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Department of War

Annual Report on Civilian Casualties in Connection with United States Military Operations in 2025

Submitted pursuant to Section 1057 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018 (Public Law 115-91), as amended.

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Department of War Report on Civilian Casualties in Connection with United States Military Operations in 2025

This report is submitted pursuant to Section 1057 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 (Public Law 115-91), as amended (“Section 1057”). Section 1057 provides that “the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on civilian casualties caused as a result of United States military operations during the preceding year.”

This report primarily provides information about U.S. military operations in 2025. This report also contains updates to information DoW reported in previous years pursuant to Section 1057.

This report is publicly available at War.gov.

As noted in Section 1 of Executive Order 13732 of July 1, 2016, *United States Policy on Pre- and Post-Strike Measures to Address Civilian Casualties in U.S. Operations Involving the Use of Force*, the protection of civilians is fundamentally consistent with the effective, efficient, and decisive use of force in pursuit of U.S. national interests. DoW’s efforts to mitigate and respond to civilian harm are a direct reflection of U.S. values; these efforts respond to strategic and moral imperatives. Minimizing civilian casualties can further mission objectives; help maintain the support of partner governments and vulnerable populations; and enhance the legitimacy and sustainability of U.S. operations critical to U.S. national security.

The U.S. military is steadfastly committed to limiting harm to civilians, and DoW has a strong record of compliance with the law of war. As a matter of policy, U.S. forces routinely conduct operations under policy standards that are more protective of civilians than required by the law of war, and we are committed to continuing to improve our approach. This commitment is reflected in DoW’s consistent efforts to maintain and promote best practices that reduce the likelihood of civilian harm, take appropriate steps when harm occurs, and draw lessons from DoW operations to further enhance our ability to mitigate civilian harm. Section 2 of Executive Order 13732 catalogues certain best practices DoW has implemented to protect civilians during armed conflict and directs those measures be continued in present and future operations. During 2025, all operations were conducted consistent with the best practices identified in Section 2 of Executive Order 13732.

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I. U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS DURING 2025 CONFIRMED, OR REASONABLY SUSPECTED, TO HAVE RESULTED IN CIVILIAN CASUALTIES

During 2025, U.S. forces remained engaged in several military operations, and DoW has assessed that U.S. military operations in 2025 resulted in 153 civilians killed and 243 civilians injured. This report contains updates to information submitted to Congress in the annual Section 1057 reports on U.S. military operations during 2018 and 2023, based on reports of civilian casualties from U.S. military operations that have been received and assessed since that the previous 1057 report was submitted in 2025.

Previous reports distinguished operations that occurred in “a declared theater of active armed conflict” by giving that term the meaning it was understood to have at the time before 10 U.S.C. § 130f, “Notification requirements for sensitive military operations,” was enacted. Title 10 U.S.C. § 130f has since been amended, and whether operations occurred within “a declared theater of active armed conflict” is no longer addressed in that provision. The term “a declared theater of active armed conflict” is also not defined in relevant DoW doctrine. Nonetheless, for the purposes of this report, to be consistent with prior reporting, U.S. military operations in Iraq, Yemen, and Somalia in 2025 and relevant prior years are considered to have occurred in “a declared theater of active armed conflict.” Thus, all assessed civilian casualties listed below occurred in a declared theater of active armed conflict.

DoW’s longstanding policy is to comply with the law of war in all armed conflicts, however characterized. DoW conducts its operations in accordance with law of war requirements, including law of war protections for civilians, such as the fundamental principles of distinction and proportionality, and the requirement to take feasible precautions in planning and conducting attacks to reduce the risk of harm to civilians and other persons and objects protected from being made the object of attack.

This report addresses only civilian casualties attributed to the use of U.S.-operated weapons. For example, if a munition fired from a U.S. aircraft resulted in civilian casualties, the civilian casualties would be included in this report even if the airstrike was planned by a staff composed of personnel from multiple nations participating in coalition efforts and was guided to the target by a foreign Joint Terminal Attack Controller.

