

1 CONTRACT MANAGEMENT AT  
2 ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

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4 WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2012

5 United States Senate,  
6 Ad Hoc Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight,  
7 Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs,  
8 Washington, D.C.

9 The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:29 p.m.,  
10 in Room 342, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Claire  
11 McCaskill, Chairman of the Subcommittee, presiding.

12 Present: Senators McCaskill, Pryor, and Tester.

13 OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR McCASKILL

14 Senator McCaskill. This hearing will now come to  
15 order.

16 On July 29, 2010, almost exactly 18 months ago, this  
17 Subcommittee held an oversight hearing on the mismanagement  
18 of contracts at Arlington National Cemetery, the Nation's  
19 most revered and sacred burial ground for veterans and their  
20 families. At the hearing, we reviewed the findings of a  
21 June 2010 report by the Army Inspector General which found  
22 hundreds of mistakes associated with graves and gross  
23 mismanagement by the Cemetery's leadership. The  
24 Subcommittee also investigated how the mismanagement of  
25 contracts to implement a new automated system to manage

1 burials contributed to those mistakes.

2       The Subcommittee found that the problems with graves  
3 was more extensive than previously acknowledged and that  
4 thousands of graves were potentially at risk of being  
5 unmarked, improperly marked, or mislabeled on the Cemetery's  
6 maps.

7       The Subcommittee's investigation also found that  
8 officials at the Cemetery and at the Army failed to conduct  
9 basic oversight. For example, Arlington's former leadership  
10 approved projects to automate and digitize burial records  
11 which resulted in millions of dollars in contracts over a  
12 decade without producing one usable product. In addition,  
13 there had been no review or audit of the Cemetery for over a  
14 decade prior to the Inspector General's 2010 review.

15       In September 2010, as a result of the investigation of  
16 this Committee, I introduced legislation to address those  
17 failures. The bill ultimately acquired 12 cosponsors,  
18 passed the Senate, and was signed into law in December of  
19 2010. The law requires two separate reports by the  
20 Secretary of the Army. The first provision required the  
21 Secretary to verify the identity, location, and burial  
22 records for gravesites in Arlington National Cemetery and  
23 present plans to remedy any errors found in the review.  
24 This report was submitted on December 22, 2011.

25       The second provision requires the Secretary of the Army

1 to submit an annual report for the next three years on  
2 execution of the Secretary's June 2010 directive, which  
3 changed the structure and authority of operations at  
4 Arlington National Cemetery. This first annual report was,  
5 in fact, submitted September 2011.

6 The law also required the Comptroller General to  
7 present a report to Congress on the management and oversight  
8 of contracts at Arlington National Cemetery, including a  
9 review of the feasibility and advisability of transferring  
10 to or sharing jurisdiction of Army National Cemeteries with  
11 the Department of Veterans Affairs. This report was  
12 released in two parts on December 15, 2011.

13 The findings of these reports and the way forward from  
14 here are the subject of today's hearing. We will hear from  
15 the Army Inspector General, GAO, the Government  
16 Accountability Office, and Arlington National Cemetery about  
17 what the Army and the Cemetery have done to try and remedy  
18 the failures of the past. We will also hear about what  
19 Arlington and the Army still need to do to ensure that this  
20 never happens again.

21 The reports provided to Congress reveal that much work  
22 remains to be done. Arlington must be put on a course that  
23 will ensure no tragedy like the one we saw unfold in 2010 is  
24 ever again reported to veterans and their families.

25 At the outset, I want to commend Ms. Condon and the

1 staff at Arlington for their efforts over the last 18  
2 months. The corrections made by Ms. Condon, Mr. Hallinan,  
3 the Cemetery staff, the members of the Accountability Task  
4 Force, and the Cemetery's Old Guard, among others,  
5 constitute a sea change from what we saw under the  
6 Cemetery's prior leadership.

7 I would also like to recognize the Army Inspector  
8 General, both old and new. The original 2010 report issued  
9 under the leadership of General McCoy demonstrates the  
10 quality and independence we expect from the Inspector  
11 General community, and I expect that General Vangjel will  
12 continue to hold Arlington and other Army officials  
13 accountable in his new role as Army Inspector General.

14 As I tell witnesses from GAO at nearly every hearing,  
15 you are the unsung heroes of the Government for the work you  
16 do every day. Nothing pains me more when people take  
17 political cheap shots at Government workers, particularly  
18 because I am aware of the work that is done at GAO, the  
19 incredible savings that you produce for taxpayers in this  
20 country every day, and the dedication with which you go  
21 about your work. And it is not like you are doing it for  
22 big bucks.

23 As I told during the September 2010 hearing, I said  
24 that I would continue my work on Arlington until I was  
25 confident that all problems at the Cemetery were fixed and

1 that we could stand tall and assure the families of our  
2 veterans that they would never again need to wonder about  
3 the location of their loved ones' remains. I look forward  
4 to continuing to work with all of you and my colleagues to  
5 make this goal a reality.

6 I thank the witnesses for being here today and I look  
7 forward to their testimony.

8 Senator Tester, welcome. You are welcome to make any  
9 comments you would like before we begin with the witnesses.

10 OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR TESTER

11 Senator Tester. I would love to, Senator McCaskill.  
12 Thank you very much, and thank you for convening this  
13 hearing and for leading the charge to expose and address  
14 this issue. I want to thank the witnesses ahead of time.

15 You know, when the issue of mismarked graves and  
16 mismanagement at Arlington came to light initially, I said  
17 it was a black eye that needed to be made right. Simply  
18 put, our Nation is entrusted with certain sacred  
19 responsibilities. It is not only about honoring and taking  
20 care of those who wear the uniform, it is about being there  
21 for the families during their time of loss. And when  
22 entrusted with the remains of their loved ones, it is  
23 incumbent upon this Nation to carry out its responsibility  
24 with the utmost respect and dignity. On too many occasions  
25 in recent memory, whether it is mismanagement at Arlington

1 National Cemetery or the mishandling of remains of American  
2 troops at Dover Air Force Base, that responsibility has been  
3 abandoned and that trust with the people for whom we serve  
4 has been broken.

5 Ms. Condon, as the Chairman said, I am happy to have  
6 you here, along with Mr. Hallinan. By all accounts, you  
7 stepped up to the plate. You have made some tough decisions  
8 and instituted a number of needed reforms and I very much  
9 appreciate that. But as a recent GAO report pointed out, we  
10 are not there yet, and when you are entrusted with sacred  
11 responsibilities, there is no margin for error. So this  
12 afternoon, I look forward to your testimony and I look more  
13 forward to the discussion that will happen after that  
14 testimony.

15 Thanks once again. Thank you all for being here.  
16 Thank you, Madam Chair.

17 Senator McCaskill. Thank you, Senator Tester.

18 Let me introduce the witnesses. Our first witness is  
19 Lieutenant General Peter Vangjel. He is the Inspector  
20 General of the United States Army. He was appointed to the  
21 position on November 14, 2011. As Inspector General, he is  
22 responsible for investigating allegations of misconduct by  
23 Army officials. Most recently, Lieutenant General Vangjel  
24 served as the Deputy Commanding General of the Third Army,  
25 United States Army Central, at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, from

1 September 2009 to September 2011. I could also probably  
2 talk to you about contracting, could I not, over there. I  
3 know that is the center of most of the contracting and the  
4 contingencies.

5 Belva McFarland Martin is the Director of Acquisition  
6 and Sourcing Management Team at the U.S. Government  
7 Accountability Office. She is responsible for a portfolio  
8 of major management and public policy issues related to the  
9 protection of the Nation's critical technologies, including  
10 export controls, the defense industrial base, Navy  
11 shipbuilding, defense acquisition workforce, and Army  
12 modernization programs.

