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**UPDATE ON ACCOUNTABILITY AT
ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY**

JOINT HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL
MEETING JOINTLY WITH
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT
AND INVESTIGATIONS
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD:

[There were no Documents submitted.]

WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE HEARING:

[There were no Questions submitted during the hearing.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING:

[There were no Questions submitted post hearing.]

UPDATE ON ACCOUNTABILITY AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES, SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL, MEETING JOINTLY WITH THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS, *Washington, DC, Friday, February 3, 2012.*

The subcommittees met, pursuant to call, at 11:51 a.m., in room 2118, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Joe Wilson (chairman of the Subcommittee on Military Personnel) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOE WILSON, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM SOUTH CAROLINA, CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL

Mr. WILSON. Welcome, ladies and gentlemen, and thank you for being here today. Today the Military Personnel Subcommittee and the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee continue their oversight of actions to improve the operation and sustainment of the Arlington National Cemetery, a national shrine which indicates our sincere appreciation of service members, military families, and veterans.

The testimony today is based on reports directed by the Congress and delivered in December by the Army and the Government Accounting Office. In general, both reports reflect substantial improvement in a number of areas of management and contracting execution. That progress reflects not only the personal commitment of our former colleague Secretary John McHugh, but also the professionalism and commitment of Ms. Kathryn Condon, the Executive Director of the Army National Cemeteries Program, and Mr. Patrick Hallinan, the Superintendent of Arlington Cemetery.

As I look at the issues that still must need to be addressed, these two appear to rise above all the rest: First, what is the corrective action and funding that will be required to resolve the nearly 14,000 critical deficiencies cited in the Arlington grave accountability effort? And second, should the Department of Veterans Affairs assume responsibility for Arlington National Cemetery and the cemetery at the Soldiers' Home here in the District of Columbia?

Before I introduce our witnesses, let me recognize in turn Representative Susan Davis, the ranking member of the Military Personnel Subcommittee; and Chairman Rob Wittman of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee; and Mr. Jim Cooper, the ranking member of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, for any opening remarks they might wish to make.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wilson can be found in the Appendix on page 29.]

STATEMENT OF HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM CALIFORNIA, RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the hearing today.

General Vangjel, I wanted to welcome you. I understand you recently took over from General McCoy as the Army inspector general.

Ms. Martin and Mr. Lepore, I look forward to hearing the Government Accountability Office [GAO] assessment of the Army's efforts with respect to Arlington.

And, Ms. Condon, welcome back. We have had a chance to see each other quite a bit, and I really appreciate your efforts.

Arlington National Cemetery, as we all know, is one of the most hallowed grounds of this Nation, and we must hold it to the highest standards of performance. Members of the Subcommittee on Military Personnel in conjunction with the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee are interested in the actions taken by the Army to improve its accountability of Arlington National Cemetery since our hearing in September.

Ms. Condon, I recognize the hard work you and Mr. Hallinan have done to turn around the cemetery, and I know that you could not have done it alone. There are probably a number of people that should be acknowledged for their efforts that could not all be recognized here today.

But I do believe that there is still more to be done to ensure that we maintain and build upon the achievements that have been made, and to ensure, above all, accountability of those who were involved in the missteps at Arlington National Cemetery.

Ms. Martin and Mr. Lepore, I am interested in learning from the GAO what issues and concerns should the committee be aware of as the Army works to develop a strategic plan for Arlington. What signs, if any, should we be tracking as the Army moves forward on its efforts to continue to improve Arlington? And I would also like to hear your thoughts on what concerns we should be aware of if there is an effort to transfer the management of Arlington from the Army to the Veterans Administration.

General Vangjel, I would be interested in the IG's perspective on Arlington and what can be done to build upon the improvements that have recently been made.

Thank you all for being here. This is an important issue and one that touches all who serve our Nation in uniform.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mrs. Davis can be found in the Appendix on page 32.]

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Ranking Member.
And Chairman Wittman.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ROB WITTMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE
FROM VIRGINIA, CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVER-
SIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS**

Mr. WITTMAN. Panel members, welcome. I want to thank my co-chair, Chairman Joe Wilson, and our ranking members, Jim Cooper and Susan Davis, for their steadfast commitment and their focus on this extraordinarily important issue. It has been an honor to work with you over the months, and we look forward as we continue along this journey of making sure that collectively we all do what is necessary to make sure Arlington maintains its rightful place in honoring this Nation's heroes.

I would also like to extend a very warm welcome to General Vangjel. Thank you so much for your leadership and for your oversight of Arlington. We know it is a new challenge for you, but one that you are ready and up to the task.

Ms. Condon, I want to thank you and your team, who have met with us on a monthly basis to keep us apprised of progress. We appreciate your dedication. We know it has been a long, arduous journey, with more steps to come. I would like to also highlight my appreciation for what you do in total for the Army, what you have done through your career, and what you have done to this point. Army leadership has done a lot to change the culture and climate at Arlington.

And I also want to thank Secretary McHugh. He is a person of steadfast devotion on getting this issue solved. He is certainly a man of his word. He said early on that this was going to be his focus. I admire him for that focus, for his commitment, for his dedication to making sure that Arlington again goes back to its rightful place in honoring this Nation's heroes. So I want to thank the Secretary for that.

This was an organization that was characterized by deficiencies and mismanagement that has since been transformed into a stable, functioning, and professional organization that is finally setting a new standard for how we care for our fallen heroes.

Mr. Brian Lepore and Ms. Belva Martin, thank you for coming. We appreciate your efforts there at the GAO. And we know, as always, the GAO does an excellent job, and we appreciate your service.

We are here today for two very important reasons: First, to figure out what progress has been made with respect to accountability issues at Arlington, and to determine what challenges remain that need to be addressed moving forward.

I have said many times how important it is to me personally that we work to achieve 100 percent accountability, and the Army has done a great job with helping us get there with the Gravesite Accountability Task Force. Validating almost 200,000 gravesites was difficult and challenging, but you, your staff, and the Old Guard got it done.

However, I do remain concerned about a number of issues. First, the lack of accountability with respect to former officials for their misconduct. It is my understanding that no criminal action has been taken, and that investigations are ongoing and open. I find this very, very difficult to believe and unacceptable, and I will continue to follow this very closely.

Second, despite the great amount of time that has elapsed since initial allegations came to light, management and contracting issues persist at Arlington. To highlight just a few, I am concerned about the GAO's findings regarding the lack of a strategic plan, the lack of IT [information technology] organizational architecture, which call into question whether we are effectively and efficiently spending taxpayers' dollars at the cemetery when millions of dollars have already been spent. I hope this panel will address these issues. And I also hope you will tell us what progress has been made and what you believe we will find in finally trying to resolve these remaining matters.

We cannot close the door on this terrible chapter at Arlington until all of these issues are resolved. We owe it to our Nation's heroes who have sacrificed their lives on our behalf, and continue to make this a top priority, and as you have done in the past, we need to get this done. And we owe it to our future generations of heroes who deserve the honor of being buried here and knowing that Arlington is again assuming its rightful place as the hallmark of honoring this Nation's heroes.

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Wittman can be found in the Appendix on page 34.]

Mr. WILSON. Thank you very much.

And Mr. Cooper.

Mr. COOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no opening statement.

Mr. WILSON. And at this time we will proceed with our witnesses. The order would be Lieutenant General Peter M. Vangjel, the Inspector General of the U.S. Army. Next would be Ms. Belva Martin, Director, Acquisition and Sourcing Management Team, U.S. Government Accountability Office; and third we would have Mr. Brian J. Lepore, Director of Defense Capabilities and Management, U.S. Government Accountability Office; and fourth and finally, we would have Ms. Kathryn Condon, who is the Executive Director of the Army's National Cemeteries Program.

And so, General, thank you for beginning.

**STATEMENT OF LTG PETER M. VANGJEL, USA, INSPECTOR
GENERAL, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY**

General VANGJEL. Chairman Wilson, Ranking Member Davis, Chairman Wittman, Ranking Member Cooper, and distinguished members of the subcommittees, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today, and thank you for your oversight and support over the past 18 months. It has made a difference at Arlington National Cemetery.

Since assuming the duties of the Army Inspector General in November, I have reviewed our previous inspections, met with the Executive Director and her team and other stakeholders who have been involved in correcting the deficiencies found at Arlington. I think to fully appreciate the progress that has been made, one only has to review the 2010 IG report, which identified 61 deficiencies, among them being a deplorable organizational climate, archaic recordkeeping and automation systems, uncontrolled contracting and

budgeting processes, and significant problems with gravesite accountability.

In contrast, you may recall from General McCoy's testimony that the 2011 IG report identified no deficiencies, and noted significant progress at the cemetery largely due to the course set by the Secretary of the Army's Directive 2010-04, the efforts of the Executive Director and her team, and the support from the Department of the Army's staff. In short, the mismanagement reported to you in the June 2010 IG report has been relegated to the past, and Arlington is beginning to transition from successful crisis management to sustained excellence.

Allow me to just share a few specifics. The previous insular environment that contributed to mismanagement and substandard performance at Arlington has improved significantly. The Executive Director has established a positive work environment, emphasizing cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. Workforce surveys taken as part of the 2011 inspection did reflect steadily improving morale, unity, and organizational effectiveness.

The cemetery now possesses a functional information technology infrastructure, supported by a service agreement with the Army's Information Technology Agency. Arlington has leveraged the Agency's Consolidated Customer Service Center to more effectively monitor and respond to customer calls, which is increasing customer service. A new computer application for digitizing burial records has been critical in establishing the accountability baseline for each gravesite and inurnment niche.

In the contracting arena, new acquisitions are subjected to rigorous analysis, pre-award compliance checks, and contract packet reviews for quality assurance. While we still noted some deficiencies and errors within contracts, the number was significantly less than 2010, mostly administrative in documentation.

Arlington now works closely with the Office of the Administrative Assistant and the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management to ensure improved oversight of the cemetery's budget formulation and execution. The transition to the General Fund Enterprise Business System has provided full visibility and transparency of cemetery expenditures.

Finally, with respect to improvements, the Executive Director has recently published a campaign plan which includes major efforts to complete gravesite accountability, complete the documentation of policies and procedures, and addresses long-term expansion of the cemetery. It assigns responsibilities for these and other tasks as well, with metrics and timelines to measure progress.

While these developments are encouraging, there is still much more work to do. The 2011 Army IG inspection report provided 53 recommendations for continued improvement at Arlington. I will highlight a few required key actions.

First of all, Arlington's leadership and the Army must finish updating relevant policies and regulations. Further, the Arlington leadership must complete the documentation and validation of internal oversight processes and controls. The recent work to establish the gravesite accountability baseline must continue to resolve the nearly 47,000 cases that remain.

The Executive Director must coordinate with the Army staff to establish and document enduring external oversight processes to prevent the recurrence of past shortcomings.

The Department of the Army must also finalize and implement enduring jurisdictional, organizational, and support relationships of the Army National Cemeteries Program.

As we look to our inspection this summer, we intend to conduct assessments in several areas: first of all, compliance with Army Directive 2010–04; progress in addressing the recommendations from our 2011 report; compliance with the Executive Director’s campaign plan; the gravesite accountability process validation; and we are collaborating with the Army Audit Agency, the VA, and the United States Army Force Management Support Agency for their participation as well in this year’s inspection.

In conclusion, Arlington remains a priority for the Secretary and for the Army. The significant progress observed by the Army IG validates the Secretary’s approach to creating the processes, systems and management that we found to be lacking at Arlington in 2010. This strategy, executed according to the Executive Director’s campaign plan, with the support of the Army, the Defense Department, other Federal agencies, and Congress, has set the conditions for continued improvement and ultimately sustained excellence.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to answering your questions and working with the committees in the future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of General Vangjel can be found in the Appendix on page 36.]

Mr. WILSON. General, thank you very much.

And Ms. Belva Martin.

STATEMENT OF BELVA M. MARTIN, DIRECTOR, ACQUISITION AND SOURCING MANAGEMENT, U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

Ms. MARTIN. Chairmen Wilson and Wittman, Ranking Members Davis and Cooper, members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you to discuss GAO’s work at Arlington.

Our reviews found that Arlington has taken significant actions to address its problems, and that the path forward, as you stated, Chairman Wilson, is for Arlington to sustain progress through improved management and oversight. My colleague Mr. Lepore will discuss GAO’s work on management issues.

On the contracting side, GAO identified 56 active contracts over \$100,000 that supported cemetery operations, construction and facility maintenance, and new efforts to enhance IT systems for the automation of burial operations. Arlington does not have its own contracting authority, but relies on relationships with contracting offices to award and manage its contracts. These contracting authorities obligated roughly \$35.2 million in support of the 56 contracts that were included in our review.

And as the IG has noted, the Army has taken a number of positive steps since June 2010 at different levels to provide for more effective management and oversight of contracts, including improv-

ing contracting policies and practices, establishing new support relationships, formalizing policies and procedures, and increasing the use of dedicated contracting staff to manage and improve its acquisitions.

However, GAO found three areas at Arlington where additional improvements are needed: first, maintaining complete data on contracts; second, defining responsibilities for contracting support; and third, determining contract staffing needs. I will briefly summarize key findings in these three areas.

First, with respect to maintaining complete data, when we did our review, we were able to pull together information on Arlington contracts from various sources, including support organizations, but there were shortcomings with each of these sources. To be able to identify, track, and ensure the effective management and oversight of its contracts, Arlington leadership needs complete data on all contracts.

Second, with respect to support relationships, the Army has taken a number of steps to better align Arlington contract support with the expertise of its partners. For example, Arlington has agreements with the Army Information Technology Agency, ITA, and the Army Analytics Group to help manage its IT infrastructure. While these agreements spell out the services that ITA will provide to Arlington, and performance metrics against which ITA will be measured—these are all very positive steps—these agreements do not specifically address ITA's contract management roles and responsibilities in support of Arlington's requirements. Although officials told us that they were aware of their roles and responsibilities, the question is, what happens when personnel changes? Going forward, sustained attention on the part of Arlington and its partners will be important to ensure that contracts of all types and risk levels are managed effectively.

Third, with respect to dedicated contract staffing arrangements, three contract specialist positions have been identified for Arlington, but have not been filled. Arlington is presently receiving support from Fort Belvoir's contracting office in the form of 10 positions, 5 funded by Arlington and 5 by Fort Belvoir. Arlington officials have identified the need for a more senior contracting specialist and are developing plans to fill this new position in fiscal year 2013.

In closing, the success of the Army's efforts to improve contracting and management at the cemetery will depend on management's sustained attention and efforts to institutionalize positive steps taken to date. Accordingly, we made a number of recommendations in our December 2011 report to improve contract management and oversight in the three areas where we found shortcomings. For the most part, DOD agreed with our findings and that there is a need to take actions, and provided timeframes for doing so. We will continue to monitor their progress.

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, this concludes my short statement. I will be happy to answer questions.

[The joint prepared statement of Ms. Martin and Mr. Lepore can be found in the Appendix on page 55.]

Mr. WILSON. Thank you very much, Ms. Martin.

We now have Mr. Brian Lepore.

STATEMENT OF BRIAN J. LEPORE, DIRECTOR, DEFENSE CAPABILITIES AND MANAGEMENT, U.S. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

Mr. LEPORE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Wilson, Ranking Member Davis, Chairman Wittman, and Ranking Member Cooper, and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to present our findings from our review of oversight and management of Arlington National Cemetery.

As you know, we issued our report on the management and oversight of Arlington on December 15 of last year. My testimony is based on our report, and I will make two points today. First, I will discuss the policies and procedures that the current leadership team at Arlington has put into place to begin to address the deficiencies that became apparent, and I will identify some of our recommendations to help assist in that endeavor. And secondly, I will discuss some factors that could potentially affect the feasibility and advisability of transferring Arlington from the Army to the Department of Veterans Affairs, the VA.

Here is the bottom line: I think it is fair to say the current leadership team at Arlington has taken many positive steps at the cemetery to address the deficiencies and make improvements. The Army has made progress in a range of areas, including chain-of-custody procedures, to ensure a proper accountability over remains, better providing information assurance, and improving procedures to address inquiries from the families and the public. However, we believe some steps are still needed to ensure that these changes are institutionalized and will prove lasting for the long term, long after the spotlight has faded. Therefore, we have made recommendations in six areas.

First, we believe they should complete the enterprise architecture to guide new investments in information technology to ensure the investments are aligned with the future operational requirements; second, an updated workforce plan to ensure the workforce is properly sized and trained; third, an internal assessment program to gauge how the cemetery is doing, and making any improvements that may be warranted; fourth, improving coordination with the cemetery's operational partners, the Military District of Washington, the military honor guards, and Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall to ensure, for example, that scheduling conflicts are avoided and the right honor guards are available when needed; fifth, a strategic plan or campaign plan with expected outcomes, performance metrics, and milestones; and sixth, written policies explaining how to assist the families when such assistance is warranted.

