

SECDEF Directs Flag and General Billet Reductions

From the Department of Defense, May 5, 2025

ARLINGTON, Va. – The following memorandum was issued by Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth:

MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP SUBJECT:

General/Flag Officer Reductions

The Department of Defense is committed to ensuring the lethality of U.S. Military Forces to deter threats and, when necessary, achieve decisive victory. To accomplish this mission, we must cultivate exceptional senior leaders who drive innovation and operational excellence, unencumbered by unnecessary bureaucratic layers that hinder their growth and effectiveness.

A critical step in this process is removing redundant force structure to optimize and streamline leadership by reducing excess general and flag officer positions.

Therefore, I direct the following actions:

- A minimum 20% reduction of 4-star positions across the Active Component;
- A minimum 20% reduction of general officers in the National Guard; and
- An additional minimum 10% reduction in general and flag officers with the realignment of the Unified Command Plan.

Through these measures, we will uphold our position as the most lethal fighting force in the world, achieving peace through strength and ensuring greater efficiency, innovation,

and preparedness for any challenge that lies ahead.