13 Brian Lepore is the Director of Defense Capabilities  
14 and Management at the U.S. Government Accountability Office.  
15 He directs audit and evaluation teams that review the  
16 Department of Defense support infrastructure, programs for  
17 base closure and realignment, installment, sustainment,  
18 modernization, and restoration, base operations including  
19 installation services, management of training ranges,  
20 infrastructure and privatization programs, and facilities  
21 energy management.

22 Kathryn Condon is the Executive Director of the Army  
23 National Cemeteries Program. She was appointed to the  
24 position on June 10, 2010. As the Executive Director, Ms.  
25 Condon is responsible for both long-term planning and day-

1 to-day administration of Arlington National Cemetery and the  
2 U.S. Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery. Ms.  
3 Condon has held several other military positions, including  
4 serving as the Civilian Deputy to the Commanding General,  
5 U.S. Army Materiel Command, from 2006 to 2009.

6 It is the custom of this Subcommittee to swear in all  
7 witnesses who appear before us, so if you do not mind, I  
8 would ask you to stand. Do you swear that the testimony you  
9 will give before this Subcommittee will be the truth, the  
10 whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

11 Lieutenant General Vangjel. I do.

12 Mr. Lepore. I do.

13 Ms. Martin. I do.

14 Ms. Condon. I do.

15 Senator McCaskill. Let the record reflect that the  
16 witnesses answered in the affirmative. Please be seated.

17 We will be using a timing system today. We would ask  
18 that your oral testimony be, it says no more than five  
19 minutes. I am going to say somewhere around five minutes.  
20 This is very important. If you need to go over two or three  
21 minutes, I do not think Senator Tester and I are going to  
22 mind. Your written testimony will obviously be printed in  
23 the record in its entirety, and we will begin with  
24 Lieutenant General Peter Vangjel. Am I saying your name  
25 right?

1 Lieutenant General Vangjel. You are, Madam Chairman.

2 Senator McCaskill. Okay. Great.

3 Lieutenant General Vangjel. Vangjel is fine.

4 Senator McCaskill. Great. You probably are used to  
5 having it pronounced 17 different ways and just do not even  
6 pause.

7 Lieutenant General Vangjel. I will answer to just  
8 about anything as long as I know that they are looking at  
9 me, Madam Chairman.

10 [Laughter.]

11 Senator McCaskill. Okay, sir. Thank you.

1                   TESTIMONY OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL PETER VANGJEL,  
2                   INSPECTOR GENERAL, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

3           Lieutenant General Vangjel. Madam Chairman and  
4 distinguished members of the Committee, thank you for the  
5 opportunity to speak to you today, and thank you for your  
6 input, support, and guidance over the past 18 months. It  
7 has made a significant difference at Arlington.

8           Since assuming the duties of the Army Inspector General  
9 in November, I have reviewed our previous inspections, I  
10 have met with the Executive Director, Ms. Condon, her team,  
11 and other stakeholders who have been involved in correcting  
12 the deficiencies found at Arlington. To fully appreciate  
13 the progress that has been made, one only has to review the  
14 June 2010 IG report which identified 61 deficiencies, among  
15 them being a deplorable organizational climate, archaic  
16 recordkeeping and automation systems, uncontrolled  
17 contracting and budgeting processes, and a significant  
18 problem with gravesite accountability.

19           In contrast, our 2011 IG report identified no  
20 deficiencies and noted significant progress at the Cemetery,  
21 largely due to the course set by the Secretary of the Army's  
22 Directive 2010-04, the efforts of the Executive Director and  
23 her team, and the support from the Department of the Army's  
24 staff. In short, the mismanagement and deficiencies  
25 reported to you in the June 2010 IG report have been

1 relegated to the past and Arlington is transitioning from  
2 successful crisis management to sustained excellence. Allow  
3 me to share just a few specifics.

4       The previous insular environment that contributed to  
5 mismanagement and substandard performance at Arlington no  
6 longer exists. The Executive Director has established a  
7 positive work environment, emphasizing cooperation,  
8 coordination, and collaboration. Workforce surveys taken as  
9 part of the 2011 inspection reflected steadily improving  
10 morale, unity, and organizational effectiveness.

11       The Cemetery now possesses an advanced fully functional  
12 information technology infrastructure supported by a service  
13 agreement with the Army's Information Technology Agency.  
14 Arlington has leveraged the agency's Consolidated Customer  
15 Service Center to more effectively monitor and respond to  
16 customer calls, thus improving customer service. A new  
17 computer application for digitizing burial records has been  
18 critical in establishing an accountability baseline for each  
19 gravesite and inurement niche.

20       The 2011 inspection team reviewed 25 contracts covering  
21 services, engineering, and construction and found that these  
22 contracts are now properly aligned, with contractors  
23 possessing the requisite skill sets to perform required work  
24 to standard. New acquisitions are subjected to rigorous  
25 analysis, fee award compliance checks, and contract packet

1 reviews for quality assurance. While we still noted some  
2 errors in 2011, none were egregious and the number was  
3 significantly less than 2010.

4 Arlington now works closely with the Office of the  
5 Administrative Assistant and the Assistant Secretary of the  
6 Army for Financial Management to ensure improved oversight  
7 of the Cemetery's budget formulation and execution. The  
8 transition to the General Fund Enterprise Business System  
9 has provided full visibility and transparency of Cemetery  
10 expenditures.

11 Finally, with respect to improvements, the Executive  
12 Director recently published a Campaign Plan which includes  
13 major efforts to complete gravesite accountability, address  
14 long-term expansion of the Cemetery, and complete  
15 documentation of policies and procedures. For these and  
16 other objectives, it assigns responsibilities, time lines,  
17 and metrics to measure progress.

18 With this encouraging news comes the reality that there  
19 is still much more work to do. The 2011 Army IG inspection  
20 report provided 53 recommendations for continued improvement  
21 at Arlington. I will highlight a few key actions.

22 Arlington's leadership and the Department of the Army  
23 must finish updating relevant policies and procedures.  
24 Further, the Arlington leadership must complete the  
25 documentation and validation of internal processes,

1 procedures, and controls. The recent work to establish the  
2 Gravesite Accountability Baseline must continue to resolve  
3 the nearly 50,000 cases that are still outstanding.

4 Effort must be exerted to establish a multi-service  
5 policy that standardizes required assets for full honors  
6 funerals and enables maximum utilization of finite resources  
7 at the Cemetery.

8 The Executive Director must coordinate with the Army  
9 staff to establish enduring external oversight processes to  
10 prevent any reoccurrence of past shortcomings.

11 The Department of the Army must finalize and implement  
12 enduring organizational and support relationships for the  
13 National Cemeteries Program.

14 And finally, the Army must maintain the support and  
15 oversight that it has provided recently to its National  
16 Cemeteries and apply lessons learned from Arlington to all  
17 cemeteries under Army control.

18 In conclusion, Arlington remains a priority for the  
19 Secretary and for the Army. The significant progress  
20 observed by the Army IG validates the Secretary's approach  
21 to creating the processes, systems, and management that we  
22 found to be lacking at Arlington in 2010. This strategy,  
23 executed according to the Executive Director's Campaign Plan  
24 with the support of the Army, the Defense Department, other  
25 Federal agencies, and Congress will set the conditions for

1 continued improvement and ultimately sustained excellence.