The cemetery leadership has generally concurred with our recommendations and has begun to implement them. We are encouraged by this.

Now my final point: the question of the feasibility and advisability of transferring Arlington from the Army to the VA. It is certainly feasible. As you know, Congress transferred more than 80 national cemeteries managed by the Army to the VA in the 1970s. However, several factors could affect the advisability of this. Such a change can have potential costs and benefits challenges. It can

lead to certain transition challenges, and can affect the characteristics that make Arlington unique among our national cemeteries. Thus, it may be premature to change jurisdiction right now since the Army has significantly improved its management of Arlington.

Here are some of the specific challenges that could arise in a jurisdictional change. First, simply identifying the goals of the transfer.

Second, the Army and the VA have their own staff, processes, and systems to determine burial eligibility, and scheduling and managing burials. As an example, Arlington has more restrictive eligibility for in-ground burials than the VA.

Third, Arlington's appropriations structure is different than the VA's, and should you make a jurisdictional change, the Congress may wish to review that and determine what is the right course of action.

Fourth, Arlington provides military funeral honors, but the VA does not.

Fifth, Arlington hosts many special ceremonies every year, some involving the President and visiting heads of state.

And sixth, Arlington is one of the most visited tourist destinations in Washington, hosting over 4 million visitors a year.

Finally, we do think opportunities exist for the Army and the VA to collaborate more for the mutual benefit of both organizations, but, most importantly, for the benefit of our Active-Duty service members, our veterans, and their families.

Here are some examples. VA has staff dedicated to establishing eligibility for burial in their cemeteries and a central scheduling center that could assist Arlington. Conversely, VA officials are examining whether geographic information system or global positioning system technology should be used in their cemeteries, but the Army already does this and could conceivably provide assistance to the VA. Since no formal mechanism exists yet to identify collaboration opportunities, we recommended that the two departments establish one, and they agreed.

In conclusion, we believe the Army has worked through the crisis and taken steps to put Arlington National Cemetery on a sustainable path to ensure effective cemetery operations. Our recommendations are offered in the spirit of assisting that process along so that we never have to come before you again to have this conversation.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my prepared remarks, and I would be happy to answer any questions that you or the other members of the subcommittee may have.

[The joint prepared statement of Mr. Lepore and Ms. Martin can be found in the Appendix on page 55.]

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Director Lepore. And I want to thank Director Martin. Both of you were very helpful. And I even appreciated your final comment that you didn't want to have to come back. Truly, you are helping make that possible. So thank you.

The Arlington Executive Director Ms. Kathryn Condon.

**STATEMENT OF KATHRYN A. CONDON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY**

Ms. CONDON. Chairman Wilson, Chairman Wittman, and distinguished members of both subcommittees, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the progress that we have made at Arlington National Cemetery. As both of the chairmen and Ranking Member Davis and Cooper both know from our monthly updates, there still is a lot of work left that we have to do at Arlington, but the Army and the entire cemetery are prepared to address the challenges that remain. But today, significant progress has been made, progress as a result of our concerted focus on establishing repeatable standards, measures, and operating procedures that emphasize safety, proficiency, professionalism, and accountability.

The implementation of state-of-the-art technology now makes the hallowed grounds of Arlington one of the most technologically advanced cemeteries in the country, a different perspective than 19 months ago, when the cemetery lacked fiscal stewardship; was a paper-based operation using a typewriter and having only one fax machine; when calls were not answered; and the workforce was not properly manned, trained, or equipped. But practicing sound fiscal stewardship and displaying transparency of cemetery operations is paramount in our effort to restore the faith, trust, and honor our veterans and their families so rightfully deserve.

A formal chain-of-custody process has been implemented to maintain positive, verifiable control of remains throughout both the interment and inurnment process at the cemetery. And we have reviewed years of financial records and recovered funds, \$26.8 million to be exact, funds that were fully used to fully fund, as you know, Chairman Wittman, the construction of the ninth columbarium and to make the necessary improvements to years of backlogs of maintenance and repair. You have my commitment that we will continue to examine prior-year funding records to see if there are more dollars that can be recovered to put back into Arlington.

In the accountability report recently submitted to this Congress, we have examined and photographed 259,978 gravesites, markers, and niches. The Accountability Task Force compiled those photos and coupled them with our existing records, and for the first time we now have consolidated 147 years of cemetery records, records that were created from logbook entries, our paper-based records of interment and grave cards that we used to have in our interment scheduling base but are no longer there, and the automated records that we did have, and we now have them into a single, accountable database.

Since the submission of the report, the total validated gravesites without any burial discrepancies in evidence is now 212,674, and we are working diligently to continue to close the remaining 18 percent of the cases to bring our efforts on accountability to closure.

The creation of the single, complete, verifiable database will soon allow families and other stakeholders with Internet access to search and produce a picture of each and every marker in the cemetery, and to review that with publicly available information pertaining to each gravesite. They can do this on our state-of-the-art

Web site and soon-to-be smartphone application that we will be launching to the public.

In the area of contracting, we have made significant progress in contract management, transforming our contracting activities to position the Army National Cemetery's program for long-term sustainment. The Army has resourced our contracting support and oversight, adding skilled acquisition support personnel to support my staff, and properly training the workforce involved in the acquisition process.

In order to orchestrate the many activities required to effectively run Arlington, we have developed the Army National Cemeteries Campaign Plan, which codifies in one strategic document the long-term vision for the operation of the cemetery at both Arlington and the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home. It is the vehicle that the superintendent Pat Hallinan and I will use to ensure that we do achieve our future vision for the cemetery. It incorporates the significant guidance, support, and recommendations we have received from Secretary McHugh, from the GAO, from the Army inspector general, from the Army Audit Agency, from the Northern Virginia Technology Council, and from distinguished Members of Congress, in particular members of this committee.

Coupled with the campaign plan, we are developing our Enterprise Architecture and Technology Acquisition Roadmap, which will serve as our IT blueprint and ensure our IT investments are effectively and efficiently meeting the needs of the organization well into the future.

In conclusion, I personally wish to thank both committees again for your leadership and monthly guidance as we restore honor and dignity to Arlington National Cemetery. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Condon can be found in the Appendix on page 77.]

Mr. WILSON. Thank you very much.

And at this time we will proceed to questions from each member of both of the subcommittees, and we will be on a strict 5-minute rule. This will be upheld by Mr. John Chapla, who is a professional staff member of the Armed Services Committee and above reproach. He is very good about keeping the 5-minute rule, including with both chairmen.

And at this time I would like to ask Ms. Condon, first of all, it is exciting, and I hope people do hear the good news that you can access records now by the Internet. As a person who has a direct family member there, it means a lot to me as a citizen of our country and also as a Member of Congress.

In your report you have identified that more than 57,000 grave discrepancies still have to be resolved. I would like you to focus on what the most serious are, and particularly the 14,000 critical discrepancies. What is the corrective action timeline and funding required to address the critical deficiencies?

Ms. CONDON. Mr. Chairman, in our accountability what we have done is we started the process with business rules. And one of our business rules, to match the photo that the Old Guard took of each and every gravesite and niche, was that we had to match that with at least two records. Most of those 14,000 discrepancies, which are

really not discrepancies per se, means that we didn't have two records; we only had one record. We are finding that from the Civil War we only had one document, which was the document in the handwritten transcribed logbook.

But what our Accountability Task Force did, and they ended at the 22nd of December, but we now have 45 analysts. Most of them are temporary employees, who have dedicated themselves to looking at the Social Security Death Index, to look at census data, to look at military records, to go on Ancestry.com to make sure that we could find another record so that we could validate the information that we have on the gravesite and headstone. And that incorporates most of what that 14,000 is.

Mr. WILSON. Well, that is very creative, and I am delighted to hear that.

Additionally, there have been press reports that \$12 million of what were previously appropriated funds could not be found. And then you have indicated that you have recovered \$26.8 million. Could you tell us how the recovery was done, whether there are any other unobligated funds still to be found? And how is this situation of unobligated funds to be prevented in the future?

Ms. CONDON. Well, sir, I can first start by talking how the \$12 million came about.

On page 15 of Ms. Martin's GAO report on contracting, they cited a 2010 Army audit that said that \$15 million was—of unliquidated obligations was recovered. So if you take the total of the amount that we have found and subtract the \$15 million, you get \$12 million that they said was unaccounted for.

Sir, that was not unaccounted for. We recovered all of that \$26.8 million, because the IG reports, the Army audit reports, and the GAO reports were all snapshots in time. And that data, you know, we were continuing to recover those funds. How did the staff? My resource management staff has been working meticulously to look at each and every contract to make sure that we close out those contracts and recover funds, and to also look at each and every MIPR [Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request], which is when you give money out to an organization to provide support, to make sure that we close out and bring back those dollars. That is how we were able to recoup the \$26 million that we found.

Mr. WILSON. I want to congratulate you. I can't imagine recovering that much money. So I am very, very pleased.

For everyone, and it can be very brief since my time is brief, should the Department of Veterans Affairs assume responsibility for Arlington National Cemetery and the cemetery at the Soldiers' Home here in the District of Columbia? And we will begin this time with General Vangjel.

General VANGJEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think that we need to take a good look at this and a more detailed look. I concur with what the GAO has brought up already. As I take a look at it, I think, though, that right now the Army should keep it. And the bottom line is collaboration is probably better at this point, at least for the next few years, and then we will take another look. And we will do whatever the President and Congress want us to do.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you.

Ms. MARTIN. I will defer to my colleague.

Mr. LEPORE. Yes, Mr. Chairman. As we noted in our report, given the progress the Army has made, and given the potential short-term costs of actually doing a transfer, it seemed to us that it might be more prudent to give the Army a chance to see if they can complete their progress and bring this through to a successful conclusion. And you will have a pretty good idea how they do when General Vangiel and his team come back in later this year. So it seemed to us that right now making that decision might be a little premature.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you.

And Ms. Condon.

Ms. CONDON. Chairman Wilson, I am not going to answer this parochially. My job was to put in place, to fix Arlington for our veterans and their loved ones. The decision on where Arlington is placed, all I can tell you, sir, is if it is transferred, you will have a fixed, much improved Arlington.

Mr. WILSON. Well, thank you all. And we now proceed to the ranking member, Susan Davis of San Diego, California.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you.

To you, General Vangiel, if you were to give Arlington a grade right now, what would that be?

General VANGJEL. I have had a chance to go down and essentially talk to some people, and I have looked at some past reports. I haven't had a chance to look at it in depth like I am going to do this summer with the inspection team as we go down. What I can say is that being deployed for the past 2 years, as I heard what was going on at Arlington, I would have to give them a zero with what I heard. I have to be honest with you, because it is just not something—it was inconceivable that that was happening, because what I saw was there were very respectful ceremonies. It seemed to be going well.

I will say, though, that looking at the progress that has been made, and, as I say, I go back and look at the reports that the Department of the Army IG has done, there have been two now, there has been significant progress. So if you are asking me to put it on a number scale, ma'am, that would be difficult for me to do at this point because I don't usually give tens. So I would have to say that they are probably around—they are better than five.

Mrs. DAVIS. Of what you know, and certainly from the testimony today, one of the things I kept hearing was about staffing issues and making sure that the issues around that are really sustained so that no matter who is there, you know, that those issues are addressed. Is that one that would certainly improve their grade, or is there anything else that really stands out to you from all that has been said?

General VANGJEL. In 2010, we identified the fact that they just—the staff wasn't robust enough to be able to do the jobs that they were being asked to do, particularly from an oversight function. We recommended that the Army Force Management Support Agency and the United States Army Manpower Analysis Agency come down, take a look. They did. They made recommendations. And the Secretary of the Army authorized an increase of about 63 per-

sonnel, I believe. And Ms. Condon has been hiring folks. I don't believe she has got them all yet. I defer to her for the actual status.

In my mind, it is the documentation of SOPs [standard operating procedures], internal process controls. If I had to say what really in my mind influences the score, if you will, the service to the families is remarkable. They are doing a good job with that. Ceremonies have always been done well. In fact, in one circumstance you could argue that the fact that they were done well caused a lack of oversight in some other areas. There was an assumption that everything was okay. And as you take a look at that, though, I think at the end of the day, it really is about establishing, documenting, and routinizing these processes that they have made so much progress with so far. But it is all about making sure that the SOPs match execution right now. That is where we are at.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you very much.

Ms. MARTIN, you mentioned in your testimony the need for contracting specialists and certainly for senior staffers as well. And I am just wondering what do you think is a reasonable timeframe to—if we look back 6 months from—or look forward 6 months from now, should those issues be addressed by then, or should it be 3 months, a year? What is reasonable to assume that a lot of these areas have been addressed?

Ms. MARTIN. Well, Congresswoman, I would certainly have to defer to the leadership at Arlington. To her credit, Ms. Condon has identified the need for a more senior contracting specialist, and she has taken some steps to get that in 2013. My understanding is there is a process to do that. So she has already put the steps in place.

The fact that she is getting the support that she needs from Fort Belvoir at the present time is certainly a positive. But our point would be that at some point if there is another urgent need within the Army, that support may not be there for Arlington. So as we have been saying, that it is important, again, to put the policies, procedures, have the right people in place in order to sustain. So sustainment, again, is the key. But Ms. Condon has certainly, and her team have certainly taken the steps to identify what she needs, and to hopefully bring those people on board.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you.

Ms. Condon, what do you think is a reasonable timeframe to come back and be sure that, you know—6 months? Is that reasonable? Or 3 months?

Ms. CONDON. Six months is fair. Ma'am, we are currently in the process of hiring that senior contracting professional to be personally on my staff. The reason why I am very comfortable with the agreement we have now with the Army Contracting Command, with having them provide our contracting support, because that means that we have trained acquisition professionals who are in the acquisition chain, so that I will make sure that they have the right training, the right credentials, the right levels of certification, and the right warrants. Because Arlington really isn't that large of an organization to have a large contracting structure embedded in our TDA [Table of Distribution and Allowances]. So if I have the one senior professional on the staff personally and then reach back to the Contracting Command for support, I think that will satisfy

the contracting oversight and requirements that we will need at the cemetery.

Mrs. DAVIS. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Ms. Davis.

And we proceed now to Chairman Rob Wittman of Virginia.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Martin, I want to begin with you. I find it interesting in the report you speak about contract management and deficiencies there at Arlington with contract management. Specifically in the area of IT, it appears as though about \$5 million spent in IT contracts that appear to be wasteful and haven't produced any results. And on page 9 of the report, you have said that the IT contract management system is not guided by a modernization blueprint, and that it is duplicative, poorly integrated, and unnecessarily costly to maintain.

From that standpoint, what did your review uncover in specific terms about why you believe that was occurring, as well as what are the current efforts to overcome those deficiencies? Where are they in this modernization effort to make sure there is not duplication and that systems aren't unduly costly to maintain those efforts?

Ms. MARTIN. Thank you, Chairman, for the question. And it actually spans both of the reports. The external reviews found that the over \$5 million that had been spent to try to modernize the IT systems really didn't get us very much. And there were a number of reasons, starting from some basic stuff like the people who were executing the contracts were not properly trained and did not have the right experience. And Ms. Condon kind of referred to the importance of doing that up-front planning for contracts.

And a couple of the systems really did not get us very much in terms of trying to modernize. As a part of the mandate, we were required to look at five particular systems that were called out, and what we found is that two of these systems are active, and those two are the interment scheduling system and the geographic information system. That is the one that Ms. Condon and my colleague referred to to be able to use GPS to do the mapping, et cetera. One system is in use, the BOSS [Burial Operations Scheduling System] system. And that is a VA system. So it is not really an Arlington contract, but Arlington does use that system to order the headstones and the grave markers, but there is no payment to VA under that contract. And then the last two, the interment management system and the total cemetery management system, are the ones that we basically got nothing for in terms of the moneys that were spent.

So there were a number of reasons in terms of, you know, the contracts not having the specific, again, oversight, the deliverables not being very clear, documentation, planning, oversight. So it spanned the gamut in terms of things that you would not want to do for contracts. And so in the oversight and management report, we made some specific recommendations in terms of having an architecture, and Mr. Lepore can talk a bit more about that.

Mr. LEPORE. Yes, Mr. Chairman. The point that my colleague Ms. Martin is making is we had made the point in our report that the cemetery staff took some very reasonable initial steps to deal

with sort of immediate deficiencies, ensuring you have got a good firewall, and virus protection, and some pretty fundamental stuff, probably the things that needed to be done urgently. Very reasonable steps.