The numbers of civilian casualties provided below are based on assessments in which DoW has been able to conclude that, based on the available information, it is more likely than not that one or more civilian casualties occurred. Section II of this report describes in more detail the processes for conducting these assessments.

A. Operation INHERENT RESOLVE and other U.S. military actions related to Iraq and Syria.

In 2025, U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) primarily conducted operations in Iraq and Syria under Combined Joint Task Force–Operation INHERENT RESOLVE (CJTF-OIR). Although the strategic landscape in the USCENTCOM area of responsibility is constantly

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changing, the methodology applied and lessons learned in Iraq and Syria continue to be relevant throughout the USCENTCOM area of responsibility and in any other region where civilian casualties could occur.

The CJTF-OIR coalition continues maintaining pressure on the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) to ensure the group's enduring defeat in Iraq and Syria working by, with, and through local partner forces. CJTF-OIR advises, assists, and enables partnered forces until they can independently defeat ISIS in designated areas of Iraq and Syria to set conditions for long-term security cooperation frameworks.

The mission of the Coalition is to support our partner forces through advising, assisting, and enabling at the operational and strategic level. CJTF-OIR works closely with local, regional, and international actors in Iraq and designated areas of Syria, to help bring stability to conflict-affected areas and to work towards enduring security partnerships.

CJTF-OIR receives reports of civilian harm from military ground units and aircrews, as well as from a variety of sources, such as traditional media organizations, social media, private individuals, and non-governmental organizations (NGO). CJTF-OIR carefully reviews reports of civilian harm, regardless of their source. This report lists only reports of civilian casualties attributed to U.S. forces. Information in this report may not match publicly available information released by USCENTCOM and CJTF-OIR. This is because CJTF-OIR, as a matter of strategy and policy, considers all civilian casualties to be the combined result of "Coalition" action and does not separately report civilian harm as attributed to a single nation.

As of February 1, 2026, CJTF-OIR reported that in 2025 no incidents were assessed in which civilian casualties more likely than not resulted from U.S. military operations in Iraq and Syria.

Updates to Previous Section 1057 Reports

CJTF-OIR routinely receives new reports of civilian harm related to U.S. military operations from prior years, assesses reports that were not completed in previous years, and re-considers previous assessments if new relevant information is discovered. The following table provides updates to information reported in previous Section 1057 reports, based upon additional assessments that were completed since the report on U.S. military operations during 2018.

	Date of Incident	Location	Operation Type	Civilians Injured	Civilians Killed
A	27 JAN 18	Al Baghdadi, Iraq	Ground Supported by Air	14	8
			TOTAL	14	8

Incident A occurred on January 27, 2018, in Al Baghdadi, Iraq.

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Incident A was a ground operation supported by air assets, utilizing strike authorities against a declared hostile force in an area of armed conflict. This operation is assessed to have resulted in eight civilians killed, and 14 injured. A significant amount of reliable information was available to inform a Civilian Harm Assessment (CHA) regarding the operation, including witness interviews and site visits. Information was used from intelligence reporting, imagery, interviews, and open-source reporting.

B. U.S. military actions in Yemen

USCENTCOM's mission in Yemen is to degrade the capabilities of Iran-backed Houthi Forces who threaten regional partners and maritime security in the Red Sea, Bab al-Mandeb Strait, and Gulf of Aden through targeted strikes and military pressure, while working to protect U.S. and coalition personnel and interests in the region.

As of February 1, 2026, USCENTCOM assessed that three operations in Yemen in 2025 "more likely than not" resulted in civilian harm. There are 15 other incidents USCENTCOM is currently assessing in response to reports received through NGO reporting.

The following table and information below summarize the determinations of the relevant completed civilian harm assessments, providing additional details.

	Date of Incident	Location	Operation Type	Civilians Injured	Civilians Killed
A	06 APR 25	Sanaa, Yemen	Air	25	5
B	17 APR 25	Ras Isa Port, Yemen	Air	171	80
C	28 APR 25	Saada, Yemen	Air	47	68
TOTAL				243	153

Incident A occurred on April 6, 2025, in Sanaa, Yemen.