2 Thank you once again for the opportunity to testify  
3 today and I look forward to answering your questions and  
4 working with the Committee in the future.

5 [The prepared statement of Lieutenant General Vangjel  
6 follows:]

1 Senator McCaskill. Thank you, Lieutenant General.

2 Ms. Martin.

1           TESTIMONY OF BELVA M. MARTIN, DIRECTOR,  
2           ACQUISITION AND SOURCING MANAGEMENT, U.S.  
3           GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

4           Ms. Martin. Madam Chair, Senator Tester, thank you for  
5 the opportunity to appear before the Subcommittee to discuss  
6 GAO's work at Arlington.

7           Senator McCaskill, you alluded to legislation that  
8 became the mandate for GAO to review contracting and  
9 management issues at the Cemetery. Those reviews found that  
10 Arlington has taken significant actions to address its  
11 problems and that the path forward is for Arlington to  
12 sustain progress through improved management and oversight.  
13 My colleague, Mr. Lepore, will discuss GAO's work on  
14 management issues.

15           On contracting, GAO identified 56 contracts over  
16 \$100,000 that supported Cemetery operations, construction  
17 and facility maintenance, and new efforts to enhance IT  
18 systems for the automation of burial operations. Arlington  
19 does not have its own contracting authority, but relies on  
20 relationships with contracting offices to award and manage  
21 contracts on its behalf. These contracting authorities  
22 obligated roughly \$35.2 million in support of the 56  
23 contracts covered by our review.

24           The Army has taken a number of steps, as the IG has  
25 alluded to, since June 2010 at different levels to provide

1 for more effective management and oversight of contracts,  
2 including improving contracting practices, establishing new  
3 support relationships, formalizing policies and procedures,  
4 and increasing the use of dedicated contracting staff to  
5 manage and improve its acquisitions. However, GAO found  
6 three areas at Arlington where additional improvements are  
7 needed. First, maintaining complete data on contracts.  
8 Second, defining responsibilities for contracting support.  
9 And third, determining contract staffing needs. I will  
10 briefly summarize key findings in these three areas.

11 First, with respect to maintaining complete data, we  
12 pulled together information on Arlington contracts from  
13 various sources, including support organizations. However,  
14 there were limitations with each of the sources. To be able  
15 to identify, to track, and ensure the effective management  
16 and oversight of its contracts, Arlington leadership needs  
17 complete data on all contracts.

18 Second, with respect to support relationships, the Army  
19 has taken a number of positive steps to better align  
20 Arlington contract support with the expertise of its  
21 partners. For example, Arlington has agreements with the  
22 Army Information Technology Agency, ITA, and the Army  
23 Analytics Group to help manage its IT infrastructure. While  
24 these agreements spell out services that ITA will provide to  
25 Arlington and performance metrics against which ITA will be

1 measured, they do not specifically address ITA's contract  
2 management roles and responsibilities in support of  
3 Arlington requirements. Although officials told us that  
4 they clearly understand their responsibilities, the question  
5 is, what happens in the future when there are new personnel  
6 in place? Going forward, sustained attention on the part of  
7 Arlington and its partners will be important to ensure that  
8 contracts of all types and risk levels are managed  
9 effectively.

10 Third, with respect to dedicated contract staffing  
11 arrangements, three contract specialist positions have been  
12 identified for Arlington but have not yet been filled.  
13 Arlington is presently receiving support from the Fort  
14 Belvoir Contracting Office in the form of ten contracting  
15 staff positions, five of which are funded by Arlington and  
16 five by Fort Belvoir. Arlington officials have identified  
17 the need for a more senior contracting specialist and are  
18 developing plans to fill this new position in fiscal year  
19 2013.

20 In closing, the success of the Army's efforts to  
21 improve contracting and management at Arlington will depend  
22 on management's sustained attention and efforts to  
23 institutionalize positive steps taken to date. Accordingly,  
24 we made a number of recommendations in our December 2011  
25 report to improve contract management and oversight in the

1 three areas where we found shortcomings. For the most part,  
2 DOD agreed that there is a need to take action and have  
3 provided time frames for doing so. We will continue to  
4 monitor their progress.

5 Madam Chair and members of the Subcommittee, this  
6 concludes my short statement. I will be happy to answer  
7 questions.

8 [The prepared statement of Ms. Martin and Mr. Lepore  
9 follows:]

1           Senator McCaskill. Thank you, Ms. Martin.  
2           Mr. Lepore.

1           TESTIMONY OF BRIAN J. LEPORE, DIRECTOR, DEFENSE  
2           CAPABILITIES AND MANAGEMENT, U.S. GOVERNMENT  
3           ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

4           Mr. Lepore. Thank you, Madam Chairman. Madam Chairman  
5 and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the  
6 opportunity to be here today to present our findings  
7 reviewing oversight and management of Arlington National  
8 Cemetery.

9           As you know, we issued our report on December 15 and my  
10 testimony today will be based on our report. I will make  
11 two points today. First, I will discuss the policies and  
12 procedures the current leadership team at Arlington has put  
13 into place to manage the Cemetery and I will identify some  
14 of our recommendations to assist in that endeavor. And  
15 second, I will discuss some factors affecting the  
16 feasibility and advisability of transferring Arlington from  
17 the Army to the Department of Veterans Affairs, the VA.

18           Here is the bottom line. I think it is fair to say the  
19 current leadership team at Arlington has taken many positive  
20 steps to address the deficiencies at the Cemetery and make  
21 improvements. The Army has made progress in a range of  
22 areas, including improving chain of custody procedures to  
23 ensure proper accountability over remains, better providing  
24 information assurance, and improving procedures to address  
25 inquiries from the families and the public. However, we

1 believe further steps are needed to ensure the changes are  
2 institutionalized and will prove long lasting long after the  
3 spotlight has faded.

4       Therefore, we have made recommendations in six areas.  
5 First, they should complete the enterprise architecture to  
6 guide new investments in information technology to ensure  
7 the investments are aligned with the future operational  
8 requirement.

9       Second, an updated workforce plan to ensure the  
10 workforce is properly sized and trained.

11       Third, an internal assessment program to gauge how the  
12 Cemetery is doing and to make any improvements that may be  
13 warranted.

14       Fourth, improving coordination with the Cemetery's  
15 operational partners, the Military District of Washington,  
16 the Military Service Honor Guards, and joint base Myer-  
17 Henderson Hall, to ensure, for example, scheduling conflicts  
18 are avoided and the right honor guards are available when  
19 needed.

20       Fifth, a strategic plan or Campaign Plan with expected  
21 outcomes, performance metrics and milestones.

22       And sixth, written policies explaining how to assist  
23 families when assistance is warranted.

24       The Cemetery leadership has generally concurred with  
25 our recommendations and begun to implement them. We are

1 encouraged by this.

2 Now, my final point. The question of feasibility and  
3 advisability of transferring Arlington from the Army to the  
4 VA. It is certainly feasible. As you know, the Congress  
5 transferred more than 80 Army managed cemeteries to the VA  
6 in the 1970s. However, several factors could affect the  
7 advisability of this. Such a change could have potential  
8 costs and benefits, lead to some important transition  
9 challenges, and affect the characteristics that make  
10 Arlington unique among our National Cemeteries. Thus, it  
11 may be premature to change jurisdiction since the Army has  
12 significantly improved its management of Arlington.

13 Here are some of the specific challenges that could  
14 arise in a jurisdictional change. First, identifying the  
15 goals of the transfer. Why is the transfer to be made?