Our point then was as the cemetery staff begins to transition to putting the organization on a long-term sustainable path, having a good plan that ties the future operational environment back to the technology investments will be needed, or what we call an enterprise architecture, would be an important step to make sure that for the long term the cemetery is on a sustainable path. They have begun that process and expect to complete it later this year.

Mr. WITTMAN. Let me follow up on that long-term sustainable path. You also point out in the report that there is a lack of a strategic plan. It seems like to me an organization can't get to where it needs to be without a clear vision that is stated in the strategic plan. Can you tell me where you believe the deficiencies lie as far as not having that plan, what that means, and really where the organization there at Arlington needs to go with that plan?

Mr. LEPORE. Yes, I would be happy to. When we did the work, there wasn't a plan at that time. It turns out that the cemetery was working on one. Just a couple of weeks ago really we saw for the first time the Army's campaign plan as they call it, which is—that is their jargon, okay, good enough. And among the kinds of things we look for in a strategic plan are goals and objectives, where are you trying to take the organization; performance metrics so you have some way of knowing did I get there or not; and milestones that sort of force you—as sort of a forcing action to help you get there; and then a process to go back and look at yourself and figure out, did I get where I need to go?

We just saw the campaign plan for the first time a couple of weeks ago. Ms. Condon and her staff were gracious enough to share it with us. So we haven't had a chance to fully review it yet since we just got it, but I can tell you it does seem to have the basic fundamentals that we would look for in such a plan.

Mr. WITTMAN. Very good.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Chairman Wittman.

And we now proceed to Ranking Member Jim Cooper of Tennessee.

Mr. COOPER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The title of this hearing is an "Update on Accountability at Arlington National Cemetery." I am worried that we are hearing a whole lot more about accounting and bureaucracy than we are hearing about accountability.

When I talk to folks back home, they think accountability means that somebody was in charge, and they had to account for what they did or did not do while they were in charge, and we are not hearing much about that. And to refresh everybody's memory, in July and August of 2009, the newspaper, the Washington Post, discovered irregularities at the cemetery. I think it was June 2010, almost a year later, that the Secretary of the Army responded. We have had a hearing in 2011. Now it is 2012. We are years into this, and to my knowledge not one person, either military or civilian,

has been punished in any way for one of the worst scandals in the 150-year history of Arlington National Cemetery.

Now, as this was going on, we have learned from the news media that the Air Force has apparently improperly disposed of the remains, the ashes, of over 200 airmen and women. To my knowledge, there has been no accountability there either. Now, that is a newer scandal. But what is going on here?

And I love your new systems. And I think accountants are great, and I love software, and accurate recordkeeping is great. But we must remember this is a core function of the U.S. military, and has been since the founding of the services. There is no more premier location than Arlington, and no reprimand, no punishment, no accountability. We haven't even, in this hearing at least, identified the folks to be held accountable. And I love looking forward, and I love optimism, and I do think great progress has been made by the current folks. But how do I look folks in the eye back home and say there has been accountability?

When you talk about whether it should be an Army or a VA facility, who in the Army was in charge? And this is way beyond the realm of the GAO and folks like that, and you are excellent witnesses, and I appreciate the limits on your supervision, but this hearing is about accountability at Arlington, and the best I can tell, there is none, at least in terms of holding the wrongdoers accountable.

So what are we going to do about this? This is years into the investigation. Members of Congress that run for office hoping to hold investigative hearings on cemetery accountability, presumably this will be handled responsibly. But I am getting tired of waiting years into the investigation. Now, I want to be fair to all involved, but this is years that have passed. Is it going to take 3 years to find out what happened to the ashes of the airmen that were apparently dumped in a dumpster? What is going on here?

So I hope that these committees will not be part of any sweeping under the rug, any whitewash. But as the years click by, shouldn't there be not just an accounting, but accountability?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As you know, I did not take an opening statement. I did not want to stress the committee here. But I think we have more work to do in this area.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you very much for your inquiries, which certainly need to be addressed.

At this time we have Mr. Conaway.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Cooper is a hard act to follow.

I am a CPA, and I am trying to figure out the recordkeeping process, which I do think is core to some of the stuff that went on. The report went through an era-based model where the various eras, and starting in 1999, there is something called the BOSS system that is, I guess, a VA cemetery system. And did you have anybody look at kind of the state of the art for—I mean, there are people who control cemeteries and burials, you know, all over the United States, and there is a full industry of that that does it. There is nothing unique about handling remains and burying folks to the military. We honor those folks a little bit more than the general. So help me understand what the current BOSS system is

versus a system you would normally find in a relatively modern cemetery operation.

Ms. CONDON. Congressman Conaway, the BOSS system is the Veterans Affairs system, their Burial Operations Scheduling System that the VA—

Mr. CONAWAY. Which is just scheduling.

Ms. CONDON. It does scheduling. And it also is the system that the gravestones, the markers, are ordered from. So that is how Arlington uses the BOSS system.

Mr. CONAWAY. All right. So it is not—well—

Ms. CONDON. It is a scheduling system that VA uses.

Mr. CONAWAY. What is ISS?

Ms. CONDON. Interment Scheduling System was the scheduling system that Arlington—it was something that I inherited on June 10, and that is the scheduling system that we use at Arlington to schedule our services. The difference between that and the BOSS system is the variables for a burial at Arlington are somewhat different. It is because you are coordinating the chapels and all the services and so forth. But, Congressman Conaway, we are working with VA on the interface between the two systems that are required.

Mr. CONAWAY. If BOSS is just scheduling, why do you need two?

Ms. CONDON. It is the system that you—we don't need two. The bottom line is we need a scheduling system. But more than that, we just need accountable data. So it doesn't matter what system you use there to schedule a service, it is all about the data.

Mr. CONAWAY. Okay. So services are being held at Arlington today. Help us understand what the records look like for a particular service. And is it a combination of handwritten records, or is it all automated? It is all captured electronically? Or what is the current state of affairs?

Ms. CONDON. Sir, I am very proud to state for those members of the committee who have actually been to Arlington and actually saw the paper records and the Kardex machine, our interment scheduling branch right now does not have one paper record in it. Everything is digital. All of the records now are digital.

Mr. CONAWAY. I understand scheduling, but somewhere in your records you keep track of who is buried where.

Ms. CONDON. Yes, sir.

Mr. CONAWAY. There are services being held today. And so those long-term records—once the services are done, the scheduling to make sure that the honor guard was there and everything got taken care of, going forward, though, we need to keep track of who is buried where. What does that data set look like?

Ms. CONDON. That data set, sir, follows the exact data that we reported in the December 22 report to this Congress. This way forward, we will have a photo of the front and back of every gravesite and niche, and electronically attached to that will be all of the records pertaining to that service. That is how we are accounting for each and every burial not only for the report that we did to Congress, but from this day forward. So our employees, now when a headstone is set, take the photo of the front and back of that headstone and attach that digitally to the records.

Mr. CONAWAY. And the record is all electronic.

Ms. CONDON. The record is all electronic.

Mr. CONAWAY. So this is a little crude. Maintaining the inventory of folks who are buried where, that is fully electronic now for all new interments?

Ms. CONDON. Yes, sir, it is.

Mr. CONAWAY. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Yield back.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Conaway.

We proceed to Mr. Critz of Pennsylvania.

Mr. CRITZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am trying to get my arms around this. Mr. Lepore, you said that in the 1970s at some point, jurisdictional responsibility for—is it every other national, or any other veterans cemetery was transferred to the VA?

Mr. LEPORE. The Army at that time managed 82 national cemeteries, and under the 1973 National Cemeteries Act, those cemeteries transferred to the Department of what was then just the VA, now the Department of Veterans Affairs, except for two. Arlington did not transfer, and the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery here in Washington did not transfer. The Army retained those.

Mr. CRITZ. Okay. Is there any trouble like we are experiencing at Arlington at any of these other cemeteries?

Mr. LEPORE. We have not audited anybody beyond the activities at Arlington, so I really can't say. I certainly have seen some press accounts, but we have not—our audit was focused on Arlington.

Mr. CRITZ. Prior to what was reported, what is that, almost 4 years ago, had there ever been an audit of Arlington's record-keeping prior?

Mr. LEPORE. I am not aware of one by GAO. I do not know whether the inspector general had ever done one, but we had not, to my knowledge.

Mr. CRITZ. Was Arlington's, we will call it for lack of a better term, management required to report, at the end of fiscal years or at any point, back to the Army budgetary processes, anything that had happened during the year?

Mr. LEPORE. I am not aware of that, but Ms. Condon may be in a better position to answer that than I am.

Ms. CONDON. Sir, Arlington, the management of Arlington, you know, as you do your research has to report to the Department of the Army.

Mr. CRITZ. So, but it is just gross numbers, we had this many ceremonies, not specifics?

Ms. CONDON. It would be from a resource standpoint—

Mr. CRITZ. Right.

Ms. CONDON [continuing]. It would be the resources required to run the cemetery.

Mr. CRITZ. Going through the gravesite accountability study findings, you know, obviously, this is a complex issue. As you read through subsections that—you know, sections within, and then subsections within, if they are not clearly marked, there are going to be issues.

Do we have any recollection of anywhere before 2008, any report where we have some issues because we are finding sections that have people in them that aren't supposed to have them, or we are

finding grave markers that have no people there? Is there anything prior to this 2008 sort of disaster?

I guess the question would be: How long have you folks been involved in this other than just since we started this process?

Ms. CONDON. Well, sir, I can start with that one. My first day was on June 10, 2010, when Secretary McHugh created the executive director position—Mr. Cooper—to be accountable for the management and the operation of Arlington.

Mr. CRITZ. So everyone is just pretty much just since 2008. And, sir, you just came on board very recently.

General VANGJEL. Personally, yes, sir, but I do know that there were operational assessments that were conducted at Arlington Cemetery based on my document research that I did as I have come on the job, 1996, 1997, 1998, by the Military District of Washington, because they had, in fact, had oversight responsibility at that time.

Mr. CRITZ. And nothing was reported in any of those reports?

General VANGJEL. Nothing that had to do with any kind of mismarked graves or accountability of graves was reported during that particular time, no, sir.

Mr. CRITZ. Since the digital system came on in 1999, is there any documentation of issues of mismarked graves since 1999 forward? Maybe in your audit report, is there anything? Now, prior to 1999, obviously, we have some issues because of paper records, and, you know, hopefully there are cemeteries across the country that have existed prior, but notwithstanding that, anything since 1999 when we went digital where there has been an issue?

Mr. LEPORE. We did not attempt to go back that far, and let me tell you, Congressman, the reason we didn't. The Gravesite Accountability Task Force was in the process of reviewing all 350,000 or so records. There are some differences on what the actual number is, as it turns out, but they were in the process of reviewing every record, and so it didn't seem very fruitful for us to do that work since we already had an organization doing that, and, as you know, the Gravesite Accountability Task Force report was just issued late December, I believe it was.

Mr. CRITZ. Right. Right.

Well, you know, I am new to the committee, but obviously, I am listening to Mr. Cooper because we are talking about accountability, and we have—these issues should have come up long before. I am sure that someone knew this. This just didn't pop up since 2008, and it is interesting to me that we have no players that have been identified as having gross mismanagement of that, and I yield back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Critz.

We proceed to Mr. Coffman of Colorado.

Mr. COFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, all of you, for your testimony and for your service to our country.

My concern as a Marine Corps combat veteran is specific to the remains of those who have been lost particularly in Afghanistan, or Iraq, and certainly anyone lost in combat. And I can remember being in Iraq that there was extraordinary care and respect paid to those that have—that fell on the battlefield. And where I see the breakdown, whether it is with the Air Force at Dover, or the Army

at Arlington, is the fact that you have civilian personnel, whether by the Army or by the Air Force, that, number one, come from a different culture where that respect may or may not be there, but it is not necessarily shared, but, more importantly, are not subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice [UCMJ].

When there is a violation of a regulation, it is, in effect, a lawful order, and uniform military personnel can be prosecuted under the Uniform Code of Military Justice, where civilian personnel are not accountable to the Uniform Code of Military Justice for the violation of the same regulation. And I really think that if anything comes out of these hearings, that the chain of custody for those who have fallen in battle, that chain of custody for the remains of those who have fallen must be by uniformed military personnel only. And because that is what is most upsetting about this is that we are in this discussion saying, oh, things are getting better; oh, things are changing. Let me tell you this: If this all were handled—and I understand support services, and so I am narrowly defining something that I really think ought to be changed in respect for those who have fallen on the battlefield—that I just don't believe we would be in this situation right now, having had a career between the United States Army and the Marine Corps. We are in the kind of discussions that we have had about the kind of dereliction of duty that has befallen Arlington, and Dover—I know Dover is not a part of this discussion today—but I simply don't believe we would be here today if we were doing that.

Now, I understand there is a broader question, and we are talking about retired military personnel. We are talking about dependents. We are talking about other things. But if there is anything that as a combat veteran that I believe must come out of these hearings, it is, again, that only U.S.—uniformed U.S. military personnel handle the remains of those who have fallen in battle. And I open it up if anybody would like to comment on that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Coffman, and you raise a really good point about the UCMJ.

We proceed to Mr. Runyan, of New Jersey.

Mr. RUNYAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I somewhat agree with what my colleague Mr. Coffman has kind of said. I think we all agree, we kind of have our arms around this. But we have to put teeth to it.

We talk about accountability, and I have had the fortunate opportunity to actually chair the VA Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorials, so I obviously have dual jurisdiction here. And we are beginning, obviously, with Sam Houston Cemetery, experiencing some of these same pitfalls that we have here at Arlington, unfortunately. Again, the word “accountability” comes up time and time again. And if there are no teeth to anything we are doing, actions have consequences. No one has the fear of a consequence coming down; whether it is through contracting, whether it is through your predecessor. How do we do this? Do we do it through the contractor? Do we have to do it through legislation, through this committee?

I mean, obviously, my colleague Mr. Coffman has a legitimate pathway to address that issue, but I think there are multiple fac-

tors that have to be in there. But we have to hold the people accountable. At the root of it, I think most of these problems go away. And I think also, and I think as we are moving forward, Ms. Condon, with how our—our plan, and I know you are still building the roadmap of “you can take this manual and hand it to your predecessor.” I know we are building that, but to have those teeth in those procedures also, and, throughout the process of gaining the information and the pitfalls that you are finding from your predecessor, to make sure that all of that information is in there.

Because it truly is a disgrace what we have done to this cemetery and, frankly, to what I am finding in the VA. And I know, being briefed by the VA people, that you guys are working very closely together because you have a lot of similar problems and to share those experiences. And I hope we can work together on that aspect because I know how a lot of this—how a lot of this works: This is my problem; that is their problem. No. It is the American people’s problem. It is our soldiers. It is our taxpayers at the end of the day. And there are people that need to be held accountable, and I think that as a committee we have to find a way to do that.

And I applaud you all for your efforts here, but there are a lot of things that it hurts. It hurts people every day when these loved ones call up and say, I don’t know if my loved one is buried where you say they are buried. And there are some of them that we can’t even prove. It is heartbreaking to have to go through that kind of stuff.

So I know we have our arms around it. I think we truly, and I will say it again, sink our teeth into it and make sure that this never happens again. And I thank you all for your testimony, and, Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you very much for your heartfelt comments, Mr. Runyan, and at this time, unless there is any further question, we shall again thank the witnesses for being here, thank you for making a difference. Again, Arlington, the shrine of our country, the respect that we have for our service members, military families, veterans, this is so important.

And I would like now to proceed to Mr. Wittman.

Mr. WITTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also would like to thank the witnesses.

I think there are a couple of things here that all of us on the committee would like to know today. I think Mr. Cooper brings up a great point on accountability, and about past actions, current investigations. I think all of us feel like a sufficient amount of time has passed where those investigations should have reached their conclusion. There should be findings, and there should be actions. So I think I know that our committee would expect from you, General Vangel, and from you, Ms. Condon, some indication about where that is.

And I realize it may not be under your direct jurisdiction. I realize it is probably internal investigations within the Army, but I am sure that you can pass on to the Army leadership there that I think both of our committees would like a definitive answer as to where that goes on. And I realize Mr. Cooper’s frustration, because at our last meeting, at our last hearing, the same questions were asked about when we could expect findings and actions. And as Mr.

Cooper pointed out, they spent a long time, and I think all of us think it is very reasonable that a conclusion should have been reached by this particular point in time.

So I hope that that comes back to both of our committees so we understand where things are. I think that is an extraordinarily important question. We talked about some of the nuts and bolts today. That is one of those efforts hanging out there that I think leaves us all in a very uncomfortable position. I thank Mr. Cooper for bringing it up. I know it is a difficult, but a very, very important issue for this, and we look forward to hearing something definitive back from the Army as to where that is. And—

Mr. WILSON. I believe, excuse me, General Vangjel wanted to comment on that.