Incident A was an air strike using strike authorities against a declared hostile force in an area of armed conflict. This operation resulted in five civilians killed, and 25 injured. A significant amount of reliable information was available to inform a CHA regarding the strike. Witness interviews and site visits were not conducted by the involved unit due to the contested nature of the area of operations. Information was used from U.S. intelligence sources, imagery, and open-source reporting. *Ex gratia* was determined to not be appropriate for this incident.

Incident B occurred on April 17, 2025, at the Ras Isa port in Yemen.

Incident B was an air strike using strike authorities against a declared hostile force in an area of armed conflict. This operation resulted in 80 civilians killed, and 171 injured. A significant amount of reliable information was available to inform a CHA regarding the strike. Witness interviews and site visits were not conducted by the involved unit due to the contested nature of the area of operations. Information was used from U.S. intelligence sources, imagery, and open-source reporting. *Ex gratia* was determined to not be appropriate for this incident.

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Incident C occurred on 28 April 2025, in vicinity of Saada, Yemen.

Incident C was an air strike using strike authorities against a declared hostile force in an area of armed conflict. This operation resulted in 47 civilians killed, and 68 injured. A significant amount of reliable information was available to inform a CHA regarding the strike. Witness interviews and site visits were not conducted by the involved unit due to the contested nature of the area of operations. Information was used from U.S. intelligence sources, imagery, and open-source reporting. *Ex gratia* was determined to not be appropriate for this incident.

C. U.S. military actions in Iran

On June 22, 2025, USCENTCOM conducted Operation Midnight Hammer, a high precision and joint force strategic strike against three critical Iranian nuclear facilities: Frodo, Natanz, and Isfahan. Following the strikes, USCENTCOM assessed that there were no civilian casualties that occurred as a result of U.S. military operations during Operation Midnight Hammer.

D. U.S. military actions in Africa

The United States is one of several countries providing whole-of-government support to the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), including humanitarian aid, stabilization efforts, economic development, and military assistance. U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM)'s overarching strategic goals in Somalia are to disrupt al-Shabaab and ISIS-Somalia's ability to conduct attacks outside of Somalia and to increase regional stability. The command's approach to achieving these goals includes training and advising Somalia's Danab Advanced Infantry Brigade in coordination and cooperation with the Department of State. USAFRICOM contributes to multi-national operations against terrorist groups, as well as conducting direct actions to disrupt terrorist groups that threaten U.S. persons, the U.S. homeland, and U.S. interests. In 2025, USAFRICOM oversaw the delivery of a variety of military equipment including small arms and medical supplies to the Danab forces trained by Department of State, increasing the Danab's capacity to conduct longer duration offensive operations. USAFRICOM support to the Somali National Army (SNA) and FGS enabled the Somalis to conduct operations in central and southern Somalia.

In 2025, USAFRICOM acted on six reports of civilian harm, including two reports carried over from the previous year. Two of the reports were received from civil society organizations through USAFRICOM's public reporting portal and the remaining four reports were received through open sources. Command investigations were initiated for two reports, one report was closed after an initial assessment, and assessment of three reports remains ongoing. Concerning reports for which a final determination was made in 2025, USAFRICOM determined that two of the reports did not involve incidents in which civilian casualties more likely than not resulted from U.S. military operations and found that one report involved an incident in which U.S. military operations resulted in the death of one civilian.

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The three 2025 reports that remain open are currently being assessed. The civilian harm reports arose from news media reporting, open-source social media, submissions through the Command's public facing reporting portal, and correspondence from civil society organizations.

Updates to Previous Section 1057 Reports

In 2025, USAFRICOM assessments identified one incident of civilian harm related to a 2018 U.S. military operation. The following table provides updates to information reported in previous Section 1057 reports, based upon additional assessments that were completed since the report on U.S. military operations during 2018.

	Date of Incident	Location	Operation Type	Civilians Injured	Civilians Killed
A	01 APR 18	El Burr, Somalia	Air	0	1
TOTAL				0	1

Incident A occurred on April 1, 2018, in El Burr, Somalia.