16 Second, the Army and the VA have their own staff,  
17 processes, and systems to determine burial eligibility and  
18 scheduling and managing burials. Arlington has more  
19 restrictive eligibility for in-ground burials than VA, for  
20 example.

21 Third, Arlington's appropriation structure is different  
22 than VA's and Congress might need to address that in the  
23 event there is to be a change.

24 Fourth, the Army provides military funeral honors, but  
25 not the VA.

1 Fifth, Arlington hosts many special ceremonies  
2 throughout the year, including some involving the President  
3 and visiting heads of state.

4 And finally, sixth, Arlington is one of the most  
5 visited tourist destinations in Washington, hosting over  
6 four million visitors a year.

7 Finally, we do think there are some opportunities for  
8 the Army and the VA to collaborate more for the mutual  
9 benefit of both organizations, but most importantly for the  
10 benefit of our servicemembers, our veterans, and their  
11 families. Here are some examples.

12 VA has staff dedicated to establishing eligibility for  
13 burial in their cemeteries and a central scheduling center  
14 that could assist Arlington, if necessary. Conversely, VA  
15 officials are examining whether Geographic Information  
16 System or Global Positioning System technology should be  
17 used in their cemeteries, but the Army already provides such  
18 services and could assist the VA if that is deemed  
19 appropriate. Since no formal mechanism yet exists to  
20 identify collaboration opportunities, we recommended that  
21 the two Departments establish one and they agreed.

22 In conclusion, we believe the Army has worked through  
23 the crisis and taken steps to put Arlington National  
24 Cemetery on a sustainable path to ensure effective cemetery  
25 operations. Our recommendations are offered in the spirit

1 of helping this process along so that we never have to come  
2 before you again to have this conversation.

3 Madam Chairman, that concludes my prepared remarks and  
4 I would be happy to answer any questions that you or the  
5 other members of the Subcommittee may have.

6 Senator McCaskill. Thank you, Mr. Lepore.

7 Ms. Condon.

1                   TESTIMONY OF KATHRYN A. CONDON, EXECUTIVE  
2                   DIRECTOR, ARMY NATIONAL CEMETERIES PROGRAM, U.S.  
3                   DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

4           Ms. Condon. Madam Chairman and distinguished members  
5 of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity today to  
6 provide an update on the progress we have made at Arlington  
7 National Cemetery.

8           I want to state up front that we still have work to do  
9 to correct some of the remaining challenges that we have at  
10 Arlington, as was just discussed by the colleagues at the  
11 hearing with me today. But I want you to know that I and  
12 the United States Army accept those challenges and all are  
13 dedicated to restore the dignity and honor that our veterans  
14 and their families so rightly deserve.

15           Significant progress has been made. Our contracting  
16 practices now bring the Cemetery in compliance with Federal  
17 Acquisition Regulations. And the implementation of state-  
18 of-the art technology now make the hallowed grounds of  
19 Arlington one of the most technologically advanced  
20 cemeteries in the Nation, a different perspective than 19  
21 months ago, when the Cemetery lacked fiscal stewardship, was  
22 a paper-based operations, where calls were not answered and  
23 where the workforce was not properly manned, trained, or  
24 equipped.

25           In the accountability report recently submitted to this

1 Congress, we examined and soldiers from the Old Guard  
2 photographed 259,978 gravesites, niches, and markers and the  
3 Accountability Task Force coupled those photos with existing  
4 Cemetery burial information that for the first time  
5 consolidated 147 years of Cemetery records, records created  
6 from logbook entries, paper-based records of internment and  
7 grave cards, and computerized burial records. We now have  
8 them in an accountable database.

9 Since the submission of the report, the total validated  
10 gravesites without any burial discrepancies in evidence is  
11 now 210,076, and we are working diligently to close the  
12 remaining 19 percent of those cases to bring our efforts to  
13 completion.

14 The creation of this single, complete, verified  
15 database will soon allow families and other stakeholders  
16 with Internet access to search for and produce a picture of  
17 any marker in the Cemetery and review publicly available  
18 information about that gravesite through our state-of-the-  
19 art website.

20 In the area of contracting, we have made significant  
21 progress in contract management, transforming our  
22 contracting activities to position the Army National  
23 Cemetery programs for long-term sustainment. The Army has  
24 resourced our contracting support and oversight, adding  
25 skilled acquisition personnel to support my staff and

1 properly training the workforce in the acquisition process.

2 Madam Chairman, I do believe that Arlington has made  
3 some monumental changes in the last 19 months, but we  
4 continue to move forward each and every day, capturing our  
5 progress with repeatable processes and predictable results.

6 In order to orchestrate the many activities required to  
7 effectively run Arlington, we developed the Army National  
8 Cemeteries Program Campaign Plan, which codifies in one  
9 strategic document the long-term vision for the operation of  
10 Arlington and the Soldiers' and Airmen's Home Cemeteries.  
11 It is the vehicle that I and the Superintendent, Pat  
12 Hallinan, will use to ensure that we achieve our vision for  
13 the Cemetery. It incorporates the significant guidance,  
14 support, and recommendations that we have received from the  
15 Secretary of the Army, the GAO, the Army Inspector General,  
16 the Army Audit Agency, the Northern Virginia Technology  
17 Council, and from distinguished members of Congress, in  
18 particular members of this Subcommittee. Coupled with the  
19 Campaign Plan, we are developing our Enterprise Architecture  
20 and Technology Acquisition Roadmap which will serve as our  
21 IT blueprint and ensure that our IT investments are  
22 effectively and efficiently meeting the needs of the  
23 organization well into the future.

24 In conclusion, I personally want to thank this  
25 Committee for its leadership, its guidance, support, and

1 encouragement for helping us restore the faith and dignity  
2 once again to Arlington National Cemetery. I look forward  
3 to your questions.

4 [The prepared statement of Ms. Condon follows:]

1           Senator McCaskill. Thank you, Ms. Condon.

2           Let us start. So that people realize, I think what I  
3 talked about in my opening statement about the Old Guard, it  
4 sounds like when you say the Cemetery's Old Guard, people do  
5 not realize that these are, in fact, active members of the  
6 Army that are assigned to the Cemetery, and while they are  
7 called the Cemetery's Old Guard, they are anything but old.  
8 These are young men and women who have been assigned to do  
9 the work at the Cemetery that we all think of, the Honor  
10 Guard, the Caissons.

11           And I do want to point out as I begin asking questions  
12 that it was, in fact, these young men that came to the  
13 Cemetery when I went out there in November and I had the  
14 opportunity to thank a number of them. They, besides their  
15 other duties, many of them showed up at midnight and worked  
16 through the night until five or six in the morning with cell  
17 phones and/or cameras and individually went through the  
18 Cemetery and photographed over 259,000 gravesites. While  
19 some people might think of that work as something that was  
20 less than honorable, it was remarkable in talking to these  
21 young men, proud members of the military, proud soldiers,  
22 how honored they were to have been engaged in this task.  
23 And I want to point that out, because it once again confirms  
24 in my mind what I have learned over and over and over again  
25 as a member of the Armed Services Committee. This country

1 is incredibly blessed by the men and women who step across  
2 the line and say, "Take me."

3 So let us talk about the number of graves and the  
4 discrepancies. We had heard that there were 330,000 graves  
5 at Arlington, and now we know there are not 330,000 graves  
6 at Arlington. Where had that number come from? Why was  
7 that number being used if it is off by almost 100,000  
8 graves?

9 Ms. Condon. Ma'am, the 330,000 number that people  
10 quote was the number that they would say of the number of  
11 people who were actually interred at Arlington National  
12 Cemetery. That is not the actual number of gravesites,  
13 because as you know, you can have a husband and spouse in  
14 the same gravesite, and sometimes even dependents along with  
15 them.