General VANGJEL. Yes, Congressman, if I could, please. As we went through the investigation for what we have with the two outstanding issues, the urns and gravesite reservations in particular, as we move forward, we look at violations of policy guidance. If it is criminal, we hand it over to the Criminal Investigation Division [CID]. They have completed their investigations with the Department of Justice now. So that is the decision, and that is what we are told in the Army, they are making the determination on prosecution. So what we will do is we will do the best we can to get information from them, and we can provide that to the committee. But ultimately, right now, it is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice [DOJ].

Mr. WITTMAN. I think that would be great. If you could let us know when CID passed it over to the Justice Department, and who it is there so these committees can communicate with the Justice Department to get from them an idea about timeframe.

General VANGJEL. Absolutely, Congressman, I will do.

Mr. WILSON. Thanks. I look forward to working with Chairman Wittman and our ranking members, too, in regard to possible CID and DOJ officials to come and let us know what the status is, because this would be beyond your purview, but there should be accountability, and we can't proceed without it.

General VANGJEL. Yeah.

Mr. WITTMAN. And I think, too, another thing to take from today that I ask all of you to consider, I think the suggestion that the leadership chain include somebody in uniform to make sure the Uniform Code of Military Justice is something that reigns, that is something that is a very, very significant suggestion, one that, as strategic planning and organization plans are looked at, that—I mean, it is something that garners your serious consideration. I want to thank Mr. Coffman for bringing that up.

Mr. WILSON. Any further? If not, we shall be adjourned. Thank you, again, everyone, for being here today.

[Whereupon, at 1:05 p.m., the subcommittees were adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

FEBRUARY 3, 2012

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

FEBRUARY 3, 2012

**Opening Remarks – Congressman Wilson
Joint Hearing**

**Military Personnel and Oversight and
Investigations Subcommittees
Status of Corrective Actions at Arlington Cemetery**

February 3, 2012

Today, the Military Personnel Subcommittee and the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee continue their oversight of actions to improve the operation and sustainment of the Arlington National Cemetery.

The testimony today is based on reports directed by the Congress and delivered in December by the Army and the Government Accounting Office. In general, both reports reflect substantial improvement in a number of areas of management and contracting execution.

That progress reflects not only the personal commitment of Secretary John McHugh, but also the professionalism and commitment of Mrs. Katherine Condon, the Executive

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Director of the Army National Cemeteries Program, and Mr. Patrick Hallinan, the Superintendent of Arlington Cemetery.

As I look at the issues that still need to be addressed, these two appear to rise above the rest:

- Should the Department of Veterans' Affairs assume responsibility for Arlington National Cemetery and the cemetery at the Soldiers Home here in the District of Columbia?
- What is the corrective action and funding that will be required to resolve the nearly 14,000 critical deficiencies cited in the Arlington Grave Accountability effort?

Before I introduce our witnesses, let me recognize, in turn, Representatives Susan Davis, the Ranking Member of the Military Personnel Subcommittee, Rob Wittman, Chairman of the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee and Jim Cooper, the Ranking Member of the Oversight and

Investigation Subcommittee for any opening remarks that they might wish to make.

Today we will hear from our witnesses in this order:

- Lieutenant General Peter M. Vangjel, The Inspector General, U.S. Army;
- Mr. Brian J. Lepore, Director of Defense Capabilities and Management, U.S. Government Accountability Office;
- Ms. Belva Martin, Director, Acquisition and Sourcing Management Team, U.S. Government Accountability Office
- Ms. Kathryn Condon, Executive Director of the Army's National Cemeteries Program.

**Statement of
Representative Susan Davis
Subcommittees on Military Personnel and Oversight and Investigation
Hearing on Update on Accountability at Arlington National Cemetery
February 3, 2012**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. General Vangiel, welcome, I understand you recently took over for General McCoy as the Army Inspector General. Ms. Martin and Mr. Lepore, I look forward to hearing the Government Accountability Office (GAO) assessment of the Army's efforts with respect to Arlington. Ms. Condon, welcome back.

Arlington National Cemetery is one of the most hallowed grounds of this nation, and we must hold it to the highest standards of performance. Members of the Subcommittee on Military Personnel in conjunction with the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee are interested in the actions taken by the Army to improve its accountability of Arlington National Cemetery since our hearing in September.

Ms. Condon, I recognize the hard work you and Mr. Hallinan have done to turnaround the cemetery. I know that you could not have done it alone. There are probably a number of people that should be acknowledged for their efforts that cannot all be recognized here today. However, I believe there is still more to be done to ensure that we maintain and build upon the achievements that have been made and to ensure accountability of those who were involved in the missteps at Arlington National Cemetery.

Ms. Martin and Mr. Lepore I am interested in learning from GAO what issues and concerns should the committee be aware of as the Army works to develop a strategic plan for Arlington. What signs, if any, should we be tracking as the Army moves forward on its efforts to continue to improve Arlington? I

would also like to hear your thoughts on what concerns we should be aware of if there is an effort to transfer the management of Arlington from the Army to the Veterans Administration?

General Vangjel, I would be interested in the IGs perspective on Arlington, and what can be done to build upon the improvements that have recently been made. Thank you all for being here, this is an important issue and one that touches all who serve our nation in uniform.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Remarks of Chairman Wittman
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations
Update on Accountability at Arlington National Cemetery
February 3, 2012**

Welcome. I want to thank my co-chair Joe Wilson, and our ranking members Jim Cooper and Susan Davis, for their steadfast commitment and focus on this very important issue. It's been an honor to work with you over the last months.

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to our panel of witnesses: General, thank you for your service to our Army—we appreciate your leadership and oversight of Arlington;

Ms. Condon, thanks to you and your team, who have met with us on a monthly basis to keep us apprised of progress. I would like to highlight my appreciation for you and the Army leadership who have changed the culture and climate at Arlington.

This was an organization characterized by deficiencies and mismanagement—that has since been transformed into a stable, functioning and professional organization—that is finally setting a new standard for how we care for our fallen heroes.

Mr. Brian Lepore and Ms. Belva Martin, thank you also for coming. The GAO always does an excellent job and we appreciate your service.

We are here today for two very important reasons: to figure out what progress has been made with respect to accountability issues at Arlington and to determine what challenges remain that need to be addressed moving forward.

I have said many times how important it is to me that we work to achieve 100% accountability, and the Army, has done a great job helping us get there with the Gravesite Accountability Task Force. Validating almost 200,000 gravesites was difficult and challenging, but you, your staff, and the Old Guard got it done.

However, I remain concerned about a number of issues. First, the lack of accountability with respect to former officials for their misconduct. It's my

understanding that no criminal action has been taken and that investigations are ongoing and open. I find this hard to believe, and unacceptable, and I will continue to follow this very closely.

Second, despite the great amount of time that has elapsed since initial allegations came to light, management and contracting issues persist at Arlington. To highlight just a few, I'm concerned about GAO's findings regarding the lack of a strategic plan and the lack of IT organizational architecture which call into question whether we're effectively and efficiently spending taxpayer dollars at the Cemetery since millions have already been wasted.

I hope the panel will address these issues in your testimony. I also hope you'll tell us what progress has been made, and when you believe we'll finally have resolution on these matters. We cannot close the door on this terrible chapter in Arlington history until all of these issues are resolved.

We owe it to our Nation's heroes who have sacrificed their lives on our behalf to continue to make this a top priority and to get this done.

And we owe it to future generations of heroes who deserve the honor of being buried there. Thank you.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
COMPLETE STATEMENT
OF
LIEUTENANT GENERAL PETER M. VANGJEL
THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY INSPECTOR GENERAL AGENCY (DAIG)

BEFORE

THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL
AND THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SECOND SESSION, 112TH CONGRESS

ON

ARLINGTON REFORMS
FEBRUARY 3, 2012

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Wilson, Ranking Member Davis, Chairman Wittman, Ranking Member Cooper and distinguished Members of the Subcommittees, thank you for affording time in your schedule to provide us with an opportunity to update you on the significant progress made at Arlington National Cemetery during the past year.

I assumed duties as the 64th Inspector General of the Army on 21 November 2011. Since then I have reviewed the work that has been done by the Inspector General Agency over the last two years with respect to Arlington National Cemetery. I have also met and engaged in discussions with Ms. Kathryn A. Condon, Executive Director of the Army National Cemeteries Program, and her team as well as the other Army stakeholders who have been involved in correcting the deficiencies found at Arlington National Cemetery since the release of the 9 June 2010 DAIG inspection report. Although I am new to the position of The Inspector General, I believe that my engagements over the last two months afford me a sound basis on which to respond to your questions regarding the Army's efforts to administer Arlington National Cemetery "to standards that fully honor the service and sacrifices of the deceased members of the armed forces buried or inurned" there. Also, it is clear to me that this Committee's oversight and guidance are crucial to the progress achieved at Arlington National Cemetery. I thank you for your efforts and look forward to working with the Committees to ensure all Arlington National Cemetery issues and concerns are resolved.

DAIG'S SPECIAL INSPECTION OF ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

The Inspector General Agency's involvement began in July 2009 when, in discussion with the Acting Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, a concern arose that

significant management issues might exist at Arlington National Cemetery. The Inspector General was directed to inspect Arlington National Cemetery. Secretary Geren chartered that inspection to assess policy and procedures for operation of the Cemetery; management, administration, and coordination processes and the training of personnel at the Cemetery; and the effectiveness of command and leadership structures relating to other commands, staff elements and agencies involved in the Cemetery's operations.

In November 2009, upon the identification of additional concerns at Arlington National Cemetery, The Inspector General was directed to add two more objectives to the inspection: one to assess information management systems at the Cemetery and another to assess the Cemetery's contracting procedures. The Inspector General was further directed to investigate potential issues related to hostile work environment, inappropriate hiring practices, and improper interment and trans-interment of remains. Teams of Army IGs conducted the inspection and the investigation simultaneously.

My predecessor, LTG Whitcomb, signed the completed inspection report on 9 June 2010. It highlighted 76 findings and made 101 recommendations for corrective action.

ARMY DIRECTIVE 2010-04

On 10 June 2010, after reviewing the IG inspection report, Secretary McHugh issued Army Directive 2010-04: *Enhancing the Operation and Oversight of Army National Cemeteries*. The directive established the Army National Cemeteries Program Executive Director position, reporting directly to the Secretary. In his directive, Secretary McHugh tasked the Executive Director to establish an accountability baseline

for all gravesites and inurnment niches at Arlington National Cemetery. He further tasked agencies and organizations across the Army to accomplish numerous actions to support the improvement of Cemetery processes and procedures.

THE 2011 RE-INSPECTION OF ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY:

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

After the completion of a six-month interim review of Arlington National Cemetery in January 2011, the DAIG conducted an in-depth re-inspection of the Cemetery from May to August 2011. With the enactment of Public Law 111-339, the Secretary decided that our 2011 re-inspection would form the basis of his report to Congress on the Army's execution and compliance with every section of the Army Directive, as required by that law. In contrast to our 2010 inspection of Arlington National Cemetery, which focused on the five objectives cited above, the 2011 re-inspection assessed the progress made by Arlington National Cemetery in correcting deficiencies enumerated in the 2010 report and the Army's compliance with the Secretary's follow-on directive. In accordance with the requirements of the Public Law, the re-inspection also assessed the adequacy of practices at Arlington National Cemetery "to provide information, outreach and support to families of those individuals buried at Arlington National Cemetery regarding procedures to detect and correct current errors" in burials there.

THE 2011 RE-INSPECTION OF ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY:

KEY FINDINGS

Since the Secretary issued Army Directive 2010-04, the Executive Director has led her staff and coordinated with other Army stakeholders to make significant improvements at Arlington National Cemetery, all while still accomplishing its daily mission. Each day,

Cemetery employees work side-by-side with ceremonial and band units from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard to bury approximately 30 veterans and family members; host an average of seven public ceremonies; and welcome thousands of tourists visiting the grounds.

Of the 76 findings contained in the 2010 report, 61 were categorized as "deficiencies," defined as serious deviations from an Army standard warranting the attention of the Army's senior leadership. During the 2011 follow-up inspection, no deficiencies were noted. We did, however, report a number of observations on the substantial progress made and on the work still to be done. The fact that the follow-up inspection found no deficiencies underscores the progress that the Army has made to correct the problems at Arlington. It is clear that the Executive Director and her staff are ready to transition from successful crisis management to sustained excellence.

Improved Organizational Culture and Climate. We found that the new Arlington National Cemetery leadership and staff have made tremendous progress in addressing the Cemetery's organizational culture and climate. Both the inspection and the investigation conducted in 2010 revealed that the Cemetery's prior leadership fostered an "insular" environment, effectively disengaged from much of the institutional Army. This insularity prevented the sustainment of functional relationships with Army command and staff elements that could provide support, resources, and oversight to the Cemetery. This insularity also contributed greatly to the mismanagement, impropriety, and ineffectiveness uncovered at the Cemetery.

Upon the establishment of the Executive Director's position, the new Executive Director and her staff immediately sought to make connections and to collaborate actively with the Army commands, staff elements, and agencies that Secretary McHugh had directed to provide support in Army Directive 2010-04. In this way, the Executive Director began to eliminate insularity in the Cemetery's organizational climate and culture, paving the way for improvement in all aspects of Arlington National Cemetery's administration, operations, and maintenance.

During its 2011 inspections of the Cemetery, the DAIG administered two Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute surveys to Cemetery employees—one in January 2011 and one in June 2011. Both surveys reflected improving morale and increasing organizational effectiveness in the year since the Executive Director and the new Superintendent took the reins of leadership. In the five months between the surveys, those who agreed with the survey statement that the overall health and morale at Arlington were better than in June 2010 almost doubled. The number of those who disagreed or felt neutrally about that survey statement dropped sharply.

Improved Information Technology and Processes. The 2011 re-inspection noted that Arlington National Cemetery now possesses a fully-functional information technology infrastructure, with computer systems enabled by the most current software applications, and supported by a comprehensive service agreement with the Army's Information Technology Agency. Starting in December 2010, Arlington partnered with the Information Technology Agency to route all incoming calls to its Consolidated Customer Service Center (CCSC) at Fort Detrick, Maryland. This process significantly improved customer service and enabled a tiered response system that improved

responsiveness to burial and inurnment inquiries. This freed Cemetery personnel to focus on supporting funeral scheduling and execution and also ensured callers inquiring about tourism-related questions were assisted promptly and efficiently by CCSC employees.

Additionally, the CCSC provided Arlington National Cemetery's Interment Services Branch the full capabilities of its tracking system. For example, every call made to the CCSC is now captured in a digital file and assigned a case number in the CCSC's database. This allows collaborative resolution of problems by CCSC personnel and Cemetery representatives from the Interment Services Branch. The Executive Director and other senior cemetery leadership review the CCSC data on a near daily basis to assess staff performance.

Other improvements to Arlington's information technology infrastructure include the replacement of antiquated and vulnerable computer hardware and applications identified in the 2010 report with the most up-to-date and effective hardware and applications the Army can provide. Additionally, the Cemetery and the Veterans Administration are partnering this year to integrate Arlington National Cemetery's Interment Scheduling System and the Veterans Administration's Burial Operations Support System. This enhancement will save the Interment Services Branch considerable man hours.

The Executive Director has partnered with the Army's Chief Information Officer and the Army Data Center-Fairfield to provide Arlington National Cemetery with a computer application for digitizing burial records and headstone photographs. This application

has helped the Executive Director's Gravesite Accountability Task Force to establish an accountability baseline of each gravesite and inurnment niche. These efforts are reflected in the Secretary's September 2011 report to your Committee, a report required by Public Law 111-339.

The digitization of all interment/inurnment records at Arlington National Cemetery is now complete, ahead of the deadlines established by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012, and the staff is continuing to digitize all other records at the Cemetery. Representatives are now generating and maintaining digital records for each new interment or inurnment. This digitized database of interment and inurnment records will eventually automatically populate and update a new digital Cemetery map—using the Army's most current geospatial mapping program. Finally, the Executive Director is establishing an on-site Operations Center to ensure 24/7 situational awareness and the sharing of real-time information concerning current and future cemeterial and ceremonial operations with Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, and Coast Guard headquarters in the National Capital Region, each of which supports the Cemetery every day.

Improvement in Compliance with Army Information Assurance Focus Areas.