Incident A was an air strike using strike authorities against a declared hostile force in an area of armed conflict. USAFRICOM determined that an April 1, 2018, airstrike near El Burr, Somalia resulted in the death of one additional civilian, a teenage male. The Command previously acknowledged the death of two civilians, a woman and a child, resulting from the same strike.

In response to information provided by civil society organizations, and after review of that information, USAFRICOM initiated a new assessment of the April 1, 2018, airstrike near El Burr, Somalia. The assessment involved reviewing the previous assessments, the original source material, including footage of the airstrike employing new methods to carefully evaluate it, and conducting additional interviews of persons who were associated with the incident or were thought to have knowledge of the incident, or who were uniquely qualified to provide subject matter expertise.

E. U.S. military actions in the Western Hemisphere

In 2025, USSOUTHCOM's mission was to deter aggression, defeat threats, rapidly respond to crises, and build regional capacity, working with allies, partners nations, and U.S. Government team members to enhance security and defend the U.S. homeland and our national interest. USSOUTHCOM also began operations to degrade the capabilities of narco-terrorists who threaten the U.S. homeland through targeted strikes and military pressure.

As of February 1, 2026, USSOUTHCOM assessed that there were no incidents in which civilian casualties more likely than not resulted from U.S. military operations in the USSOUTHCOM area of responsibility in 2025. Additional information is provided below about the assessment process and where to read more about the different classes of persons under the law of war, including "civilians" and "combatants."

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II. DOW PROCESSES FOR ASSESSING REPORTS OF CIVILIAN CASUALTIES FROM U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS

As reflected in Section 2 of Executive Order 13732, *United States Policy on Pre- and Post-Strike Measures To Address Civilian Casualties in U.S. Operations Involving the Use of Force*, of July 1, 2016, the U.S. military, as appropriate and consistent with mission objectives and applicable law, including the law of war, has a practice of reviewing or investigating incidents involving civilian casualties, including by considering relevant information from all available sources, such as other agencies, partner governments, and NGOs, and taking measures to mitigate the likelihood of future incidents of civilian casualties.

On December 21, 2023, the Department released the DoD Instruction (DoDI) 3000.17 on Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response (CHMR), which directed commands to use standardized processes for conducting civilian harm assessments and investigations. The DoDI states that the Department conducts, documents, and archives timely and thorough assessments of civilian harm that may have resulted from U.S. military operations, at a scale appropriate to the operational environment; that the requirement to conduct such assessments applies regardless of sensitivity or security protections; and, to facilitate such assessments, the Department collects and archives accurate data regarding U.S. military operations to the greatest extent practicable and collects relevant information regarding civilian harm from external sources, including public sources.

The DoDI lays out six purposes for civilian harm assessments: (1) assess whether civilian harm resulted from U.S. military operations; (2) identify and document the causes of civilian harm; (3) enable learning that improves DoW operational and institutional capability, capacity, and readiness to mitigate and respond to civilian harm; (4) support information requirements of military and civilian leadership, including to inform planning and decision-making in ongoing operations and to fulfill external reporting requirements; (5) enable acknowledgements and other appropriate responses to civilians harmed by U.S. military operations; and (6) enable timely responses to reports from outside the DoW that civilian harm may have resulted from U.S. military operations. The DoDI further allows for command investigations of civilian harm to be conducted in addition or in place of a civilian harm assessment, and identifies the following circumstances for which a command investigation of civilian harm may be appropriate: (1) to answer questions not sufficiently addressed by, or outside the scope of, a civilian harm assessment; (2) to inquire into potential misconduct not within the purview of a Military Criminal Investigative Organization, or related matters that may have contributed to civilian harm; or (3) to facilitate a more detailed inquiry into matters that a relevant authority deems to be sufficiently complex or significant as to warrant the use of command investigative mechanisms.

When assessing reports of civilian casualties, DoW considers whether any members of the civilian population were injured or killed as a direct result of U.S. military operations. For the purposes of such assessments, DoW does not include members of the civilian population who have forfeited the protections of civilian status by engaging in hostilities. For example, DoDI 3000.17, defines “civilian casualty” as “Death or physical injury of civilians who are protected as such, but excluding harm to DoW personnel or contractor personnel supporting U.S. military operations.”