16 I can tell you right now, ma'am, that I--one of the  
17 efforts of the Accountability Task Force will be to truly  
18 identify what the number of people who are actually interred  
19 in the Cemetery, and right now our data shows that it is  
20 over 400,000 individuals who are interred at Arlington. But  
21 until we complete the results of the Accountability Task  
22 Force, we will not be able to give you the accurate number  
23 of the number of people who are interred at the Cemetery.

24 Senator McCaskill. So we now know that we have at  
25 least 70,000 more people buried at Arlington than had been

1 previously estimated?

2 Ms. Condon. Yes, ma'am, we do.

3 Senator McCaskill. The additional review--we have  
4 heard today that there will be over 64,000 gravesites that  
5 will need additional review. What does that mean?

6 Ms. Condon. Ma'am, to give you a great example, part  
7 of our Accountability Task Force is we set up business  
8 rules, and one of our business rules was that we had to have  
9 at least two official documents to match with the photo of  
10 the headstone or the niche. What we are finding in the  
11 previous, as reported in the Task Force report, is there was  
12 a period where all we had was literally a record of  
13 internment or a grave card. And so what that means, ma'am,  
14 is that we are looking at other sources of official data  
15 such as the Social Security Death Index and Census records  
16 so that we can truly verify the information of those  
17 interred. So that is one of the examples of what that  
18 means.

19 Senator McCaskill. So what you are saying is we have  
20 over 60,000 gravesites where we do not have sufficient back-  
21 up and documentary evidence for you all to be certain that  
22 you have gotten it right?

23 Ms. Condon. Yes, ma'am, because as an example, in  
24 Section 27, which is the Freedman's Village section, all we  
25 have is a headstone that says "Citizen," and that is all the

1 information that we have there. So that is one of the  
2 examples.

3 Senator McCaskill. Okay. How long do you think it is  
4 going to take to get through this additional 64,000  
5 gravesites where you cannot at this point speak with  
6 certainty about who is located there?

7 Ms. Condon. Ma'am, as I stated in the report, I think  
8 because we currently have a team of 40 individuals who are  
9 now temporary employees working on that, we should probably  
10 come to closure by this summer.

11 Senator McCaskill. Okay. Let me go to contracting.  
12 You know, one of the things that was interesting to me in  
13 the GAO report is that you all use contracting services of  
14 various places, and that, to me, as somebody who spends a  
15 lot of time around this subject matter, that makes the  
16 little alarm bells go off in my head. It is hard enough to  
17 do contract oversight if you have one contracting source in  
18 terms of your work. But with you all using several  
19 different contracting personnel from several different  
20 agencies, I think it is really problematic that you are ever  
21 going to get the kind of control that you need.

22 Do you think you should bring it in house, or at a  
23 minimum, try to locate all the contracts either with the  
24 Army Corps of Engineers or with the Northern Virginia  
25 Contracting Authority or one of these various places that

1 you are now actually executing contracts within?

2 Ms. Condon. Ma'am, that was one of the issues that I  
3 addressed immediately when taking over as the Executive  
4 Director, and one of the first things that I did was sign an  
5 agreement with two contracting agencies, with the Army  
6 Contracting Command for all of our service contracts and  
7 with the Corps of Engineers for all of our construction  
8 contracts. Most of our contracts really are service  
9 contracts and that is why our Mission and Installation  
10 Contracting Command is the one who has a contracting support  
11 element who is supporting me at Arlington National Cemetery.

12 So, really, we are really--most of our contracts are  
13 channeled through--because they are service contracts, such  
14 as our landscaping, et cetera. So I am very confident that  
15 we have a handle on our contracts by really going to those  
16 two agencies, the Corps for our major construction projects  
17 and the Mission and Installation Contracting Command for our  
18 services contracts.

19 Senator McCaskill. So going forward, those are the  
20 only two contracting sources you are going to use and they  
21 are clearly delineated from a management perspective that  
22 you feel confident you can keep track of it?

23 Ms. Condon. I feel confident that we can keep track of  
24 it, and the only other contracting is, as before, we are no  
25 longer having individual information technology contracts.

1 I am now part of the Headquarters Department of the Army  
2 support for IT. So I only have to put forward my  
3 requirement. I do not have to have separate contracts to  
4 support that. So I am comfortable with where we are going  
5 now.

6 Senator McCaskill. And do you all feel--does GAO--Ms.  
7 Martin, do you feel okay about the way they have organized  
8 the contracting at this point in time?

9 Ms. Martin. Yes, we would not take exception with the  
10 fact that they use outside sources for contracting, and as  
11 Ms. Condon alluded to, they have two means of doing that.  
12 One is to go to a contracting authority to identify their  
13 requirements, their oversight, et cetera, and the second  
14 means is to partner with Army-wide efforts and they would  
15 become a task order, so to speak. So we do not have  
16 concerns with that.

17 What it means is that you have, just as you alluded to,  
18 Madam Chairman, you have to do more with respect to  
19 management and oversight to get that visibility into the  
20 contracts, to make sure that the requirements are stated in  
21 a way that you get deliverables and that you provide the  
22 adequate oversight. So it is not so much the vehicle. It  
23 is the management oversight and visibility that is  
24 important, and I think Ms. Condon alluded to the fact that  
25 she took some actions to try to do that.

1 Senator McCaskill. Great. Okay.

2 Senator Tester.

3 Senator Tester. Thank you, Madam Chair, and we will  
4 start with you, Ms. Condon. As I said in my opening  
5 statement, we have got--I mean, the trust of our Nation  
6 depends upon the work that is being done in Arlington and  
7 rebuilding that trust is going to be a tall task. Can you  
8 give me any ideas on what you are doing to help rebuild that  
9 trust?

10 Ms. Condon. Senator, one of the things that we have  
11 focused on is honoring the fallen and making sure that we  
12 are doing everything we can to provide information to the  
13 families of our loved ones that we inter at Arlington. And  
14 I think the greatest step forward on that is we now have a  
15 means to communicate with those who are scheduling services  
16 by just the implementation of our call center.

17 Senator Tester. Okay.

18 Ms. Condon. Before, literally, most of the telephone  
19 calls went unanswered. Now, every phone call to the  
20 Cemetery is answered. So I think we have the means to--so  
21 our loved ones can schedule their service. So I think that  
22 is a great step forward in restoring the confidence.

23 Senator Tester. Okay, that is good. How about  
24 outreach to families that had concerns?

25 Ms. Condon. What we did is, sir, every time there was

1 an issue with an affected family member, we personally work  
2 with the next of kin on each and every one of those cases so  
3 that they know--you know, we have been open, we have been  
4 candid, and we have been transparent with each and every one  
5 of those family members.

6 Senator Tester. So from your perspective, you are 100  
7 percent confident that folks are where they are said to be,  
8 their final resting place?

9 Ms. Condon. Sir, as I--in the report to Congress when  
10 we do our accountability, there is still the possibility of  
11 human error in a burial at Arlington. But if we do discover  
12 that there could possibly be a discrepancy, we have set  
13 procedures where we follow each and every case, where we  
14 notify not only Congress but also the next of kin and  
15 accommodate what the family's wishes are in case we find  
16 any.

17 Senator Tester. Do you have any mechanism--I guess  
18 redundancy would be the term--to be able to determine if  
19 there is a mistake, a human error that is made? Do you have  
20 any ability to find it quicker than one of the family  
21 members would find?