During the DAIG's inspection in 2010, Arlington National Cemetery did not meet the Army standard in 12 of 14 Information Assurance functional areas inspected (two additional functional areas were not inspected because they did not apply at that time). In the 12 functional areas, 57 serious Information Assurance deficiencies were identified. The Cemetery's information technology infrastructure was grossly outmoded and vulnerable and the Cemetery's workforce was untrained in critical Information

Assurance disciplines and understaffed in qualified Information Assurance personnel. A follow-on Information Assurance compliance inspection of the Cemetery was conducted in June 2011. Compared to the 2010 inspection, in which none of the applicable functional areas met the standard, in June 2011, Arlington National Cemetery met Army standards in all applicable Information Assurance functional areas. Arlington National Cemetery's improved Information Assurance readiness can be attributed to a strong customer/service-provider relationship, leadership focus, and a proactive staff. Today, I am pleased to report to you that Arlington National Cemetery ranks among the very best organizations in the Army for compliance with Information Assurance requirements.

Improvement in Acquisition and Contracting. During our first inspection, we found the Cemetery's procurement and contracting actions did not comply with Army, Defense Department, and Federal acquisition rules and regulations. Untrained and unqualified personnel on the Cemetery's staff were developing requirements and committing funds to contracts without appropriate oversight. During our 2011 inspection, the DAIG team reviewed 17 contracts generated by the Mission Installation Contracting Command's (MICC) Fort Myer and Fort Belvoir offices and eight contracts served by the Army Corps of Engineers Baltimore District. Most of the MICC contracts were recently-completed service contracts, affording us timely insights into the status of current performance. In our reviews, we focused on Arlington National Cemetery's development of requirements packages, its pre-award compliance, its coordination with supporting contracting agencies, its training of contracting officer's representatives, and its oversight of contract execution. Finally, we looked at MICC and Corps of Engineers management controls and acquisition processes and procedures.

Today, the Cemetery's contracting actions are properly aligned, based on an appropriate scope of work, and serviced by either the MICC (for service contracts), or the Corps of Engineers (for architect-engineering and construction contracts). Previously, contracting procedures at Arlington National Cemetery were monitored by a single contracting liaison officer. Now, both the Contracting Command and the Corps of Engineers are providing support teams to the Cemetery's Contracting Support Element and engaging in appropriate oversight to ensure that quality contracts are produced and monitored. The Contracting Support Element subjects new acquisitions to rigorous requirements determination, pre-award compliance checks, and contract packet reviews for quality assurance. The addition of the current Contract Support Element has greatly improved acquisition lead times and the Cemetery's overall contracting capability.

Active Arlington National Cemetery contracts are consistently awarded and administered in accordance with applicable law, rules, and regulations, a finding corroborated by the December 2011 GAO report, *Additional Actions Needed to Continue Improvements in Contract Management*. These improvements are due in no small part to the emphasis the Secretary of the Army and the Executive Director place on proper contracting practices.

Budget Formulation and Execution. Congress funds Arlington National Cemetery through a MilCon/Veterans Affairs (and related Veterans Affairs agencies) funding line item. The Cemetery receives "no-year" funds. The 2010 Inspection report found that the diversified budget and appropriation structure for Arlington National Cemetery

exacerbated the lack of organizational command and control. This unique appropriations structure also limited the ability of the Secretary of the Army to shift resources to the Cemetery if needed. The Secretary's 2010 Directive mandated the Executive Director to realign budget oversight and execution with more standard Army practices. The Executive Director and her team now work closely with the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Financial Management and Comptroller, and the General Counsel, to ensure improved oversight of Arlington National Cemetery's budget formulation and execution. The Executive Director's decision to transition to the General Fund Enterprise Business System, providing full visibility of the Cemetery's expenditures, has been critical to reversing perceived budget shortfalls. This transition enabled the Executive Director and her staff to reconcile unobligated funds from the last several years, something that had not been previously accomplished. As a result, the September 2011 inspection report found that Arlington National Cemetery resource managers had recouped \$15 million of an estimated \$25 million in unliquidated obligations that had been overlooked due to poor accounting processes. These funds can now be applied to future Arlington National Cemetery budgets.

Compliance with AD 2010-04. During the 2011 re-inspection, DAIG inspectors found that Army commands, staff elements, and agencies had complied with Army Directive 2010-04 and are effectively executing the tasks to enhance the operations and oversight of the Army National Cemeteries Program.

The Army Secretariat and the Cemetery's new leadership have initiated several other long-term improvements. One ongoing action is to determine the best alignment of

Arlington National Cemetery under the jurisdiction of Headquarters, Department of the Army, as required by section 591 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2012. Other actions include the creation of a new public affairs policy for the Cemetery and the establishment of the Army National Cemeteries Advisory Commission. The inaugural meeting of the Advisory Commission occurred on 1 December 2011, and the Committee's report from that meeting soon will be provided to the Secretary of the Army.

To ensure steady progress in correcting Arlington National Cemetery deficiencies in the period between the 2010 and 2011 DAIG inspections, Secretary McHugh directed a series of external reviews. These included an interim review by the DAIG and contract reviews by the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics and Technology and the Army Audit Agency. The Army's Chief Information Officer was directed to conduct a complete review of information technology systems and applications. The Army's Force Management Support Agency and Manpower Analysis Agency also were directed to review Arlington's force structure and make recommendations for improvement. All of these external reviews have been completed. These reviews, combined with the 2011 re-inspection, have ensured that Arlington National Cemetery is currently receiving the necessary external oversight and assessment.

Effective Outreach and Support to Families Regarding Burial Discrepancies.

During the 2011 re-inspection, we found that the Arlington National Cemetery leadership and staff were professional, compassionate, and supportive in providing information, outreach, and assistance to families concerned about possible burial

discrepancies. Immediately upon assuming her position, the Executive Director established a hotline to respond to burial inquiries and developed a tiered system to ensure that proper efforts were made to address family member concerns. In several cases, even though documents confirmed the locations of the deceased, the Cemetery supported family requests for physical verification in order to fully address their concerns.

As of September 2011, the Cemetery had received approximately 1,300 inquiries from family members. Of these, in all but 13 cases (eight of these 13 cases represent the eight urns containing cremated remains found together in one unmarked grave in October 2010), the Cemetery was able to assure family members that there were no discrepancies regarding the burial locations of their loved ones. In the cases of substantiated burial discrepancies, the Cemetery worked closely with each family concerned and invited their participation (at Army expense, when appropriate) in correcting any error and updating records accordingly. In the case of the eight urns found in a single grave, four were positively identified and re-interred. The Cemetery has reinterred the remaining four unidentified urns as "Unknown" remains, with the full dignity and respect accorded remains at any funeral service.

Equally important, the new Executive Director and Superintendent have thoroughly revised the Cemetery's procedures for interring and disintering remains to incorporate checks and balances as well as oversight safeguards to prevent similar discrepancies in the future. These safeguards were documented in a 20 June 2011 policy memorandum issued by the Executive Director and Superintendent, entitled *Assurance of Proper Casket/Urn Placement*.

This policy addresses a six-step chain of custody procedure that the Cemetery staff must apply, beginning with the receipt of the burial request through interment; specifies training and accountability measures; and provides guidance for correcting the misplacement of casketed or cremated remains. In each step, Arlington National Cemetery Field Operations Supervisors are required physically to confirm the preparation and closure of graves and countersign a "dig slip" to verify that remains are interred or inurned in the correct gravesite. The Cemetery's General Foreman then inspects the process to ensure no deviation from the standard. Cemetery leadership continuously trains the workforce on these procedures and provides consistent, direct supervision and quality control.

DAIG's 2011 RE-INSPECTION OF ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY:

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the Army and Arlington National Cemetery staffs have made great strides in correcting deficiencies noted in the 2010 DAIG inspection, fulfilled Secretary McHugh's guidance issued in Army Directive 2010-04, and supported families who inquired about potential burial errors, there remains more to do at Arlington National Cemetery, and the way ahead is effectively documented in the Executive Director's Campaign Plan. In the 2011, re-inspection report, we presented Secretary McHugh with 53 recommendations designed to continue and enhance the progress made to this point. A description of some of our key recommendations follows.

Policy Documentation. Army Directive 2010-04 established immediate oversight mechanisms to improve information technology, information assurance, contracting, engineering support, and force structure. In his directive, the Secretary established the

Executive Director as the proponent for all policies related to the Army National Cemeteries Program. In this capacity, the Executive Director is working with the Army Secretariat to update the Code of Federal Regulations as it applies to Arlington National Cemetery.

Additionally, the Executive Director is working closely with the Department of the Army Headquarters Staff to update Army Regulation 290-5, *Army National Cemeteries*. We recommended in the 2011 report that the Executive Director incorporate requirements for long-term, robust, and continuous oversight processes and mechanisms into a revision of Army Regulation 290-5. Incorporating these long-term internal and external oversight processes will be critical to ensuring effective oversight beyond the tenure of the current Secretary of the Army and Executive Director. We also recommended that the Executive Director revise Department of the Army Pamphlet 290-5, *Administration, Operation, and Maintenance of Army Cemeteries*, to provide the Army National Cemeteries, as well as 28 Army post cemeteries, with sound, authoritative, and current guidance on standardized processes and procedures for cemetery operations. In addition, we advised that any policies, processes, and procedures peculiar to Arlington National Cemetery should be removed from the pamphlet and published in Arlington National Cemetery's standing operating procedures.

Creation of a Multi-Service Policy. In the 2011 re-inspection report, we recommended a multi-Service policy be established to mitigate certain factors affecting increased wait times for interment and inurnment at Arlington National Cemetery. We made this recommendation because of the disparity among the Services in their

interment/inurnment wait times. Service members and veterans of all five Services (and family members) are eligible for burial at Arlington National Cemetery.

Excluding Service members who are killed in combat operations, wait times for funerals and burial are increasing and vary by Service. For example, in June 2010, it took an average of 74 days (from the day a deceased's interment/inurnment eligibility was determined) before a deceased was interred/inurned with full honors, compared to 87 days in June 2011, with a range of delay of almost 30 days among Services. This disparity in wait times is attributed to the lack of a multi-Service policy for interment/inurnment honors and the different procedures employed by the Services to manage ceremonial and band units.

Partnering with the CCSC has allowed the Arlington National Cemetery leadership to more accurately and more timely identify the demand for burials. This more accurate system has resulted in the receipt and processing of more requests for burial, leading to increased wait times. Accordingly, the Army Secretariat is encouraged to engage the Office of the Secretary of Defense to develop common policy, processes, and procedures to standardize Service support for honors and cemetery operations as one method to decrease disparities in wait time among the Services.

Long-Term Command, Control, and Oversight. The Army must sustain the progress made at Arlington National Cemetery and prevent the Cemetery from returning to the insular organization it once was. We note that the Executive Director and her staff have

fundamentally transformed the control mechanisms and oversight of Cemetery operations. However, to ensure this continues in the long-term, the Department of the Army is currently studying the most appropriate organizational and jurisdictional structures consistent with the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012. Alignment of long-term responsibilities will facilitate effective external oversight and support.

Cemetery Lifespan. During our inspections, we found that the number of interments and inurnments at Arlington is increasing each year. Should this trend continue, the Cemetery is likely to reach capacity in advance of current projections. We recommended that the Secretary of the Army request the Army National Cemeteries Advisory Commission to examine the causes and effects of increasing demand and make recommendations to address this issue. As previously noted, the Advisory Commission met on 1 December 2011. It recommended the formation of a subcommittee to specifically address long-term expansion. Because the impact of this issue extends beyond the Army, the Advisory Commission's recommendations should be considered carefully by our Nation's most senior leaders.

CONCLUSION

As the 2011 re-inspection report indicates, the progress made at Arlington National Cemetery since June 2010 is a "good news" story and shows a significant turn-around in performance at the Cemetery. Our inspection team found that the Arlington National Cemetery Executive Director, Superintendent, and staff are systematically correcting the deficiencies enumerated in the 2010 DAIG inspection report. As Secretary McHugh

directed, Army agencies and organizations have completed (or are in the process of completing) the tasks specifically assigned to them in Army Directive 2010-04. Finally, the inspection team also found that Arlington National Cemetery's efforts at providing outreach, information, and support to family members regarding burial discrepancies were professional and supportive. Simply put, the mismanagement that was found at the Cemetery in 2010 has been relegated to the past, and the focus is on continued improvement for the future.

The progress observed and reported by the DAIG validates the Secretary's approach to restoring the processes, systems, and management we found to be lacking at Arlington in 2010. This strategy—executed passionately and diligently according the Executive Director's Strategic Campaign plan, with the support of the Army, the Defense Department, other federal agencies, and Congress—has set the conditions for future success.

With this good news comes a realization that there is still more work to do. The leadership and staff of Arlington National Cemetery must continue to complete the painstaking work required to update the Army's relevant policy and procedural documents. The recent work establishing the gravesite accountability baseline must continue to resolve 64,230 discrepancies that remain. The Cemetery must complete its review and documentation of the internal processes, protocols, and controls to ensure future success. Finally, the Army must maintain the support and oversight it provides its' National Cemeteries and apply what it has learned to all cemeteries, large and small, under Army control.

Upholding the credibility of Arlington National Cemetery remains a priority for the Secretary of the Army and for the Committees. As a Soldier, I know that each member of the Armed Forces and their families recognize Arlington National Cemetery as "hallowed ground." I am confident that the Army will succeed in administering Arlington National Cemetery "to standards that fully honor the service and sacrifices of the deceased members of the armed forces buried or inurned" there.

United States Government Accountability Office

GAO

Testimony
Before the Subcommittees on Military
Personnel and Oversight and
Investigations, Committee on Armed
Services, House of Representatives

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ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

Actions Needed to Ensure Lasting, Positive Changes in Contracting and Management

Statement of Belva M. Martin
Director, Acquisition and Sourcing Management

and

Brian J. Lepore
Director, Defense Capabilities and Management



February 3, 2012

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

Actions Needed to Ensure Lasting, Positive Changes in Contracting and Management



Highlights of GAO-12-436T, a testimony before the Subcommittees on Military Personnel and Oversight and Investigations, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives

Why GAO Did This Study

Arlington National Cemetery (Arlington) is the final resting place for many of our nation's military servicemembers, their family members, and others. In June 2010, the Army Inspector General identified problems at the cemetery, including deficiencies in contracting and management, burial errors, and a failure to notify next of kin of errors. In response, the Secretary of the Army issued guidance creating the position of the Executive Director of the Army National Cemeteries Program (ANCP) to manage Arlington and requiring changes to address the deficiencies and improve cemetery operations. In response to Public Law 111-339, GAO assessed several areas, including (1) actions taken to improve contract management and oversight, (2) the Army's efforts to address identified management deficiencies and provide information and assistance to families regarding efforts to detect and correct burial errors, and (3) factors affecting the feasibility and advisability of transferring jurisdiction for the Army's national cemeteries to the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). The information in this testimony summarizes GAO's recent reports on Arlington contracting (GAO-12-99) and management (GAO-12-105). These reports are based on, among other things, analyzing guidance, policies, plans, contract files, and other documentation from the Army, Arlington, and other organizations and interviews with Army and VA officials.

What GAO Recommends

In the reports, GAO made several recommendations to help Arlington sustain progress made to date.

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What GAO Found

GAO identified 56 contracts and task orders that were active during fiscal year 2010 and the first three quarters of fiscal year 2011 under which contracting offices obligated roughly \$35.2 million on Arlington's behalf. These contracts supported cemetery operations, construction and facility maintenance, and new efforts to enhance information-technology systems for the automation of burial operations. The Army has taken a number of steps since June 2010 at different levels to provide for more effective management and oversight of contracts, establishing new support relationships, formalizing policies and procedures, and increasing the use of dedicated contracting staff to manage and improve its acquisition processes. However, GAO found that ANCP does not maintain complete data on its contracts, responsibilities for contracting support are not yet fully defined, and dedicated contract staffing arrangements still need to be determined. The success of Arlington's acquisition outcomes will depend on continued management focus from ANCP and its contracting partners to ensure sustained attention to contract management and institutionalize progress made to date. GAO made three recommendations to continue improvements in contract management. The Department of Defense (DOD) partially concurred and noted actions in progress to address these areas.

The Army has taken positive steps and implemented improvements to address other management deficiencies and to provide information and assistance to families. It has implemented improvements across a broad range of areas at Arlington, including developing procedures for ensuring accountability over remains and improving its capability to respond to the public and to families' inquiries. Nevertheless, the Army has remaining management challenges in several areas—managing information-technology investments, updating workforce plans, developing an organizational assessment program, coordinating with key partners, developing a strategic plan, and developing guidance for providing assistance to families. GAO made six recommendations to help address these areas. DOD concurred or partially concurred and has begun to take some corrective actions.

