OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

MAY - 6 2009

The Honorable Carl Levin
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter provides the final report to Congress on the request in the Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying H.R. 2638, Joint Explanatory Statement for 2009, regarding the Office for Military Health System (MHS) Strategic Communications and the contract awarded to provide support for that office.

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communication mission and improve the health care of our Service members, veterans, and their families.

Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

Gail H. McGinn
Performing the Duties of the
Under Secretary of Defense
(Personnel and Readiness)

cc:
The Honorable Lindsey O. Graham
Ranking Member

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
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MAY - 6 2009

The Honorable Ike Skelton
Chairman, Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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Performing the Duties of the
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(Personnel and Readiness)

cc:
The Honorable John M. McHugh
Ranking Member

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
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MAY - 6 2009

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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Ranking Member

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PERSONNEL AND
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Chairman, Subcommittee on Personnel
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PERSONNEL AND
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Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Military Personnel
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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Thank you for your continued support of the Military Health System.

Sincerely,

Gail H. McGinn
Performing the Duties of the
Under Secretary of Defense
(Personnel and Readiness)

cc:
The Honorable Joe Wilson
Ranking Member

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

MAY - 6 2009

The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye
Chairman, Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter provides the final report to Congress on the request in the Joint Explanatory Statement accompanying H.R. 2638, Joint Explanatory Statement for 2009, regarding the Office for Military Health System (MHS) Strategic Communications and the contract awarded to provide support for that office.

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In 2007, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs (ASD (HA)) recognized that there was no central, coordinating office for strategic communications across the MHS. He began the process to establish such an office by diverting resources from his Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force Health Protection and Readiness to redesign the Health Affairs Web site, which had been very policy focused. He wanted a vibrant Web site that provided daily information on the MHS. Although the Web site was a good start, it needed someone to coordinate and oversee its development and evolution, and needed strategic communications support to develop content and assure its currency. That could not be done entirely within existing resources because the public affairs or communications offices in the various Department of Defense components, including the TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) and Services offices, were focused on their individual organizations' missions and tasks.

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The content management team must reach a young, increasingly tech-savvy military community. Using the power of Web 2.0 technologies, they are reaching Service members and their families with MHS messages and information through external blogs, social networks, wikis, and services like Twitter. In addition, they use widgets, chic-lets and micro-content for portable devices such as iPhones and Web 2.0 channels like Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Twitter, and others to help syndicate the content of www.health.mil. News, stories, videos, blogs, blog-talk radio shows, and interactive web events (webhalls and healthy debates) are all part of the work of this team.

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Performing the Duties of the
Under Secretary of Defense
(Personnel and Readiness)

cc:
The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

MAY - 6 2009

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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Ranking Member

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
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PERSONNEL AND
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Washington, DC 20515

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