22 Ms. Condon. Sir, we have the ability from this day  
23 forward. We now have--

24 Senator Tester. Okay.

25 Ms. Condon. --a six-step chain of custody procedure.

1 We have implemented new procedures. And, you know, what  
2 happened prior to June 10, we will--we have procedures on  
3 how we will handle any discrepancy that we find--

4 Senator Tester. That is good. I think it is  
5 critically important that--well, that every effort is made  
6 to do it right.

7 At the first hearing, we heard about millions of  
8 dollars in contracts that were not being utilized  
9 appropriately. We talked with Madam Chair about some of the  
10 things that you have done to eliminate that. I mean, we are  
11 in times of austerity here. We have an important job to do  
12 at Arlington and other military cemeteries around the  
13 country, but there still are concerns about dollars. I read  
14 in this testimony that there was a recommendation to go from  
15 102 to 201 or something like that employees. We talked  
16 about the contracting. I just want to touch on contracting  
17 for just a second.

18 The information I had is there were three contracting  
19 organizations that dealt with 35 contracts. I think that is  
20 GAO numbers. You are saying, Ms. Condon, that you have  
21 taken it down to two contracting organizations, and do those  
22 two contracting organizations deal with all your contracts  
23 now?

24 Ms. Condon. Except those contracts that are from the  
25 Headquarters--like our IT contracts--

1 Senator Tester. With the Army.

2 Ms. Condon. --are with the Army.

3 Senator Tester. Okay. And how many contracts are with  
4 the Army?

5 Ms. Condon. Right now, it is predominately our IT  
6 contracts.

7 Senator Tester. And how many are there?

8 Ms. Condon. Sir, I would have to take--get the exact  
9 number for you on that one.

10 Senator Tester. Okay. Okay. The whole point is, and  
11 I think it goes to oversight of those contracts. Are we  
12 getting, number one, are we getting our contracting dollar  
13 out of the contracts that are given, and do you have enough  
14 oversight? And I guess I will give you three questions if  
15 you can hit them. And the third one is, because you have--  
16 and I understand the IT stuff with the Army and I think that  
17 is--I do not deny you should do that. But because you have,  
18 it was three, and then you have two contracting agencies,  
19 does that require more manpower than if you just had one and  
20 went with it? What is the advantage of two, is what I am  
21 saying.

22 Ms. Condon. The advantage of two, sir, is purely  
23 expertise. The Corps of Engineers' expertise is  
24 construction--

25 Senator Tester. Okay.

1 Ms. Condon. --and we use the Corps for construction  
2 and--

3 Senator Tester. So that is one of the contracting  
4 organizations. What is the other one?

5 Ms. Condon. The other one is the Mission and  
6 Installation Contracting Command, which is part of Army  
7 Contracting Command, and that is for services, services such  
8 as our landscaping--

9 Senator Tester. Okay. I have got you.

10 Ms. Condon. --and maintaining the grounds--

11 Senator Tester. So the bottom line, in your opinion,  
12 are we getting the bang for the buck?

13 Ms. Condon. Sir, yes, we are, because one of the  
14 things that we have in place now that we did not before, is  
15 we now have trained contracting officer representatives, and  
16 each and every day we are out there holding the contractors  
17 accountable for doing the job correctly. So I think we  
18 truly are getting the bang for the buck. As a matter of  
19 fact, we consolidated from our service contracts. When we  
20 started in the Cemetery, there were 26 contracts. We  
21 consolidated them down to 16 contracts. Each and every one  
22 of those 16 contracts, when we recompeted it, came under the  
23 Government estimate and we did have cost savings by just  
24 consolidating those contracts.

25 For an example, we had six contracts prior that had

1 something to do with a tree. By consolidating those  
2 contracts to one contract, we were able to save the  
3 Government money and be good stewards of the taxpayer  
4 dollar.

5 Senator Tester. We appreciate that, and that is  
6 exactly the point I am getting to. When you start  
7 consolidating the contracts, I think it is easier for  
8 oversight and there is more accountability, but that is my--  
9 I am sitting here and you are sitting there, okay, so you  
10 may have a different perspective and I appreciate it, but  
11 that is what I heard.

12 When it comes to technology, your contracts with  
13 technology, you talked about the gravesites now, they are  
14 all on a searchable database so you can find out what is  
15 going on and I think that is good. It should have been done  
16 years ago, but better late than never. The question is, as  
17 you look at a lot of businesses as they move towards  
18 technology, there is a reduction in manpower necessary. I  
19 think it was the GAO, and correct me if I am wrong, Ms.  
20 Martin, but you had recommended 200 staff people--somebody  
21 recommended 200 staff people for Arlington. It does not  
22 really matter. The question is, as you look at the overall  
23 landscape and you see the kind of changes you are making, is  
24 your manpower demand going to continue to go up or do you  
25 see it potentially becoming static or potentially going

1 down?

2 Ms. Condon. Sir, that was one of the things that Mr.  
3 Hallinan and I, when we came on board, is we were really  
4 truly building the workforce that was required to run  
5 Arlington properly that we did not have before. What we are  
6 also doing is looking not only at our manpower--we feel that  
7 the numbers that we have now are adequate, but as we look  
8 into the future, as we get time to assess the technology and  
9 the operating procedures, are there some things that we are  
10 currently putting on contract that we could do from within  
11 house.

12 Senator Tester. That is right.

13 Ms. Condon. So that is one of--because we do realize  
14 that the downsizing of Government, et cetera. So that is  
15 one of our goals, is to make sure that we have the right  
16 number of people to do the job--

17 Senator Tester. Yes, and I agree, although I will tell  
18 you, and excuse me for taking a little bit more time than I  
19 should, Madam Chair, but I think a lot of times we use  
20 contractors to be subcontractors--I mean, to be general  
21 contracts and we could be doing that--

22 Ms. Condon. Mm-hmm.

23 Senator Tester. --and we could be doing it and getting  
24 more efficiency from the dollar, quite frankly, and we could  
25 get more money to the ground and more money to get work done

1 in those contractors' pockets, which I think is ultimately  
2 something that is pretty darn important in this whole thing.

3 I want to thank you. I can tell you that, and Madam  
4 Chair knows about this as much as anybody, but the  
5 contracting that goes on in Government right now, maybe with  
6 your exception, and this has changed in the last 15 months  
7 or so, but almost every contract that is investigated into,  
8 there is waste, fraud, and abuse. And I would just say, as  
9 I said in my opening remarks, thank you for the work you  
10 have done. Thank you for the work you are going to do, you  
11 and Mr. Hallinan, and I very much appreciate it.

12 And that is not to take anything off all you guys. I  
13 just let you off the hook. And I am sorry, I should have  
14 asked you guys more questions, but thank you very much,  
15 Madam Chair.

16 Senator McCaskill. Senator Pryor.

17 Senator Pryor. Thank you, Madam Chairman, and thank  
18 you for having this hearing. It is very, very important and  
19 I appreciate you doing it.

20 General, if I may start with you, in the lessons  
21 learned area, I know you spent a lot of time on Arlington  
22 National Cemetery and I appreciate that. Do you have  
23 concerns that there may be other Arlington Cemetery problems  
24 out there in the system with other National Cemeteries?

25 Lieutenant General Vangjel. Well, as far as the other

1 National Cemeteries are concerned, the Soldiers' and  
2 Airmen's Home National Cemetery, we were pretty much focused  
3 on that and Ms. Condon has a plan to get after that as she  
4 works through the Arlington issue.