A transfer of jurisdiction for the Army's two national cemeteries to VA is feasible based on historical precedent for the national cemeteries and examples of other reorganization efforts in the federal government. However, several factors may affect the advisability of making such a change, including the potential costs and benefits, potential transition challenges, and the potential effect on Arlington's unique characteristics. In addition, given that the Army has taken steps to address deficiencies at Arlington and has improved its management, it may be premature to move forward with a change in jurisdiction, particularly if other options for improvement exist that entail less disruption. GAO identified opportunities for enhancing collaboration between the Army and VA that could leverage their strengths and potentially lead to improvements at all national cemeteries. GAO recommended that the Army and VA develop a mechanism to formalize collaboration between these organizations. DOD and VA concurred with this recommendation.

Chairmen Wilson and Wittman, Ranking Members Davis and Cooper, and Members of the Subcommittees:

We are pleased to be here today to discuss the Army's progress in addressing contracting and management challenges identified at Arlington National Cemetery (Arlington), opportunities for collaboration between the Army and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), as well as steps remaining to ensure sound management of the cemetery going forward. Beginning in 2009, the Army's management of Arlington came under intense scrutiny following the discovery of burial errors and the identification of serious contracting and other management deficiencies affecting cemetery operations. In June 2010, the Army Inspector General (Army IG) reported on numerous deficiencies and made more than 100 recommendations for corrective action, which covered a span of issues, including cemetery policies and procedures, management and training, command structures, information assurance compliance, and contracting.¹ After the Army IG's inspection findings were released, the Secretary of the Army assigned new leadership to Arlington, including the new position of Executive Director of the Army National Cemeteries Program (ANCP),² and issued Army Directive 2010-04 requiring a number of changes to address the identified deficiencies and improve cemetery operations.³ In the time since these actions, the Army has taken positive steps to address critical areas and implement improvements, and we continue to be encouraged by these efforts. However, our work points to the need for further action to ensure that the positive changes made thus far are institutionalized and will prove lasting over the long term.

Our statement today is based on two reports issued on December 15, 2011, as required by Public Law 111-339.⁴ The first discusses (1) the number, duration of, and dollar amount spent on current contracts used to support operations at Arlington and (2) the extent to which the Army has put processes and procedures in place to provide for the effective

¹U.S. Army, Inspector General Agency, *Special Inspection of Arlington National Cemetery Final Report* (Washington, D.C.: June 2010).

²The Executive Director oversees Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia and the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

³Army Directive 2010-04, *Enhancing the Operations and Oversight of the Army National Cemeteries Program* (June 10, 2010).

⁴Pub. L. No. 111-339 (2010).

management and oversight of contracts supporting Arlington.⁵ The second discusses (1) the Army's efforts to address identified management deficiencies; (2) the Army's process for providing information and assistance to families regarding efforts to detect and correct burial errors; and (3) factors that may affect the feasibility or advisability of transferring jurisdiction for the Army's two national cemeteries to VA, as well as issues related to collaboration between these agencies.⁶

For these two reports we conducted work at Arlington and other offices and agencies within the Department of the Army, including the Military District of Washington, Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, the Army Contracting Command, the Mission and Installation Contracting Command (MICC), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), among others. We also conducted work at VA and contacted veteran service organizations and private industry associations. We reviewed documents pertaining to previously identified deficiencies, including the Army IG's 2010 inspection and investigation of Arlington, the results of two follow-up inspections conducted by the Army IG in 2011, and Army Directive 2010-04. We obtained information from knowledgeable officials about the steps taken to respond to the Army IG's findings and to implement the Army's directive. In addition, we analyzed data from contracting offices and other sources on contracts active during fiscal years 2010 and 2011 and above \$100,000 and reviewed contract files; analyzed guidance, policies, plans, and other documentation from Arlington and other organizations; and interviewed agency officials to assess efforts to improve contract management. To identify factors that may affect the feasibility or advisability of transferring jurisdiction for the Army's national cemeteries to VA, we reviewed our prior work on federal government reorganization, reviewed the legislative history of the National Cemeteries Act of 1973,⁷ and obtained pertinent documents and interviewed officials from the Army and VA, including the Secretary of the Army and VA's Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs. We conducted this

⁵GAO, *Arlington National Cemetery: Additional Actions Needed to Continue Improvements in Contract Management*, GAO-12-99 (Washington, D.C.: Dec. 15, 2011).

⁶GAO, *Arlington National Cemetery: Management Improvements Made, but a Strategy is Needed to Address Remaining Challenges*, GAO-12-105 (Washington D.C.: Dec. 15, 2011).

⁷Pub. L. No. 93-43.

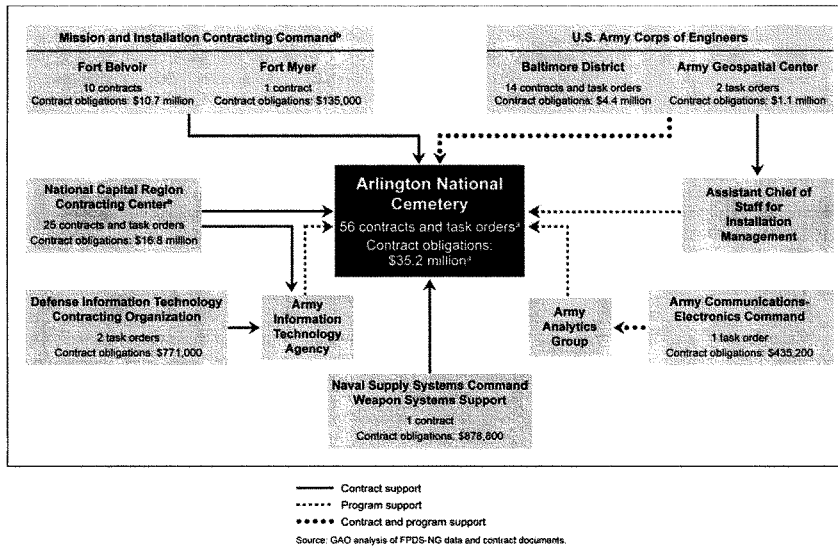
work from March 2011 through December 2011 in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit work. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

**Management of
Arlington Contracts
Improved, but
Additional Steps Are
Needed to Ensure
Continued Progress**

The Army has taken a number of steps since June 2010 at different levels to provide for more effective management and oversight of contracts supporting Arlington, including improving visibility of contracts, establishing new support relationships, formalizing policies and procedures, and increasing the use of dedicated contracting staff to manage and improve acquisition processes. While significant progress has been made, we have recommended that the Army take further action in these areas to ensure continued improvement and institutionalize progress made to date. These recommendations and the agency's response are discussed later in this statement.

Arlington does not have its own contracting authority and, as such, relies on other contracting offices to award and manage contracts on its behalf. ANCP receives contracting support in one of two main ways, either by (1) working directly with contracting offices to define requirements, ensure the appropriate contract vehicle, and provide contract oversight, or (2) partnering with another program office to leverage expertise and get help with defining requirements and providing contract oversight. Those program offices, in turn, use other contracting arrangements to obtain services and perform work for Arlington. Using data from multiple sources, we identified 56 contracts and task orders that were active during fiscal year 2010 and the first three quarters of fiscal year 2011 under which these contracting offices obligated roughly \$35.2 million on Arlington's behalf. These contracts and task orders supported cemetery operations, such as landscaping, custodial, and guard services; construction and facility maintenance; and new efforts to enhance information-technology systems for the automation of burial operations. Figure 1 identifies the contracting relationships, along with the number of contracts and dollars obligated by contracting office, for the contracts and task orders we reviewed.

Figure 1: Distribution of Arlington Contracts by Office



^aFigure represents contracts or task orders active during fiscal year 2010 and the first three quarters of fiscal year 2011 and above \$100,000.

^aThe Mission and Installation Contracting Command as well as the National Capital Region contracting office are part of the Army Contracting Command.

At the time of our review, we found that ANCP did not maintain complete data on contracts supporting its operations. We have previously reported that the effective acquisition of services requires reliable data to enable

informed management decisions.⁸ Without complete data, ANCP leadership may be without sufficient information to identify, track, and ensure the effective management and oversight of its contracts. While we obtained information on Arlington contracts from various sources, limitations associated with each of these sources make identifying and tracking Arlington's contracts as a whole difficult. For example:

- *Internal ANCP data.* A contract specialist detailed to ANCP in September 2010 developed and maintained a spreadsheet to identify and track data for specific contracts covering daily cemetery operations and maintenance services. Likewise, ANCP resource management staff maintain a separate spreadsheet that tracks purchase requests and some associated contracts, as well as the amount of funding provided to other organizations through the use of military interdepartmental purchase requests. Neither of these spreadsheets identifies the specific contracts and obligations associated with Arlington's current information-technology and construction requirements.
- *Existing contract and financial systems.* The Federal Procurement Data System-Next Generation (FPDS-NG) is the primary system used to track governmentwide contract data, including those for the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Army. The Arlington funding office identification number, a unique code that is intended to identify transactions specific to Arlington, is not consistently used in this system and, in fact, was used for only 34 of the 56 contracts in our review. In October 2010 and consistent with a broader Army initiative, ANCP implemented the General Fund Enterprise Business System (GFEBs)⁹ to enhance financial management and oversight and to improve its capability to track expenditures. We found that data in this system did not identify the specific information-technology contracts supported by the Army Communications-Electronics Command, Army Geospatial Center, Naval Supply Systems Command Weapon Systems Support office, and others. Officials at ANCP and at the MICC-Fort Belvoir stated that they were exploring the use of additional data resources to assist in tracking Arlington contracts, including the Virtual Contracting Enterprise, an electronic tool

⁸GAO, *Defense Acquisitions: Tailored Approach Needed to Improve Service Acquisition Outcomes*, GAO-07-20 (Washington D.C.: Nov., 9, 2006).

⁹GFEBs is intended to improve financial, asset, and real property management and standardize processes across the Army.

intended to help enable visibility and analysis of elements of the contracting process.

- *Contracting support organizations.* We also found that Army contracting offices had difficulty in readily providing complete and accurate data to us on Arlington contracts. For example, the National Capital Region Contracting Center could not provide a complete list of active contracts supporting Arlington during fiscal years 2010 and 2011 and in some cases did not provide accurate dollar amounts associated with the contracts it identified. USACE also had difficulty providing a complete list of active Arlington contracts for this time frame. The MICC-Fort Belvoir contracting office was able to provide a complete list of the recently awarded contracts supporting Arlington with accurate dollar amounts for this time frame, and those data were supported by similar information from Arlington.

The Army has also taken a number of steps to better align ANCP contract support with the expertise of its partners. However, some of the agreements governing these relationships do not yet fully define roles and responsibilities for contracting support. We have previously reported that a key factor in improving DOD's service acquisition outcomes—that is, obtaining the right service, at the right price, in the right manner—is having defined responsibilities and associated support structures.¹⁰ Going forward, sustained attention on the part of ANCP and its partners will be important to ensure that contracts of all types and risk levels are managed effectively. The following summarizes ongoing efforts in this area:

- ANCP established a new contracting support agreement with the Army Contracting Command in August 2010. The agreement states that the command will assign appropriate contracting offices to provide support, in coordination with ANCP, and will conduct joint periodic reviews of new and ongoing contract requirements. In April 2011, ANCP also signed a separate agreement with the MICC, part of the Army Contracting Command, which outlines additional responsibilities for providing contracting support to ANCP. While this agreement states that the MICC, through the Fort Belvoir contracting office, will provide the full range of contracting support, it does not

¹⁰GAO-07-20.

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- specify the types of requirements that will be supported, nor does it specify that other offices within the command may also do so.
- ANCP signed an updated support agreement with USACE in December 2010, which states that these organizations will coordinate to assign appropriate offices to provide contracting support and that USACE will provide periodic joint reviews of ongoing and upcoming requirements. At the time of our review, USACE officials noted that they were in the process of finalizing an overarching program management plan with ANCP, which, if implemented, provides additional detail about the structure of and roles and responsibilities for support. USACE and ANCP have also established a Senior Executive Review Group, which updates the senior leadership at both organizations on the status of ongoing efforts.
 - ANCP has also put agreements in place with the Army Information Technology Agency (ITA) and the Army Analytics Group, which provide program support for managing information-technology infrastructure and enhance operational capabilities. Officials at ANCP decided to leverage this existing Army expertise, rather than attempting to develop such capabilities independently as was the case under the previous Arlington management. For example, the agreement in place with ITA identifies the services that will be provided to Arlington, performance metrics against which ITA will be measured, as well as Arlington's responsibilities. These organizations are also responsible for managing the use of contracts in support of their efforts; however, the agreement with ANCP does not specifically address roles and responsibilities associated with the use and management of these contracts supporting Arlington requirements. Although officials from these organizations told us that they currently understand their responsibilities, without being clearly defined in the existing agreements, roles and responsibilities may be less clear in the future when personnel change.

ANCP has developed new internal policies and procedures and improved training for staff serving as contracting officer's representatives, and has dedicated additional staff resources to improve contract management. Many of these efforts were in process at the time of our review, including decisions on contracting staff needs, and their success will depend on continued management attention. The following summarizes our findings in this area:

- Arlington has taken several steps to more formally define its own internal policies and procedures for contract management. In July 2010, the Executive Director of ANCP issued guidance stating that the

Army Contracting Command and USACE are the only authorized contracting centers for Arlington. Further, ANCP is continuing efforts to (1) develop standard operating procedures associated with purchase requests; (2) develop memorandums for all ANCP employees that outline principles of the procurement process, as well as training requirements for contracting officer's representatives; and (3) create a common location for reference materials and information associated with Arlington contracts. In May 2011, the Executive Director issued guidance requiring contracting officer's representative training for all personnel assigned to perform that role, and at the time of our review, all of the individuals serving as contracting officer's representatives had received training for that position.

- ANCP, in coordination with the MICC-Fort Belvoir contracting office is evaluating staffing requirements to determine the appropriate number, skill level, and location of contracting personnel. In July 2010, the Army completed a study that assessed Arlington's manpower requirements and identified the need for three full-time contract specialist positions. While these positions have not been filled to date, ANCP's needs have instead been met through the use of staff provided by the MICC. At the time of our review, the MICC-Fort Belvoir was providing a total of 10 contracting staff positions in support of Arlington, 5 of which are funded by ANCP, with the other 5 funded by the MICC-Fort Belvoir to help ensure adequate support for Arlington requirements. ANCP officials have identified the need for a more senior contracting specialist and stated that they intend to request an update to their staffing allowance for fiscal year 2013 to fill this new position.

Prior reviews of Arlington have identified numerous issues with contracts in place prior to the new leadership at ANCP.¹¹ While our review of similar contracts found common concerns, we also found that contracts and task orders awarded since June 2010 reflect improvements in acquisition practices. Our previous contracting-related work has identified the need to have well-defined requirements, sound business arrangements (i.e., contracts in place), and the right oversight mechanisms to ensure positive outcomes. We found examples of improved documentation, better

¹¹For example, see U.S. Army, Inspector General Agency, *Special Inspection of Arlington National Cemetery Final Report* (Washington, D.C.: June 2010) and Army Audit Agency, *Contracting Operations in Support of Arlington National Cemetery: Army Contracting Command National Capital Region, A-2012-0021-ALC* (Alexandria, Va.: 2011).

definition and consolidation of existing requirements for services supporting daily cemetery operations, and more specific requirements for contractor performance. At the time of our review, many of these efforts were still under way, so while initial steps taken reflect improvement, their ultimate success is not yet certain.

Army Has Made Progress in Addressing Other Management Deficiencies at Arlington, but Challenges Remain

The Army has also taken positive steps and implemented improvements to address other management deficiencies and to provide information and assistance to families. It has implemented improvements across a broad range of areas at Arlington, including developing procedures for ensuring accountability over remains, taking actions to better provide information-assurance, and improving its capability to respond to the public and to families' inquiries. For example, Arlington officials have updated and documented the cemetery's chain-of-custody procedures for remains, to include multiple verification steps by staff members and the tracking of decedent information through a daily schedule, electronic databases, and tags affixed to urns and caskets entering Arlington. Nevertheless, we identified several areas where challenges remain:

- *Managing information-technology investments.* Since June 2010, ANCP has invested in information-technology improvements to correct existing problems at Arlington and has begun projects to further enhance the cemetery's information-technology capabilities. However, these investments and planned improvements are not yet guided by an enterprise architecture¹²—or modernization blueprint. Our experience has shown that developing this type of architecture can help minimize risk of developing systems that are duplicative, poorly integrated, and unnecessarily costly to maintain.¹³ ANCP is working to develop an enterprise architecture, and officials told us in January that they expect the architecture will be finalized in September 2012. Until the architecture is in place and ANCP's ongoing and planned information-technology investments are assessed against that architecture, ANCP lacks assurance that these investments will be aligned with its future operational environment,

¹²An enterprise architecture comprises a set of descriptive models (e.g., diagrams and tables) that define, in business terms and in technology terms, how an organization operates today, how it intends to operate in the future, and how it intends to invest in technology to transition from today's operational environment to that of the future.

