelli, Thomas J SES OSD OASD LA (USA) (b)(6); Magsamen, Kelly E SES (USA) (b)(6); Zier, Caroline G SES OSD OUSD POLICY (USA) (b)(6); Yayboke, Erol K SES (USA) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Following up from Unders

Rheanne,

Quick summary:

- This morning PTDO ASD Zimmerman (HD&HA) was joined by RADM Spedero (JS) and Maj Gen Sherman (USAF) in a briefing to SASC members regarding the December events at JBLE and to more broadly discuss drone incursion issues.
- Senators Reed (D-RI), Wicker (R-MS), Shaheen (D-NH), Gillibrand (D-NY), Ernst (R-IA), Cramer (R-ND), Tuberville (R-AL), Rounds (R-SD), Schmitt (R-MO), Cotton (R-AR), Manchin (D-WV), Peters (D-MI), Kaine (D-VA), and Kelly (D-AZ) attended. Not all asked questions and only Sen. Reed stayed for the entirety of the brief.
- The briefing was viewed by members as an informative first step for what is a very complex and concerning problem that must be quickly addressed. Sen. Reed highlighted multiple times that Congress is in part responsible for the confusion with counter-sUAS authorities and that a legislative fix may be required. Sen. Reed also focused on the number of agencies involved and the potential need for a lead USG entity.
- There was an animated response by Sen. Gillibrand to a comment by Ms. Zimmerman regarding there not being a DoD-wide database for cataloging UAS incursions. Sen. Gillibrand believes sUAS should be catalogued by AARO. Ms. Zimmerman briefly mentioned stand-up of the SIG C-UXS during this exchange.
- Sen. Ernst expressed concerns regarding drones being used at the southwest border and dissatisfaction with DHS having lead responsibilities.
- Members expressed an eagerness to legislate on the topic and to see the Department be proactive on cUAS.

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 Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 11:51 AM
 To: Meagher, Christopher M SES (USA) (b)(6); King, Heather SES SD (b)(6); Waibel, Carlie S SES (USA) (b)(6)
 Cc: Mancinelli, Thomas J SES OSD OASD LA (USA) (b)(6); Magsamen, Kelly E SES (USA) (b)(6); Zier, Caroline G SES OSD OUSD POLICY (USA) (b)(6); Yayboke, Erol K SES (USA) (b)(6); Bodian, Lane A SES OSD OASD LA (USA) (b)(6)
 Subject: RE: Following up from Unders

Becky Zimmerman and RADM Spedero provided a classified brief to SASC this morning on s-UAS incursions. Adding Lane to provide a quick read-out when he returns from the Hill.

Rheanne Wirkkala
 Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs
 (b)(6)
 Office: (b)(6) | Tandberg: (b)(6)

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From: Meagher, Christopher M SES (USA) (b)(6)
 Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 10:26 AM
 To: Wirkkala, Rheanne E HON OSD OASD LA (USA) (b)(6); King, Heather SES SD (b)(6); Waibel, Carlie S SES (USA) (b)(6)
 Cc: Mancinelli, Thomas J SES OSD OASD LA (USA) (b)(6); Magsamen, Kelly E SES (USA) (b)(6); Zier, Caroline G SES OSD OUSD POLICY (USA) (b)(6)

(b)(6); Yayboke, Erol K SES (USA) (b)(6)

Subject: RE: Following up from Unders

Yes, when they reached out to inquire, Breaking Defense said Langley was being briefed in a classified setting to SASC today, fwiw.

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Subject: RE: Following up from Unders

Thanks, Heather. Copying below the quick read-out of the AARO briefings from our team in case helpful:

Mr. Tim Phillips, Acting Director AARO, and (b)(6) were joined by Dr. Sean Kirkpatrick in a compartmented brief and a ~~TS//SI~~ brief to staff on the findings of the Historical Record Report

BLUF: Both briefs were well attended and went well. Dr. Kirkpatrick attended the first brief and the majority of the second brief. Questions were robust in both sessions and the staff seemed appreciative of the information and AARO's work. There are a few due outs.

Session 1: Compartmented Annex Brief to Senior Staff; 1300 - 1400

The session was well attended. Staff Directors and Clerks from all six intelligence and defense committees attended, along with Senate Leadership National Security Advisors (House Leadership NSA's were invited but did not attend). Mr. Phillips delivered prepared opening remarks to convey the key takeaways from the report, before inviting questions from the attendees. Although it seemed most in the room had not had the chance to read the annex in advance of the session, the discussion was robust. Staff asked numerous questions about the individuals AARO interviewed as part of the review, and some of the noteworthy programs to include KONA BLUE. Staff also asked questions to better understand AARO perspectives on risk and CI implications of the findings in the report. DoD SAPCO provided copies of the annex for reference during the brief and Mr. Phillips, Dr. Kirkpatrick, and (b)(6) highlighted different sections during the Q&A session to provide context and additional detail. At the end of the session, staff asked for perspectives and recommendations for countering inaccurate or misleading narratives related to UAP based on the review. The staff were appreciative of the information and thanked the panel for the time.