5 We do have 28 other cemeteries, though, that are post  
6 cemeteries that are out there, and quite frankly, we are  
7 starting to take a look at that, as well, based on public  
8 law and the NDAA 2012. They have asked us to take a look at  
9 the Service Academy Cemetery, for example, and we are  
10 getting ready to launch on that now. We will be  
11 participating with the Department of Defense to take a look  
12 at the statistical sample of the cemeteries that are out  
13 there.

14 But clearly, from our perspective, we are looking  
15 forward to taking a look at what else might be out there.  
16 We have no indications at this point that there is anything,  
17 but we want to make sure that we do not have another  
18 Arlington that is out there.

19 Senator Pryor. So you have no indications at this  
20 point at any--

21 Lieutenant General Vangjel. Not at this time, sir.  
22 No.

23 Senator Pryor. Okay. And I know that the GAO made  
24 several recommendations and one was enhanced collaboration  
25 between the Army and Veterans Affairs on ways to improve

1 operations. But as I understand it, there has not been any  
2 sort of formalized working group, is that fair?

3 Lieutenant General Vangjel. I think where we are at  
4 right now, Senator, is that we have the Department is  
5 looking to collaborate with the Veterans Affairs. Ms.  
6 Condon, as the Executive Director and the proponent right  
7 now, is in the best position to take a look at what we need  
8 to do with Arlington National Cemetery. There are some  
9 things that have gone on, however. The integration of the  
10 Internment Scheduling System, for example, with the Burial  
11 Operations Support System that the VA runs, there is work  
12 ongoing right now to take a look at how we are going to  
13 align some of the automation digits, if you will, to make  
14 that compatible so that information can be shared back and  
15 forth.

16 In terms of the internal assessment program that we are  
17 so concerned with for Arlington and what Ms. Condon has as a  
18 component of her Campaign Plan, the operational assessment  
19 and inspection regimen that the VA uses, that is being  
20 incorporated. Mr. Hallinan, of course, with his expertise  
21 and being the Superintendent there at the Cemetery is taking  
22 advantage of using that document as a base document for that  
23 which he might use from his internal regimen.

24 So there are a number of different aspects right now  
25 that are going on at a lower level, but really the intent

1 was to start that at the ground up and find out where we  
2 needed to have some of that collaboration and coordination  
3 and it will be pulled up over the next six months. We look  
4 forward to seeing something when we go back down to  
5 Arlington in June, July, this summer. We have another re-  
6 look that we have to do in accordance with public law and we  
7 are looking forward to seeing some of that.

8         Senator Pryor. Ms. Condon, did you have any comment on  
9 that?

10         Ms. Condon. Sir, we are working with Veterans Affairs,  
11 not only from an integration of our scheduling system with  
12 their Burial Operations System, but we also have an  
13 agreement between the two, for our Secretary of the Army and  
14 the Secretary of VA, where we are leveraging their training.  
15 We have sent several of our employees to the VA training  
16 program and we are looking at having a way where we can have  
17 interns back and forth between the cemeteries. And one of  
18 the things we are also looking at is we are probably a  
19 little bit further ahead right now from a geospatial  
20 standpoint and we would like to share that with VA because  
21 of the steps that we have already taken to geospatially  
22 manage our cemetery.

23         Senator Pryor. Okay. One of the other recommendations  
24 that the GAO made was in how you should interact with  
25 families. It sounds like there is a set of recommendations

1 there. What is the current process for notifying a family  
2 if you guys have identified an error? What do you do now?

3 Ms. Condon. Sir, when we identify an error, the first  
4 thing we do is we do the research to make sure that we have  
5 all of the facts from a Cemetery perspective. And then the  
6 next step is to notify the next of kin and to explain the  
7 discrepancy that we may have found and to discuss with the  
8 family how, you know, our plans for rectifying whatever  
9 discrepancy that is and accommodating the family's wishes on  
10 if they would like a chaplain, if they would like to attend  
11 if we have to do all of that. So there is a set procedure  
12 that we use for each and every case. But the bottom line is  
13 we immediately notify the next of kin when we find a  
14 discrepancy that could impact their loved one.

15 Senator Pryor. And is that now written policy?

16 Ms. Condon. Sir, it is now written policy.

17 Senator Pryor. And also, just for my background  
18 information, in looking at the problems at Arlington, did  
19 most of these problems happen during a set period of time or  
20 do they go back to the beginning at Arlington and it is just  
21 the function of the age of the Cemetery?

22 Ms. Condon. Sir, the issues span the age of the entire  
23 Cemetery.

24 Senator Pryor. Okay. And so what happens if a family  
25 member comes to you and says, hey, I think there is a

1 problem. What is your process then?

2 Ms. Condon. If a family member comes to us with a  
3 problem, the first thing we do is to research to see if  
4 there truly could have been a problem with that family  
5 member.

6 Senator Pryor. Okay. And if a family member just  
7 reaches out and contacts you and says, I want to make sure  
8 that my loved one is where he is supposed to be and  
9 everything is copacetic, same thing? Do you guys have a  
10 process there?

11 Ms. Condon. Yes, we have a process there, sir, and as  
12 you know, most of our burials at Arlington are gravesite  
13 burials in the family. So we have a process for a family  
14 who has a concern and part of our Accountability Task Force  
15 is that we verify not only the headstone and the records  
16 that match to that gravesite.

17 Senator Pryor. And there has been some discussion  
18 about an electronic database?

19 Ms. Condon. Mm-hmm.

20 Senator Pryor. Are you saying that you are putting  
21 every person buried in Arlington in an electronic database?

22 Ms. Condon. Every person buried in Arlington's records  
23 will be in an electronic database.

24 Senator Pryor. That has not been done yet, but you are  
25 working on it?

1           Ms. Condon. We are working on that. That was part of  
2 our Accountability Task Force, and sir, as part of our  
3 geospatial effort, as well. We are months away from  
4 actually having the application where you will not only be  
5 able to find your loved one's records, but we will have an  
6 application on one of your smart phone technologies that  
7 will literally take you to the actual gravesite, which is  
8 why we started our Accountability Task Force by using smart  
9 phone technology with the Old Guard taking photos using a  
10 smart phone because that was our long-range plan for our  
11 public facing application for the general public.

12           Senator Pryor. By virtue of having a database and the  
13 attention that this issue has received over the last year or  
14 two, do you think that these problems are now fixed going  
15 forward?

16           Ms. Condon. Sir, the same accountability that we are  
17 doing for the task force is how we are going to account for  
18 each and every burial that we have at Arlington from this  
19 day forward. As a matter of fact, the procedures are in  
20 place. Our workforce is now taking the photos of the  
21 headstones and latching that up with our automated records.

22           Senator Pryor. Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Madam  
23 Chair.

24           Senator McCaskill. Thank you. And I will say, in my  
25 visit to Arlington in November, I had the opportunity to

1 look at the procedures that are now in place and they are--  
2 there is a lot of redundancy. It will be very hard for them  
3 to lose track of a burial site and what remains are located  
4 there based on the processes that are now in place, which is  
5 a big improvement.

6 General Vangjel, I was worried about the unobligated  
7 funds issue. You know, I do not think I need to tell  
8 anybody that is testifying today that we are trying very  
9 hard. I think there is a newfound sense of urgency in  
10 Congress to watch every dime that is spent and to be  
11 accountable for every dollar that is obligated. So imagine  
12 my concern that we have \$15 million in obligations that were  
13 out there that had never been spent, and in fact, the Army  
14 Audit Agency found that due to poor financial oversight by  
15 the previous administration at the Cemetery, \$27 million in  
16 obligations between 2004 and 2010 were made and never  
17 disbursed.

