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MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
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SUBJECT: Ethics and Integrity

Recently, I reviewed the Defense Science Board task force study on Management Oversight in Acquisition Organizations, (www.acq.osd.mil/dsb/reports/2005-03-MOAO_Report_Final.pdf), which assessed the structure and methods of oversight to ensure integrity of acquisition decisions in the Department. While this study was specifically aimed at reviewing the Department's acquisition organizations, I am convinced that the lessons learned from this review have broad application throughout the Department.

The task force observed, in discussions with industry and respected academic organizations, that ethical behavior is a function of leadership. I strongly agree. As a result, I want to stress to all members of the Department the importance of placing ethics at the forefront of our vision and values. Ethical conduct and integrity must be modeled by the Department's leadership, in every office and agency. It is not enough merely to pay attention to our Standards of Conduct during annual-required training sessions. Integrity is a daily responsibility that must be an intrinsic part of our everyday decision-making processes and practices.

The task force also emphasized that our focus must not only be on "doing things right," but also on "doing the right thing." I agree and would add that expediency must never be an excuse for misconduct. Any breach of integrity in the Department must be taken seriously and requires aggressive action. I call on the Department's leadership, and

all defense employees, to take every opportunity to articulate our expectation of high integrity and ethical conduct, and to speak out frequently on the importance of ethical behavior as part of our values. Please provide the widest distribution possible of this memorandum.