¹³GAO, *Opportunities to Reduce Potential Duplication in Government Programs, Save Tax Dollars, and Enhance Revenue*, GAO-11-318SP (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 1, 2011).

increasing the risk that modernization efforts will not adequately meet the organization's needs.

- *Updating workforce plans.* The Army took a number of positive steps to address deficiencies in its workforce plans, including completing an initial assessment of its organizational structure in July 2010 after the Army IG found that Arlington was significantly understaffed. However, ANCP's staffing requirements and business processes have continued to evolve, and these changes have made that initial workforce assessment outdated. Since the July 2010 assessment, officials have identified the need for a number of new positions, including positions in ANCP's public-affairs office and a new security and emergency-response group. Additionally, Arlington has revised a number of its business processes, which could result in a change in staffing needs. Although ANCP has adjusted its staffing levels to address emerging requirements, its staffing needs have not been formally reassessed. Our prior work has demonstrated that this kind of assessment can improve workforce planning, which can enable an organization to remain aware of and be prepared for its current and future needs as an organization. ANCP officials have periodically updated Arlington's organizational structure as they identify new requirements, and officials told us in January that they plan to completely reassess staffing within ANCP in the summer of 2012 to ensure that it has the staff needed to achieve its goals and objectives. Until this reassessment is completed and documented, ANCP lacks assurance that it has the correct number and types of staff needed to achieve its goals and objectives.
- *Developing an organizational assessment program.* Since 2009 ANCP has been the subject of a number of audits and assessments by external organizations that have reviewed many aspects of its management and operations, but it has not yet developed its own assessment program for evaluating and improving cemetery performance on a continuous basis. Both the Army IG and VA have noted the importance of assessment programs in identifying and enabling improvements of cemetery operations to ensure that cemetery standards are met. Further, the Army has emphasized the importance of maintaining an inspection program that includes a management tool to identify, prevent, or eliminate problem areas. At the time of our review, ANCP officials told us they were in the process of developing an assessment program and were adapting VA's program to meet the needs of the Army's national cemeteries. ANCP officials estimated in January that they will be ready to perform their first self-assessment in late 2012. Until ANCP institutes an assessment program that includes an ability to complete a self-assessment of operations and an external assessment by cemetery

subject-matter experts, it is limited in its ability to evaluate and improve aspects of cemetery performance.

- *Coordinating with key partners.* While ANCP has improved its coordination with other Army organizations, we found that it has encountered challenges in coordinating with key operational partners, such as the Military District of Washington, the military service honor guards, and Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall.¹⁴ Officials from these organizations told us that communication and collaboration with Arlington have improved, but they have encountered challenges and there are opportunities for continued improvement. For example, officials from the Military District of Washington and the military service honor guards indicated that at times they have experienced difficulties working with Arlington's Interment Scheduling Branch and provided records showing that from June 24, 2010, through December 15, 2010, there were at least 27 instances where scheduling conflicts took place.¹⁵ These challenges are due in part to a lack of written agreements that fully define how these operational partners will support and interact with Arlington. Our prior work has found that agencies can derive benefits from enhancing and sustaining their collaborative efforts by institutionalizing these efforts with agreements that define common outcomes, establish agreed-upon roles and responsibilities, identify mechanisms used to monitor and evaluate collaborative efforts, and enable the organizations to leverage their resources.¹⁶ ANCP has a written agreement in place with Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, but this agreement does not address the full scope of how these organizations work together. Additionally, ANCP has drafted, but has not yet signed, a memorandum of agreement with the Military District of Washington. ANCP has not drafted memorandums of agreement with the military service honor guards

¹⁴The Military District of Washington coordinates all official ceremonies at Arlington, including wreath-laying ceremonies and state funerals. The military services provide burial honors for private funeral and memorial services, and the Army provides ceremonial support including the Sentinels at the Tomb of the Unknowns. Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall, located adjacent to Arlington, provides numerous installation-support services to Arlington, including emergency services and ceremonial support such as facilities, bus transportation, and traffic control.

¹⁵Scheduling conflicts included scheduling the wrong honor guard for a funeral and scheduling funerals during times that the honor guards had blocked off to enable them to meet their other responsibilities outside of Arlington.

¹⁶GAO, *Results-Oriented Government: Practices That Can Help Enhance and Sustain Collaboration among Federal Agencies*, GAO-06-15 (Washington, D.C.: Oct. 21, 2005).

despite each military service honor guard having its own scheduling procedure that it implements directly with Arlington and each service working with Arlington to address operational challenges. ANCP, by developing memorandums of agreement with its key operational partners, will be better positioned to ensure effective collaboration with these organizations and help to minimize future communication and coordination challenges.

- *Developing a strategic plan.* Although ANCP officials have been taking steps to address challenges at Arlington, at the time of our review they had not adopted a strategic plan aimed at achieving the cemetery's longer-term goals. An effective strategic plan can help managers to prioritize goals; identify actions, milestones, and resource requirements for achieving those goals; and establish measures for assessing progress and outcomes. Our prior work has shown that leading organizations prepare strategic plans that define a clear mission statement, a set of outcome-related goals, and a description of how the organization intends to achieve those goals.¹⁷ Without a strategic plan, ANCP is not well positioned to ensure that cemetery improvements are in line with the organizational mission and achieve desired outcomes. ANCP officials told us during our review that they were at a point where the immediate crisis at the cemetery had subsided and they could focus their efforts on implementing their longer-term goals and priorities. In January, ANCP officials showed us a newly developed campaign plan. While we have not evaluated this plan, our preliminary review found that it contains elements of an effective strategic plan, including expected outcomes and objectives for the cemetery and related performance metrics and milestones.
- *Developing written guidance for providing assistance to families.* After the Army IG issued its findings in June 2010, numerous families called Arlington to verify the burial locations of their loved ones. ANCP developed a protocol for investigating these cases and responding to the families. Our review found that ANCP implemented this protocol, and we reviewed file documentation for a sample of these cases. In reviewing the assistance provided by ANCP when a burial error occurred, we found that ANCP's Executive Director or Chief of Staff contacted the affected families. ANCP's Executive Director—in consultation with cemetery officials and affected families—made

¹⁷GAO, *Executive Guide: Effectively Implementing the Government Performance and Results Act*, GAO/IGD-96-118 (Washington, D.C.: June 1996).

decisions on a case-by-case basis about the assistance that was provided to each family. For instance, some families who lived outside of the Washington, D.C., area were reimbursed for hotel and travel costs. However, the factors that were considered when making these decisions were not documented in a written policy. In its June 2010 report, the Army IG noted in general that the absence of written policies left Arlington at risk of developing knowledge gaps as employees leave the cemetery. By developing written guidance that addresses the cemetery's interactions with families affected by burial errors, ANCP could identify pertinent DOD and Army regulations and other guidance that should be considered when making such decisions. Also, with written guidance the program staff could identify the types of assistance that can be provided to families. In January, ANCP provided us with a revised protocol for both agency-identified and family member-initiated gravesite inquiries. The revised protocol provides guidance on the cemetery's interactions with the next of kin and emphasizes the importance of maintaining transparency and open communication with affected families.

Formal Collaboration between the Army and VA Could Lead to Improvements across All National Cemeteries

A transfer of jurisdiction for the Army's two national cemeteries to VA is feasible based on historical precedent for the national cemeteries and examples of other reorganization efforts in the federal government. However, we identified several factors that may affect the advisability of making such a change, including the potential costs and benefits, potential transition challenges, and the potential effect on Arlington's unique characteristics. In addition, given that the Army has taken steps to address deficiencies at Arlington and has improved its management, it may be premature to move forward with a change in jurisdiction, particularly if other options for improvement exist that entail less disruption. During our review, we identified opportunities for enhancing collaboration between the Army and VA that could leverage their strengths and potentially lead to improvements at all national cemeteries.

Transferring cemetery jurisdiction could have both benefits and costs. Our prior work suggests that government reorganization can provide an opportunity for greater effectiveness in program management and result in improved efficiency over the long-term, and can also result in short-

term operational costs.¹⁸ At the time of our review, Army and VA officials told us they were not aware of relevant studies that may provide insight into the potential benefits and costs of making a change in cemetery jurisdiction. However, our review identified areas where VA's and the Army's national cemeteries have similar, but not identical, needs and have developed independent capabilities to meet those needs. For example, each agency has its own staff, processes, and systems for determining burial eligibility and scheduling and managing burials. While consolidating these capabilities may result in long-term efficiencies, there could also be challenges and short-term costs.

Potential transition challenges may arise in transferring cemetery jurisdiction. Army and VA cemeteries have similar operational requirements to provide burial services for service members, veterans, and veterans' family members; however, officials identified areas where the organizations differ and stated that there could be transition challenges if VA were to manage Arlington, including challenges pertaining to the regulatory framework, appropriations structure, and contracts. For example, Arlington has more restrictive eligibility criteria for in-ground burials, which has the result of limiting the number of individuals eligible for burial at the cemetery. If Arlington cemetery were to be subject to the same eligibility criteria as VA's cemeteries, the eligibility for in-ground burials at Arlington would be greatly expanded.¹⁹ Additionally, the Army's national cemeteries are funded through a different appropriations structure than VA's national cemeteries. If the Army's national cemeteries were transferred to VA, Congress would have to choose whether to alter the funding structure currently in place for Arlington.

Other factors that may affect the advisability of transferring jurisdiction pertain to the potential effect on Arlington's unique characteristics. These characteristics include the following:

¹⁸GAO, *Federal Land Management: Observations on a Possible Move of the Forest Service into the Department of the Interior*, GAO-09-223 (Washington, D.C.: Feb. 11, 2009).

¹⁹Burial eligibility at VA's national cemeteries is governed by 38 U.S.C. § 2402 and 38 C.F.R. § 38.620. Burial eligibility at Arlington is governed by 38 U.S.C. § 2410 and 32 C.F.R. § 553.15.

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- *Mission and vision statements.* The Army and VA have developed their own mission and vision statements for their national cemeteries that differ in several ways. Specifically, VA seeks to be a model of excellence for burials and memorials, while Arlington seeks to be the nation's premier military cemetery.
 - *Military honors provided to veterans.* The Army and VA have varying approaches to providing military funeral honors. VA is not responsible for providing honors to veterans, and VA cemeteries generally are not involved in helping families obtain military honors from DOD. In contrast, Arlington provides a range of burial honors depending on whether an individual is a service member killed in action, a veteran, or an officer.
 - *Ceremonies and special events.* Arlington hosts a large number of ceremonies and special events in a given year, some of which may involve the President of the United States as well as visiting heads of state. From June 10, 2010, through October 1, 2011, Arlington hosted more than 3,200 wreath-laying ceremonies, over 70 memorial ceremonies, and 19 state visits, in addition to Veterans Day and Memorial Day ceremonies, and also special honors for Corporal Frank Buckles, the last American servicemember from World War I. VA officials told us that their cemeteries do not support a similar volume of ceremonies, and as a result they have less experience in this area than the Army.

During our review, we found that there are opportunities to expand collaboration between the Army and VA that could improve the efficiency and effectiveness of these organizations' cemetery operations. Our prior work has shown that achieving results for the nation increasingly requires that federal agencies work together, and when considering the nation's long-range fiscal challenges, the federal government must identify ways to deliver results more efficiently and in a way that is consistent with its limited resources.²⁰ Since the Army IG issued its findings in June 2010, the Army and VA have taken steps to partner more effectively. The Army's hiring of several senior VA employees to help manage Arlington has helped to foster collaboration, and the two agencies signed a memorandum of understanding that allows ANCP employees to attend classes at VA's National Training Center.

²⁰GAO, *Opportunities to Reduce Potential Duplication in Government Programs, Save Tax Dollars, and Enhance Revenue*, GAO-11-318SP (Washington, D.C.: Mar. 1, 2011).

However, the Army and VA may have opportunities to collaborate and avoid duplication in other areas that could benefit the operations of either or both cemetery organizations. For example, the Army and VA are upgrading or redesigning some of their core information-technology systems supporting cemetery operations. By continuing to collaborate in this area, the agencies can better ensure that their information-technology systems are able to communicate, thereby helping to prevent operational challenges stemming from a lack of compatibility between these systems in the future. In addition, each agency may have specialized capabilities that it could share with the other. VA, for example, has staff dedicated to determining burial eligibility, and the Army has an agency that provides geographic-information-system and global-positioning-system capabilities—technologies that VA officials said that they are examining for use at VA's national cemeteries.

While the Army and VA have taken steps to improve collaboration, at the time of our review the agencies had not established a formal mechanism to identify and analyze issues of shared interest, such as process improvements, lessons learned, areas for reducing duplication, and solutions to common problems. VA officials indicated that they planned to meet with ANCP officials in the second quarter of fiscal year 2012, with the aim of enhancing collaboration between the two agencies. Unless the Army and VA collaborate to identify areas where the agencies can assist each other, they could miss opportunities to take advantage of each other's strengths—thereby missing chances to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of cemetery operations—and are at risk of investing in duplicative capabilities.

Summary of Recommendations for Further Improvements at Arlington National Cemetery

The success of the Army's efforts to improve contracting and management at Arlington will depend on continued focus in various areas. Accordingly, we made a number of recommendations in our December 2011 reports. In the area of contracting, we recommended that the Army implement a method to track complete and accurate contract data, ensure that support agreements clearly identify roles and responsibilities for contracting, and determine the number and skills necessary for contracting staff. In its written comments, DOD partially concurred with these recommendations, agreeing that there is a need to take actions to address the issues we raised, but indicating that our recommendations did not adequately capture Army efforts currently underway. We believe our report reflects the significant progress made by Arlington and that implementation of our recommendations will help to institutionalize the positive steps taken to date.

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- With regard to our recommendation to identify and implement a method to track complete and accurate contact data, DOD noted that Arlington intends to implement, by April 2012, a methodology based on an electronic tool which is expected to collect and reconcile information from a number of existing data systems. Should this methodology consider the shortcomings within these data systems as identified in our report, we believe this would satisfy our recommendations.
 - DOD noted planned actions, expected for completion by March 2012 that, if implemented, would satisfy the intent of our other two recommendations.

With regard to other management challenges at Arlington, we recommended that the Army implement its enterprise architecture and reassess ongoing and planned information-technology investments; update its assessment of ANCP's workforce needs; develop and implement a program for assessing and improving cemetery operations; develop memorandums of understanding with Arlington's key operational partners; develop a strategic plan; and develop written guidance to help determine the types of assistance that will be provided to families affected by burial errors. DOD fully agreed with our recommendations that the Army update its assessment of ANCP's workforce needs and implement a program for assessing and improving cemetery operations. DOD partially agreed with our other recommendations. In January, ANCP officials provided us with updates on its plans to take corrective actions, as discussed in this statement.

- With regard to implementing an enterprise architecture, DOD stated that investments made to date in information technology have been modest and necessary to address critical deficiencies. We recognize that some vulnerabilities must be expeditiously addressed. Nevertheless, our prior work shows that organizations increase the risk that their information-technology investments will not align with their future operational environment if these investments are not guided by an approved enterprise architecture.
- Regarding its work with key operational partners, DOD stated that it recognizes the value of establishing memorandums of agreement and noted the progress that the Army has made in developing memorandums of agreement with some of its operational partners. We believe that the Army should continue to pursue and finalize agreements with key operational partners that cover the full range of areas where these organizations must work effectively together.
- With regard to a strategic plan, DOD stated that it was in the process of developing such a plan. As discussed previously, ANCP officials in

January showed us a newly developed campaign plan that, based on our preliminary review, contains elements of an effective strategic plan.

- Regarding written guidance on the factors that the Executive Director will consider when determining the types of assistance provided to families affected by burial errors, DOD stated that such guidance would limit the Executive Director's ability to exercise leadership and judgment to make an appropriate determination. We disagree with this view. Our recommendation does not limit the Executive Director's discretion, which we consider to be an essential part of ensuring that families receive the assistance they require in these difficult situations. Our recommendation, if implemented, would improve visibility into the factors that guide decision making in these cases.

Finally, we recommended that the Army and VA implement a joint working group or other such mechanism to enable ANCP and VA's National Cemetery Administration to collaborate more closely in the future. Both DOD and VA concurred with this recommendation. As noted, VA stated that a planning meeting to enhance collaboration is planned for the second quarter of 2012.

