



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

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

FEB - 7 2025

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Department's response to the Joint Explanatory Statement, page 749, accompanying H.R. 2617, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Public Law 117-328), "Negative Air Pressure Containment Systems," is enclosed.

The Department remains committed to readiness and the capacity to respond to pandemics and biological events at military medical treatment facilities worldwide. The Department reviewed existing negative air room containment systems and capabilities across the Military Health System, explored commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) portable and modular negative air room containment systems, and current validated requirements for such systems. The Department did not identify validated requirements via the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System for such COTS portable systems.

Thank you for your continued strong support for the health and well-being of our Service members and families. I am sending similar letters to the other congressional defense committees.

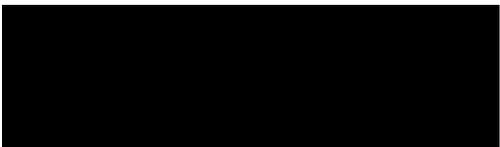
Sincerely,



Darin S. Selnick
Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of
Defense for Personnel and Readiness

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Chris Coons
Ranking Member





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PERSONNEL AND
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The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
Subcommittee on Defense
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

FEB - 7 2025

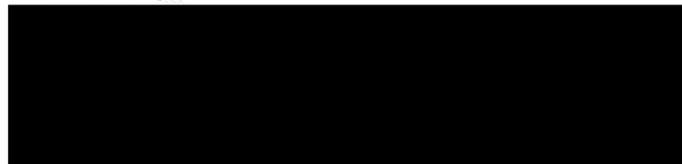
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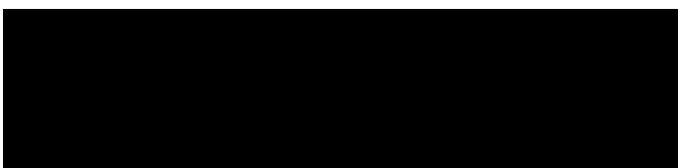
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Darin S. Senick
Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of
Defense for Personnel and Readiness

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member





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PERSONNEL AND
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The Honorable Roger F. Wicker
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of
Defense for Personnel and Readiness

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member





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4000 DEFENSE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301-4000

PERSONNEL AND
READINESS

The Honorable Mike D. Rogers
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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Darin S. Selnick
Performing the Duties of the Under Secretary of
Defense for Personnel and Readiness

Enclosure:
As stated

cc:
The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member

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Report to the Congressional Defense Committees



Negative Air Pressure Containment Systems

February 2025

The estimated cost of this report or study for the Department of Defense is approximately \$1,450 for the 2024 Fiscal Year. This includes \$0 in expenses and \$1,450 in DoD labor.

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I. INTRODUCTION

This report is in response to Joint Explanatory Statement, page 749, accompanying H.R. 2617, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (Public Law 117–328), which requests that the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs (ASD(HA)):

- 1) Explore commercial-off-the-shelf portable and modular negative air room containment systems to increase readiness and capacity to respond to pandemics and biological events at military medical treatment facilities (MTFs) worldwide; and
- 2) Provide a report to the congressional defense committees on the Department’s assessment of modular negative air room containment system requirements in MTFs as well as detailed recommendations for the resources and acquisition of necessary systems.

II. BACKGROUND

Negative pressure rooms are routinely used in hospitals to care for patients with contagious infectious disease conditions. These hospital-based (brick and mortar) rooms are routinely used in Department of Defense (DoD) MTFs and were regularly used during the recent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. The ASD(HA) was requested to explore commercial-off-the-shelf portable and modular negative air room containment systems to increase readiness and capacity to respond to pandemics and biological events at MTFs worldwide.

III. DISCUSSION

The DoD explored commercial-off-the-shelf portable and modular negative air room containment systems. There are several commercial companies that sell such systems. These systems are intended to augment negative pressure isolation room capabilities found in hospitals. The DoD routinely uses hospital-based (brick and mortar) negative pressure isolation rooms to care for patients with infectious disease conditions. These rooms were used to care for patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

DoD cannot resource or acquisition new capabilities without an officially validated requirement. The process for documenting and validating new requirements is the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System (JCIDS). JCIDS enables the Joint Requirements Oversight Council to execute statutory duties to assess joint military capabilities, and identify, approve, and prioritize gaps in these capabilities, to meet applicable requirements in the National Defense Strategy. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction 5123.01I, “Charter of the Joint Requirements Oversight Council and Implementation of the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System,” October 30, 2021, guides implementation of JCIDS. DoD reviewed current validated JCIDS requirements for MTFs. This assessment determined there is not a defined JCIDS requirement for this capability in MTFs.

Although there is not a current JCIDS requirement for this portable capability, as stated above, DoD MTFs have negative pressure isolation rooms built into their brick-and-mortar hospitals. These negative pressure rooms are part of an MTF's capability to care for patients with contagious infectious diseases. Additionally, during the COVID-19 pandemic, DoD identified, validated, and acquired the Negatively Pressurized Conex (NPC) and NPC Lite to transport infectious patients to its MTFs for care in their brick-and-mortar negative pressure isolation rooms. As a result, the DoD had the capability to both transport these infectious patients and care for them within MTFs. It is conceivable that the DoD could experience a scenario in which an overwhelming scale of infectious disease patients exceeded the capacities of its current MTF-based capability. However, this risk has not been characterized or quantified, and no subsequently validated requirement has been identified via JCIDS for such commercial-off-the-shelf portable systems.

The Defense Centers for Public Health – Aberdeen coordinated with the Defense Health Agency (DHA) Deputy Assistant Director, Medical Affairs; Joint Trauma System; and Deputy Assistant Director, Acquisition and Sustainment; as well as the Military Departments to explore and assess current validated JCIDS requirements for commercial-off-the-shelf portable and modular negative air room containment systems at MTFs. DoD did not identify a validated requirement for this capability; DHA is therefore unable to develop a detailed acquisition strategy that includes resourcing without a validated requirement identified through JCIDS.

III. CONCLUSION

This assessment determined there is not a defined JCIDS requirement for this capability. If a validated JCIDS requirement is identified at MTFs, DHA will complete market research and analysis to develop a detailed acquisition strategy aligned with DoD policies and procedures.