Session 2: ~~TS//SI~~ Brief to Intelligence and Defense Committee PSMs; 1400 -

This session was also well attended. 24 PSMs representing all six of the invited committees joined the session. SSCI Minority Staff Director Brian Walsh stayed for the second session. Mr. Phillips again delivered his opening remarks and presented from prepared slides to convey the key findings from the report and provide amplifying detail. Staff began asking questions early on and Mr. Phillips, Dr. Kirkpatrick, and (b)(6) fielded questions as they came up, referring to the slides as needed. PSM questions varied, but recurring themes centered on the number of total people interviewed versus contacted over the course of the review and the supporting documentation, locations visited as part of the review, and plans for future UAPs. Staff also asked numerous questions about the programs highlighted during the presentation to include KONA BLUE. At the end of the session, PSMs thanked the panel for their time and the information.

Rheanne Wirkkala
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs

(b)(6)
Office: (b)(6) | Tandberg (b)(6)

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From: King, Heather SES SD (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 10:19 AM
To: Meagher, Christopher M SES (USA) (b)(6);
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Cc: Wirkkala, Rheanne E HON OSD OASD LA (USA)
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Chris / Carlie,

Following up from Unders a bit ago - the Deputy asked us to flag for you that the Langley topic re: Breaking Defense may be connected to the AARO rollout that occurred this week. Understand there were hill briefings on UAP led by Tim Phillips (Acting Director of AARO). Now that those hill briefings have occurred, there may be more individuals who are tracking Langley. She asked that we flag for you all and that you get a readout of those hill engagements. Copying Rheanne and Tom here too in case they have color/context!

Thanks!
Heather

(b)(6)

CTR OSD PA (USA)

From: (b)(6) CIV OSD PA (USA)
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:45 PM
To: Kozik, David A SES OSD OUSD INTEL & SEC (USA)
Subject: FW: Following up from Unders
Signed By: (b)(6)

Importance: High

Dave,
Flagging for you in case you haven't heard. We do not want to see sUAS added to AARO's portfolio!

Regards,

(b)(6)

From: (b)(6) CIV OSD PA (USA)
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:43 PM
To: Meagher, Christopher M SES (USA) (b)(6); OSD Pentagon PA List Press
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- The briefing was viewed by members as an informative first step for what is a very complex and concerning problem that must be quickly addressed. Sen. Reed highlighted multiple times that Congress is in part responsible for the confusion with counter-sUAS authorities and that a legislative fix may be required. Sen. Reed also focused on the number of agencies involved and the potential need for a lead USG entity.
- There was an animated response by Sen. Gillibrand to a comment by Ms. Zimmerman regarding there not being a DoD-wide database for cataloging UAS incursions. Sen. Gillibrand believes sUAS should be catalogued by AARO. Ms. Zimmerman briefly mentioned stand-up of the SIG C-UXS during this exchange.
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Regards,
Sue

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Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 11:51 AM
To: Meagher, Christopher M SES (USA) (b)(6); King, Heather SES SD
(b)(6); Waibel, Carlie S SES (USA) (b)(6)
Cc: Mancinelli, Thomas J SES OSD OASD LA (USA) (b)(6); Magsamen, Kelly E SES (USA) (b)(6); Zier, Caroline G SES OSD OUSD POLICY (USA) (b)(6); Yayboke, Erol K SES (USA) (b)(6); Bodian, Lane A SES OSD OASD LA (USA) (b)(6)
Subject: RE: Following up from Unders

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(b)(6)
Office: (b)(6) | Tandberg: (b)(6)

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Thanks!
Heather

(b)(6)

CTR OSD PA (USA)

From: Meagher, Christopher M SES (USA)
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:35 PM
To: (b)(6) CIV OSD PA (USA); (b)(6)
Subject: FW: Following up from Unders

(b)(6) – just flagging this chain below.

Chris

From: Bodian, Lane A SES OSD OASD LA (USA) (b)(6)
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 1:28 PM
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Subject: RE: Following up from Unders

Rheanne,

Quick summary:

- This morning PTDO ASD Zimmerman (HD&HA) was joined by RADM Spedero (JS) and Maj Gen Sherman (USAF) in a briefing to SASC members regarding the December events at JBLE and to more broadly discuss drone incursion issues.
- Senators Reed (D-RI), Wicker (R-MS), Shaheen (D-NH), Gillibrand (D-NY), Ernst (R-IA), Cramer (R-ND), Tuberville (R-AL), Rounds (R-SD), Schmitt (R-MO), Cotton (R-AR), Manchin (D-WV), Peters (D-MI), Kaine (D-VA), and Kelly (D-AZ) attended. Not all asked questions and only Sen. Reed stayed for the entirety of the brief.
- The briefing was viewed by members as an informative first step for what is a very complex and concerning problem that must be quickly addressed. Sen. Reed highlighted multiple times that Congress is in part responsible for the confusion with counter-sUAS authorities and that a legislative fix may be required. Sen. Reed also focused on the number of agencies involved and the potential need for a lead USG entity.
- There was an animated response by Sen. Gillibrand to a comment by Ms. Zimmerman regarding there not being a DoD-wide database for cataloging UAS incursions. Sen. Gillibrand believes sUAS should be catalogued by AARO. Ms. Zimmerman briefly mentioned stand-up of the SIG C-UXS during this exchange.
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