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Further information about different classes of persons under the law of war, including “civilians” and “combatants,” can be found in Chapter IV of the DoW Law of War Manual (June 2015, Updated July 2023), which is available at

<https://ogc.osd.mil/Portals/99/Law%20of%20War%202023/DOD-LAW-OF-WAR-MANUAL-JUNE-2015-UPDATED-JULY%202023.pdf?ver=Qbxamfouw4znu1I7DVMcsw%3d%3d>.

DoDI 3000.17 provides procedures for conducting civilian harm assessments. In addition, in preparation for and throughout the duration of crisis or conflict, it requires CCMDs to establish or maintain civilian harm assessment cells (CHACs) and to have a Civilian Harm Assessment and Investigation Coordinator in place at the CCMD-level, or, as appropriate, at subordinate operational commands.

CHACs receive and compile information related to civilian harm, including information from combat assessments and information from other DoW and non-DoW sources, that is relevant and necessary for conducting assessments as soon as the operational environment permits.

In assessing reports of civilian harm, the command or entity seeks to review all readily available information from a variety of sources and may seek additional information that is not readily available, for example by searching social media and conducting interviews. Sources of information may include, but are not limited to, operational planning data and reporting, video surveillance and other data from intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets, witness observations (including those of partnered forces) where available, news reports, and information provided by NGOs and other sources, such as local officials or social media. In reviewing the report, the command or entity seeks to assess whether civilian casualties more likely than not resulted from U.S. military operations. The “more likely than not standard” reflects the command’s best understanding based on the information available at the time of the assessment, as well as the reality that information during military operations is often lacking or incomplete. If there is reason to believe that civilians were injured or killed—or when the scope of a civilian harm assessment includes damage or destruction of civilian objects, that civilian objects were damaged or destroyed—and that such harm resulted from U.S. military operations, and if other available information does not provide greater reason to believe that civilians were not killed or injured as a result of U.S. military operations, then the “more likely than not” standard would be met.

When receiving information indicating civilian harm may have occurred, CHACs review the information and, if the necessary baseline information to conduct a civilian harm assessment is not provided, seek additional information by, as appropriate and practicable, communicating with the source of the original information. Necessary baseline information includes information that indicates: (1) the date, time, and specific location of the incident; (2) whether injuries, deaths, damage, or destruction may have occurred; and (3) whether such injuries, deaths, damage, or destruction may have resulted from U.S. military operations. To the extent reasonably practicable, CHACs pursue other sources of information necessary to inform civilian harm assessments (e.g., information available from intelligence reports, interviews with witnesses or information documented from on-site, traditional, and social media, and publicly available reports). When reviewing reports of civilian harm, CHACs consider the reliability of information, including to mitigate risks associated with adversarial or otherwise malicious use of

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disinformation, and, under the guidance of the commander, take appropriate actions should evidence of adversarial or otherwise malicious use of disinformation emerge.

When there is a report of civilian harm, the first step is to submit an initial review. A commander's CHAC may conduct this initial review, or a commander or their designee may direct that an appropriate subordinate command to conduct or support this initial review in coordination with the CHAC. The intent of the initial review is to correlate information related to the reported civilian harm with other information related to civilian harm that may provide further details and with information on U.S. military operations. In doing so, CHACs will ensure appropriately sized location and time windows are considered to ensure all U.S. military operations that may have resulted in the reported civilian harm are considered as part of the review process. If the unit conducting the review is unable to identify any U.S. military operations that may have resulted in the reported civilian harm in question, then the unit may recommend that the command not proceed with the civilian harm assessment.

