

## **OPM provides guidance on interagency personnel rotations**

In June, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) issued guidance on national security professional development interagency personnel rotations. On June 15, Acting Director Beth F. Cobert announced OPM's guidance aimed at assisting participating agencies in meeting the requirement mandated by section 1107(e) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013.

The guidance encourages agencies to give "strong preference" to national security executive candidates who have completed interagency rotations when filling senior positions within the interagency community of interest. Agencies are also required to provide rotation opportunities for employees "to ensure a sufficient pool of qualified individuals" exists.

**- Office of Personnel Management**

## **Reports examine DoD civilian deployment**

On June 9, RAND Corporation released two reports examining the deployment of Department of Defense (DoD) civilians. The full case study is included in *Expeditionary Civilians: Creating a Viable Practice of Department of Defense Civilian Deployment*, and while a shorter report, *Expeditionary Civilians: Creating a Viable Practice of Civilian Deployment Within the U.S. Interagency Community and Among Foreign Defense Organizations*, focuses primarily on DoD civilian deployments in interagency and international missions.

The full case study is an end-to-end review and analysis of DoD civilian deployments that looks at the goals of DoD's civilian deployment capability and attempts to identify gaps between policy and practice. The report also considers combatant commander's perspectives on the use of civilians, and gathers lessons learned from analogous organizations in the United States and other countries to benefit DoD civilian deployments.

The shorter report explores the requirements needed to deploy DoD civilians, the types of missions deployable civilians support internationally, and the methods used to identify, select, track, and deploy eligible civilians. The report builds on interviews with representatives from 17 government agencies in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, the European Union, and Australia with well-established civilian deployment programs. The report makes several recommendations about championing, structuring, and planning expeditionary civilian operations.

**- RAND Corporation**

## **Agencies collaborate on Zika vaccine**

Scientists at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research are making progress on a Zika virus vaccine, and plan to start human testing later this year. Efforts to produce the vaccine and prepare for the spread of the virus have included components of the Department of Defense, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Department of Health and Human Services.

In a recent interview, Army Col. (Dr.) Stephen Thomas said that the swift progress on the Zika vaccine is due to the institute's scientists familiarity and experience with flaviviruses like Zika. Thomas said "it's in our DNA to work on flaviviruses, and we've been doing vaccine development for flaviviruses since World War II." According to Thomas, the institute began to take part in the whole-of-government response when they started to see an increase in Zika a couple years ago.

The CDC is tracking active Zika virus transmission in effected areas, and reports 618 travel-

associated Zika cases, 11 sexually transmitted cases, one case of Zika-related Guillain-Barré syndrome within the continental U.S. However, there have been no reports of locally acquired mosquito-borne cases.

- **DoD News**

## **State, USAID release joint strategy for countering violent extremism**

In May, the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) released their Joint Strategy on Countering Violent Extremism (CVE). The joint strategy builds on the foundation of the 2015 White House CVE Summit and provides a “roadmap” for U.S. CVE efforts.

In his opening message for the strategy, Secretary of State John Kerry states that “The Department of State and USAID have produced a proactive international strategy recognizing immediate needs, utilizing our strengths, and demonstrating our will to comprehensively address the challenge of violent extremism, including the root causes. Together, we are building organizational structures needed to pursue a more aggressive and integrated approach to this challenge. This is a generational struggle, but we must begin now.”

The new CVE strategy will guide U.S. efforts to leverage the full range of diplomatic and development resources to prevent and counter the spread of violent extremism through five objectives:

- Expand international political will, partnerships, and expertise to better understand the drivers of violent extremism and mobilize effective interventions.
- Encourage and assist partner governments to adopt more effective policies and approaches to prevent and counter the spread of violent extremism, including changing unhelpful practices where necessary.
- Employ foreign assistance tools and approaches, including development assistance, to reduce specific political or social and economic factors that contribute to community support for violent extremism in identifiable areas or put particular segments of a population at high risk of violent extremist radicalization and recruitment to violence.
- Empower and amplify locally credible voices that can change the perception of violent extremist groups among key demographic segments.
- Strengthen the capabilities of government and non-governmental actors to isolate, intervene with, and promote the rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals caught in the cycle of radicalization to violence.

- **State Department**