Chairmen Wilson and Wittman, Ranking Members Davis and Cooper, and Members of the Subcommittees, this completes our prepared statement. We would be pleased to respond to any questions that you may have at this time.

Contacts and Staff Acknowledgments

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STATEMENT BY

MS. KATHRYN A. CONDON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
ARMY NATIONAL CEMETERIES PROGRAM

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL
AND THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SECOND SESSION, 112TH CONGRESS
ON
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Introduction

Chairmen Wilson and Wittman and Ranking Members Davis and Cooper and distinguished Members, thank you for the opportunity to appear before these subcommittees to provide an update on the progress we have made at Arlington National Cemetery. As reported in my latest monthly update to the Chairmen and ranking members, you know firsthand that we are on our way to regaining and maintaining accountability at Arlington.

We have achieved this level of progress in large part through our concerted focus on establishing repeatable standards, measures and operating procedures that emphasize safety, proficiency, professionalism and accountability. Since assuming leadership at Arlington National Cemetery in June 2010, the cemetery superintendent, Mr. Patrick Hallinan, and I have concentrated on re-organizing, re-training and re-tooling the organization.

Over the past 20 months we have made tremendous progress across all areas of cemetery operations. We have executed in-depth reviews in gravesite accountability and fiscal stewardship. We developed a strategic plan to achieve my vision, modernize operations and infrastructure, and prioritize information technology investments for the future. We have invested in our workforce.

We are well on our way to achieving our vision for the Army National Cemeteries Program: America's premier military cemeteries, National Shrines, Living History of Freedom, and where dignity and honor rest in solemn repose.

Accountability

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to report that we have fully complied with Public Law 111-339 to provide an accounting of the gravesites at Arlington. In addition, we also have made tremendous progress to correct the deficiencies identified, rather than only creating a plan of action as the legislation stipulated. We examined each of the baseline 259,978 gravesites, niches and markers in the Cemetery; gathered and consolidated 147 years of records created from log book entries, paper-based records of interment; and computerized burial records by placing them in a modern system designed for accounting. After completing more thorough research on the 47,304 remaining cases, we will merge all burial information into a single, authoritative database maintained in accordance with Department of the Army standards.

To address the requirements of the Law, the Army assembled a team of 194 Soldiers and civilians into a Gravesite Accountability Task Force. The Accountability Task Force counted and photographed every grave marker, niche and memorial marker, associated each photo with existing Cemetery records and confirmed the accuracy of all the associated information.

Arlington's history spans much of the country's history—reflecting the wars, slavery, the Great Depression, varying cultural standards, and evolving cemetery

practices and record keeping of the time. Validating some records required significant research. Some of Arlington's burial records only exist in Civil-War era log books. From records, for instance, we learned that many more spouses were laid to rest at Arlington than previously thought, since during the Great Depression often only the veteran was depicted on the headstone. Still other burial records do not exist at all, with the headstone photos taken by the Accountability Task Force being the only information documenting the interment. This includes those slaves and freed slaves -- "Citizens" and "Civilians" -- who lived on the grounds in Freedman's Village during and after the Civil War. In some cases, burial record keeping mistakes were compounded over an extended period as headstone marking and burial practices evolved.

With tremendous support from Congress and the Army, we are well on our way to completing our plan to achieve full accountability to include resolution of all discovered discrepancies. Since our December 22nd submission of the "Gravesite Accountability Study Findings" to Congress, we have continued with determination to resolve all open cases as rapidly as possible in accordance with repeatable and auditable processes we developed as part of the effort. As of January 31, 2012, we have closed 16,926 additional cases since the submission of the report, bringing the total of closed gravesite cases to 212,674 or 82% of the 259,978 total cases.

Considering even the recent history of the Cemetery, it is important to note that we may discover interment or other discrepancies in the future that are not apparent from our completed analysis. If discovered, such errors will be

immediately reported to the Secretary of the Army, the appropriate Congressional Committees and, with close consultation of next of kin, resolved as quickly as possible. Importantly, we are implementing industry best practices and developing standards and measures, policies, technology and training to institutionalize repeatable practices with predictable results.

We have a far better understanding of the Cemetery's records and history than ever before, and we have preserved it electronically. The end result will enable us to serve the needs of families and the American public by properly honoring and preserving the legacy of the fallen heroes laid to rest at Arlington.

Every veteran's family is unique. We want all the families with whom we engage—whether the day of the funeral service or as we correct historical discrepancies—to recognize that our core mission is to Honor the Fallen.

Fiscal Stewardship

Practicing sound fiscal stewardship and displaying transparency in Arlington's operations is paramount in our effort to restore the faith and trust in Arlington National Cemetery.

I continue to implement standard Army financial management controls. On October 1, 2010, Arlington transitioned to the Army's General Fund Enterprise Business System (GFEBS). This system enables Arlington and the Army to have complete visibility of the cemetery's financial transactions.

As part of the new financial management controls and oversight process, my resource managers meticulously reviewed years of financial records and recovered funds that, in past years, were sent to Department of Defense agencies that support the Cemetery. The Army Audit Agency (AAA), Department of the Army Inspector General (DAIG), and Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports provided snapshots in time of our recovery efforts. As of this testimony, we have recovered \$26,763,199.69 from prior fiscal years that was obligated but not disbursed, and we continue to examine our prior year commitments and recover unliquidated obligations. Table 1 reflects financial recoveries Arlington recouped after the reconciliation of prior year financial transactions.

Fiscal Year	Amount Recovered from Prior Fiscal Years	Amount Re-Obligated (Spent)	Remaining Amount Available for Obligation (Available to Spend)
2004	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 25,071.41	\$ 24,928.59
2005	\$ 52,760.09	\$ 25,484.76	\$ 27,275.33
2006	\$ 126,514.04	\$ 125,932.00	\$ 582.04
2007	\$ 350,455.57	\$ 328,753.46	\$ 21,702.11
2008	\$ 1,770,860.31	\$ 1,642,223.41	\$ 128,636.90
2009	\$ 12,611,519.99	\$ 12,348,758.22	\$ 262,761.77
2010	\$ 11,801,089.69	\$ 9,993,373.26	\$ 1,807,716.43
Total	\$ 26,763,199.69	\$ 24,489,596.52	\$ 2,273,603.17

Table 1

As I stated at previous Congressional hearings, we have worked diligently to modernize cemetery operations, address years of facility maintenance and repair backlogs, address Information Technology (IT) security vulnerabilities and conduct necessary IT system upgrades. Table 2 below provides a detailed breakdown of projects that are addressing these operational shortfalls and would not have been possible without the recovery of these funds.

Project	Amount
Columbarium Court 9	\$15,190,026.00
Visitor Center Roof Repair	\$89,274.00
Memorial Amphitheater Generator	\$2,600.00
Millennium Archaeological & NEPA Section 106 Study	\$85,000.00
Replace PCB Transformer in Admin Bldg	\$1,613,890.00
Design and replace HVAC in Admin Bldg and Visitor Center	\$315,300.00
Millennium Project Design Charrette	\$136,000.00
ANC Memorial Amphitheater Road Repair	\$67,000.00
Facilities Maintenance Complex Completion	\$764,700.00
Replace Flagstone sidewalk Memorial Amphitheater	\$1,012,000.00
Study to Repair/Replace Eternal Flame	\$50,000.00
Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Study & Repair	\$25,000.00
Information Technology System Upgrades and Support	\$2,033,163.49
Burial Operations Equipment	\$1,690,476.52
Urn Liners	\$170,000.00
Service Support (GFEBS, Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan)	\$500,116.51
Grounds Maintenance Bridge Contract	\$745,050.00
Total	\$24,489,596.52

Table 2

The Army National Cemeteries Program Campaign Plan

I am proud of what we have accomplished since June 2010 to bring all aspects of the Army National Cemeteries Program (ANCP) in line with the rich, proud and dignified traditions befitting our Nation's military heroes. The ANCP Campaign Plan is the vehicle I am using to ensure we achieve the future vision of the ANCP. It incorporates the ANCP's major missions for our veterans and the Nation, as well as the significant guidance, support and recommendations we have received from the Secretary of the Army, the AAA, DAIG, GAO, the Northern Virginia Technology Council, and distinguished members of the Congress. Based on my guidance, my staff identified and I approved their priority tasks to achieve the ANCP vision. All come with measurable metrics and milestones and are

based on prioritized resources. Through updates to myself and the Superintendent, we will ensure this is more than just a document. The Campaign Plan is how we manage strategic changes and incorporate lessons learned across the organization.

The Campaign Plan helps identify risk and prioritization of our resources—our people, money and time. You in Congress, the Army and the Nation have been extremely generous in helping the ANCP remain a place where our country can Honor, Remember and Explore our military veterans' sacrifices. We will not assume risk with honoring our fallen and maintaining accountability of their burials. The ANCP requires significant resources to fix decades of uncompleted basic maintenance and repair. The Campaign Plan allows me to provide written guidance on how we will prioritize resources across the organization into the future.

The Campaign Plan also helps show the interdependence of my directorates' and the workforce's efforts. We are one-ten thousandth of the Army: one weak link can cause catastrophic failure; one strong link has far-reaching effects. The Campaign Plan provides specific priorities to the directorates, and it helps the leaders and workforce understand the larger context of their efforts. It also establishes very clear and measurable standards and milestones, to which we are holding them accountable.

Operations at ANCP

The backbone of the Strategic Campaign Plan are our five strategic lines of effort that, when executed with proficiency, will ensure the cemetery appropriately honors the veterans laid to rest here on a daily basis in the near term while effectively planning for future cemetery operations. Those key efforts include: 1) Honor the Fallen through burials, 2) Maintain the Hallowed Grounds of the Cemeteries, 3) Uphold the Faith and Confidence of the American People, including through accountable record keeping and public outreach, 4) Prepare ANCP for beyond 2025 and 5) Synchronize ANCP Activities across all other lines of effort.

Among those strategic efforts, I would like to emphasize Arlington's primary mission: Honor the Fallen through all aspects of dignified burial services for veterans and their eligible dependents.

A key first step in improving this process was the implementation of the call center. When we assumed leadership, more than 75% of the calls to Arlington – from simple questions to burial requests – went unanswered. By standing up the Consolidated Call Center in December 2010 in partnership with the U.S. Army Information Technology Agency, we now answer every call. Today calls are answered by a trained call center representative. Each call is assigned a unique case number and 80% of concerns are addressed immediately. The remaining cases are passed to appropriate cemetery officials for action and tracked in our case management system with reportable metrics.

The Superintendent implemented a formal chain of custody process to

maintain positive, verifiable control of remains throughout the interment or inurnment process. As an additional quality control measure, we require funeral home representatives to formally transfer remains to the custody of a Cemetery representative. Funeral directors must include their license number and signature when transferring remains for burial services. Families which hand-carry cremated remains must provide a certificate of cremation when they arrive. Today we have an auditable chain of custody process in place.

Numbering and cataloging concrete liners also represents an important advancement in our burial operating procedures. The liners protect urns and prevent inadvertent removal of an urn from a gravesite, eliminating the potential disassociation of remains from their assigned resting place.

No matter how thorough and well-thought-out procedures are, it is difficult to expect or realize true long-term success unless personnel are trained appropriately. To that end, as detailed within our Campaign Plan, we are investing in our workforce. We are codifying standards and measures across the organization. We have formally trained one-third of our workforce to their functional industry standards across the lines of cemetery operations. Intensive training represents one way we are re-building the work force and instilling pride, *esprit-de-corps* and advanced competencies. This includes partnering with organizations such as the Department of Veterans Affairs and private industry to train our equipment operators and cemetery personnel. Supervisors are now held accountable for their actions and that of workers for whom they are responsible. Recognizing the unique needs of our Cemetery, we are providing our staff with the

skills to remain resilient and provide compassionate care for grieving families.

To ensure we are meeting our goals and objectives, we are also instituting organizational review measures to help hold ourselves accountable. This entails establishing internal inspection teams to conduct periodic self-analyses. This capability enables the ANCP to evaluate and implement self-correcting measures.

In the field we also are pursuing a "softer footprint" by using smaller and terrain-appropriate equipment that allows our operators to minimize disruption of the surrounding landscape. Having the right equipment, standards, training, supervision and inspections will ensure our workforce maintains the Cemeteries at national shrine standards while being more efficient and environmentally responsible in the process.

In order to fully realize my vision, the ANCP requires significant investment in repairing and maintaining its infrastructure. We have had near catastrophic failure in critical support systems. Our planned investments institute a lifecycle maintenance program that ensures the life, health and safety of our workforce, grieving families and visiting dignitaries and tourists.

Technology at ANCP

Leveraging technology to enhance operations, increase oversight and improve our outreach remains a critical focus of the Army National Cemeteries Program. In order to optimize our business processes we are creating the strategic framework for developing and deploying technology throughout the

ANCP. This Enterprise Architecture (EA), included within and complementary to the Campaign Plan, serves as the blueprint to ensure our IT investments are effectively and efficiently meeting the needs of the organization well into the future.

In line with the EA and Campaign Plan, we have digitized the Army National Cemeteries to make us among the most technologically advanced cemeteries in the United States. When combined with our dedicated workforce, technology has enabled us to make progress towards regaining accountability much more rapidly. For instance, The Third U.S. Infantry, The Old Guard based at Joint Base Myer Henderson Hall, Virginia, supported the Gravesite Accountability Task Force (GATF) by photographing every Arlington grave, niche and memorial marker using smart phone technology. The Army-designed iPhone application allowed GATF members on the ground to e-mail immediately the memorial pictures with GPS location to a central repository. This process is now instituted by our current workforce. The data was validated the following morning for quality and accuracy and then linked digitally with existing burial records and supporting information that other members of the Task Force would then review. This data serves as the foundation of the single database from which the Cemetery will soon manage all of its operations digitally.

In addition to the call center, meaningful changes have been made through technology in order to better serve our families. Arlington's new web site is a platform for information and outreach to families. The website provides a searchable index of scheduled services by name and date. The Arlington National Cemetery's Administrative Guide to Information and Burial is also available on the

web site to assist families in understanding eligibility requirements. The new "Headstone Formatting" application enables families to review and approve an inscription design for their loved one's headstone or niche cover on-line prior to the burial service. This is one less activity the family has to complete when they arrive at Arlington for their loved ones' service. "Headstone Formatting" is in use on a test basis now.

In partnership with the Army, we are developing a geospatial information system (GIS), which will enhance internal operations and visitors' experiences at the cemetery and produce the first comprehensive digital map of all gravesites. This effort will allow cemetery scheduling representatives to automate the assigning of gravesites on digitized maps. This system also will present real-time, GPS-verified information to equipment operators to allow validation of excavation sites prior to their beginning work on the Cemetery grounds. In addition to supporting internal operations, within months this effort will produce a publically available web based application, smart phone application, and kiosks located throughout the grounds. This GIS application will enable the public to locate gravesites in the Cemetery, acquire directions to the gravesite, and view the grave marker remotely.

The enterprise architecture will allow us to continue to invest in appropriate technology to create end-to-end processes supporting cemeteries' operations and activities. As a result of introducing precision into the process, we will ensure continued accountability of Arlington's burials and records for future generations.

Army National Cemeteries Advisory Commission

While we have implemented meaningful changes at Arlington, the Army welcomes open engagements on methods for improving its processes further. The newly-formed Federal Advisory Commission, the Army National Cemetery Advisory Commission, held its inaugural meeting December 1, 2011. In line with the Secretary of the Army's request and the Commission Charter, the Commission will provide the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of the Army recommendations regarding: 1) extending the life of active burials and inurnments at Arlington National Cemetery, 2) addressing the cracks in the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Monument; and 3) capturing and conveying the Army National Cemeteries' history, including the long-term implications of the ANC Section 60 mementos and improving the visitor experience. The ANCP is truly honored to have the depth and breadth of experience and expertise of our distinguished commission members, each volunteering his or her time to ensure the Army National Cemeteries remain the nation's premier military cemeteries. The next planned meeting of this Commission is early March 2012.

Conclusion

Our obligation to our military heroes, their families and the Nation is to remain America's premier military cemetery where dignity and honor rest in solemn repose. There is still much work to be done, and our Strategic Campaign Plan maps out that effort. Now that we have provided an accounting of the

gravesites at Arlington and have in place systems for maintaining accountability of our gravesites and practicing sound fiscal stewardship, it is important that all aspects of the Army National Cemeteries Program benefit from this structured approach. As we maintain the pace of 27 to 30 services every week day – and six (6) to eight (8) non-honors services on Saturdays – we are optimistic about the future of Arlington. We look forward to working alongside our many partners to continue meeting the needs of our veterans and the American public well into the future.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to appear before you.