Following the initial review, a commander's CHAC may conduct the civilian harm assessment, or a commander or the commander's designee may direct that an appropriate subordinate or supporting command conduct or support the civilian harm assessment in coordination with the CHAC. Any unit tasked to conduct a civilian harm assessment, including any individual that supports a civilian harm assessment, must not have been directly involved in the event(s) being assessed, must be objective, and must be able to complete a thorough assessment as soon as practicable and in accordance with any directed timelines (or seek an extension). The unit that conducts the civilian harm assessment will consider all reasonably available information to inform the assessment, including from U.S. military, other USG, and external sources, and compile a thorough report detailing the civilian harm assessment in a timely manner. Approved reports from civilian harm assessments will be retained by the CHAC or forwarded by the CHAC to the appropriate office for retention, as determined by the commander or their designee. Reports of civilian harm assessments that are not approved will be returned to the CHAC or unit that conducted the assessment with additional guidance from the commander or their designee. Alternatively, the commander or their designee may direct another subordinate command to conduct the civilian harm assessment, request that a different non-subordinate command conduct the civilian harm assessment or initiate an investigation.

If warranted, a commander or other responsible official may direct a more extensive review or investigation to find additional facts about the incident and to make relevant recommendations, such as identifying process improvements to reduce the likelihood of future civilian casualty incidents. Command-directed investigations are conducted in accordance with applicable Military Department guidance (e.g., Army Regulation 15-6, Navy Judge Advocate General Instruction 5800.7G, or Department of the Air Force Manual 1-101).

In some cases, DoW has not been able to assess a report of civilian casualties due to insufficient information provided or because related reports are still pending review. However, DoW continues to consider relevant information on civilian harm that may lead to initiation of an assessment. Additionally, existing civilian harm assessments can be re-opened or an investigation initiated if previously unassessed relevant information becomes available and a review of the new information indicates it could change the previously approved results, or if

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other issues emerge that cast significant doubts on the accuracy of the results of the previously approved assessment.

DoW acknowledges that there are differences between DoW assessments of civilian harm and reports from other organizations, including NGOs. DoW personnel engage with representatives from NGOs and international organizations (IOs) regularly to discuss reports and assessments of civilian casualties, at both working and leadership levels. These differences result from a variety of factors. For example, NGOs and media outlets often use different types of information and methodologies than DoW to assess whether civilian casualties have occurred. Some organizations conduct on-the-ground assessments and interviews, while others rely heavily on media reporting. Although such information can be valuable, this information alone can be incomplete or inaccurate. DoW assessments seek to incorporate available information, including information provided by NGOs and IOs, as well as additional information and tools that are not available to other organizations – such as operational planning data and intelligence sources. As noted above, DoW reconsiders existing assessments if new relevant information becomes available, such as new information received from NGOs or other external sources.

III. DOW PROCESSES FOR CONSIDERING *EX GRATIA* PAYMENTS OR OTHER FORMS OF RESPONSE TO CIVILIAN HARM

An *ex gratia* payment may be one of several possible response options that might be appropriate for DoW to take when U.S. military operations injure or kill a civilian or damage or destroy civilian objects. Other possible response options could include an acknowledgement of responsibility, provision of medical care, or other appropriate measures that may be consistent with mission objectives and applicable law. Such actions have historically been used to express condolences, sympathy, or goodwill, and to support mission objectives. Such actions are not required by law, not an admission of wrongdoing, and not for the purpose of compensating the injured civilian or the civilian's family for their loss.

When commanders identify a situation in which it is appropriate to extend an *ex gratia* payment, DoW has authority and funds to do so. Section 1213 of the NDAA for FY 2020 (Public Law 116-22), as amended, specifies that it shall be construed as the sole authority to make *ex gratia* payments for property damage, personal injury, or death that is incident to the use of force by the U.S. Armed Forces. In June 2020, DoW published Department-wide interim regulations to implement the authority provided under Section 1213. Commanders rely on these regulations to evaluate incidents and to determine whether offering an *ex gratia* payment in a particular case would be appropriate and consistent with mission objectives and applicable law.

V. CONCLUSION

The Department recognizes that our efforts to mitigate and respond to civilian harm respond to both strategic and moral imperatives. We welcome the opportunity to provide Congress with this annual report on civilian casualties in connection with U.S. military operations, as required by Section 1057 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, as amended.