Industry’s Role in Force Projection, Sustainment a Topic at NDTA-USTRANSCOM Command Fall Meeting

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Sustainment Robert McMahon will discuss industry’s role in projecting and sustaining U.S. forces during an emergency or a crisis at the National Defense Transportation Association-U.S. Transportation Command fall meeting Oct. 7-10 at Union Station in St. Louis.

As one of five keynote speakers, McMahon will discuss the private sector’s role in providing augmented transportation capacity to support Defense Department requirements.

“Clearly, DoD cannot accomplish its mission without partnering with commercial partners in the world of logistics and sustainment. They are absolutely essential to our success by ground, sea and air,” said Michael P. Kleman, a spokesman for USTRANSCOM. “Our success is reliant on that partnership.”

The collaboration’s foundation rests on the Voluntary Intermodal Sealift Agreement and Civil Reserve Air Fleet programs, which provide commercial ships and

aircraft, respectively, to meet mission needs.

For example, VISA involves the participation of all major U.S.-flag companies and offers access to more than 90 vessels, contributing more than 3 million square feet of force-projection capacity and 143,000 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of sustainment capability. On the other hand, CRAF includes 25 safety-certified U.S. air carriers, providing long-range international airlift for about 40% of DoD air cargo and more than 90% of passenger transport.

In addition, the Maritime Security Program, managed by the U.S. Maritime Administration, consists of 60 military-useful, internationally-trading, U.S.-flags ships that employ more than 2,500 U.S.-trained and credentialed mariners. MSP vessels are required to be enrolled in the VISA program.

After completing a 34-year Air Force career, retiring as a major general in 2012, McMahon was CEO of the 21st Century Partnership and then served as the director of field operations and site lead for the Boeing C-17 Globemaster III Integrated Sustainment Program. He later served as president of Fickling Management Services of Macon, Georgia, from 2015 to 2017, leading a real estate company that maintained properties in eight states.

“I have a

much greater appreciation of the private sector than I had when I wore the uniform. They are great Americans, just as dedicated and patriotic as those in uniform," McMahon said.

In his current position, McMahon works as the principal staff assistant and adviser to the undersecretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment, deputy secretary of defense, and secretary of defense for sustainment in the DoD. As the principal logistics official within DoD senior management, he also provides oversight of logistics policies, practices and efficiencies to enable readiness throughout the Pentagon as well as manages more than $170 billion in logistics operations.

McMahon also oversees the DoD's real property portfolio made up of 28 million acres, over 500 installations, and more than 500,000 buildings and structures valued at $1 trillion. Those interested in attending Mr. McMahon's keynote address and other fall Meeting activities can register here.