18 Now, what worries me about this is that nobody noticed,  
19 that clearly the systems were not in place, that someone  
20 would not have some kind of notification that you had  
21 significant unobligated funds that had never been disbursed.  
22 I know we recovered part of them. What about the other \$12  
23 million in undisbursed funds, for any of you, and what kind  
24 of reassurances--and maybe I need to talk to Army Audit here  
25 instead of Inspector General, but if I were the Inspector

1 General, this would get my attention because I would wonder,  
2 where else are there unobligated funds that are hanging out  
3 that we could pull back for the taxpayers to be put for a  
4 more important use, or better yet, to put back in the  
5 Treasury.

6 Lieutenant General Vangjel. I could not agree with you  
7 more, Madam Chairman, and one of the things that we will be  
8 doing this summer--as you know, the Army Audit Agency did  
9 come down and take a look. It very thoroughly went through  
10 Arlington's records, their existing contracts that they had  
11 in place. And in spite of the previous regime's assessment  
12 that they were short of funds, they, in fact, had funds that  
13 they could not account for. I have to give credit to the  
14 current Executive Director because when she came on board,  
15 the first thing she wanted to do was get visibility of it,  
16 and as she went after the General Fund Enterprise Business  
17 System, that enabled them to begin to account. The Army  
18 Audit Agency with the Assistant Secretary of the Army for  
19 Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology both did program  
20 management reviews and audits and they were able to uncover  
21 some \$15 million that essentially has been reconciled and  
22 put to good use because Ms. Condon did not want to submit a  
23 budget request until she knew where the money was. That is  
24 good stewardship from our perspective. However, what we  
25 want to do is make sure as we come down for a second look

1 this year, a third look next year, we want to make sure that  
2 we have got that. So the Army Audit Agency will be coming  
3 down as subject matter experts as part of the overarching IG  
4 inspection and the re-look so that we have got appropriate  
5 oversight.

6 But your point is well made as we look to other  
7 activities that are ongoing in the Army and we will most  
8 certainly take that back, because there are some things as  
9 we look at oversight mechanisms right now systemically  
10 across the Army, we have got to make sure that we are  
11 spending our money appropriately, wisely, in the right  
12 places, and in accordance with our senior leader guidance.  
13 So I will take that one back, Madam Chairman, and we will  
14 work through that with our subsequent inspections that we  
15 are doing throughout the Army.

16 Senator McCaskill. If this was not transparent, if  
17 this was not obvious, and clearly it was not, then I think  
18 it would be very helpful for someone at the most senior  
19 level at the Pentagon to take a look at this issue of  
20 obligated but not disbursed and what kind of systems are in  
21 place in the various parts of our military to make sure that  
22 we do not have this going on. I have to believe there are  
23 systems other places, because--well, for one thing, I heard  
24 too many whistleblower stories about getting rid of stuff at  
25 the end of the budget year because if you do not spend it

1 all, then they are going to think you do not need it the  
2 next year, and horror stories about fuel being dumped and so  
3 forth so that they can ask for the full load the next year  
4 without having to admit that maybe they had not used it all  
5 the previous year. That goes on in every part of  
6 Government, not just the military.

7 But this worries me. This is a troubling sign beyond  
8 the problems that were represented, and I will follow up  
9 with other people within DOD to talk about that, but it is a  
10 problem.

11 In terms of the VA, first of all, I am glad to hear  
12 that you are cross-training. I think that is a great idea,  
13 especially since the training for cemeteries that VA does is  
14 in Missouri. I think it is terrific that you are utilizing  
15 the great skill set and core competencies of the Veterans  
16 Administration when it comes to our new cemeteries.

17 I visited one of those cemeteries in Missouri because I  
18 wanted to compare and contrast what I had seen at Arlington  
19 at the height of this mess compared to what is ongoing at a  
20 cemetery. I went to the cemetery in Springfield, Missouri,  
21 and I was very impressed at what they had done there in  
22 regards to tracking and maintaining. In fact, one of the  
23 things I thought was terrific is if the cemetery was--the  
24 office was closed, there was actually a kiosk outside the  
25 building where a visitor could pull up with their name

1 exactly where they needed to go in the cemetery to visit  
2 their loved one without having to involve any personnel of  
3 the cemetery in that question or that answer. Very  
4 impressive.

5         And I am assuming with the geospatial technology that  
6 you are embracing that you are envisioning not only can  
7 people do this on their smart phones, but there would be  
8 kiosks at Arlington where people who are visiting outside of  
9 the business hours of the administration could actually get  
10 that information.

11         Ms. Condon. Ma'am, as a matter of fact, just this past  
12 week, we are in Alpha testing for our kiosk that we are  
13 going to put throughout the entire Cemetery and in our  
14 visitor center to do exactly that, where it will actually  
15 print you a copy of a map that will take you, literally,  
16 because of the acreage that we have at Arlington, literally  
17 will take you to that gravesite. So we did take that from  
18 what VA was doing and we are going to have kiosks by  
19 sometime late spring.

20         Senator McCaskill. So how about GPS? Are you going to  
21 be able to--let us say I arrived at Arlington with my smart  
22 phone and I went on. Is there going to be an application  
23 that I can download, that I could go on, enter the name, and  
24 then it will actually guide me like a GPS to the gravesite?

25         Ms. Condon. Ma'am, that is exactly what we are doing

1 with our smart phone application. So we are months away  
2 from doing that.

3 Senator McCaskill. I was worried when I saw the  
4 article in the Washington Post yesterday that they had some  
5 problems in the VA system, isolated, obviously, but I am  
6 pleased at least they are taking a look, because obviously  
7 the scope and breadth of the VA system dwarfs Arlington. I  
8 mean, people do not realize that all of the cemeteries in  
9 the country, and every State has some, are run by VA, with  
10 the only two exceptions being the two that we have talked  
11 about today, Arlington and the other cemetery that the Army  
12 runs.

13 Well, let me do this. I want to try to leave open the  
14 door for the next hearing that we will have on this, because  
15 I am not going to stop until whoever it is that is running  
16 Arlington Cemetery can say, we now have a handle on every  
17 single gravesite, and we are not there yet. We have made a  
18 lot of progress in 18 months. I would like each witness to  
19 state what you think the single biggest challenge facing  
20 Arlington is at the present time. What remains that you  
21 think is the biggest challenge that has to be tackled and  
22 accomplished as we look towards the next 12 months of  
23 progress towards full accountability and transparency for  
24 this sacred site, and let us start with General Vangjel.

25 Lieutenant General Vangjel. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

1 I think the biggest problem that exists right now would be  
2 to complete the accounting for the gravesite accountability.  
3 If we are going to establish trust and maintain trust with  
4 the American people, folks want to know. They want to know  
5 that the problem is solved, that it has gone away. I think  
6 that is the biggest thing that would face us.

7 In order to get there, there are some SOPs, documents  
8 that need to be done, the documentation so that we can  
9 transfer, as you mentioned a bit earlier, whoever is going  
10 to be at Arlington Cemetery. We want to make sure the right  
11 procedures and documents are in place to facilitate any  
12 transition from the current Executive Director to one that  
13 would follow.

14 Those would be the two biggest, and I think other one  
15 that, if I could just add one more, would be the overall  
16 long-term expansion of the Cemetery to be able to  
17 accommodate the burials. I think that would be one other  
18 that we need to really make sure that we have got the right  
19 plans that have been executed. I know that Ms. Condon in  
20 her Campaign Plan has gone after that and that those are  
21 the--in my mind, ma'am, those are the big three. Thank you,  
22 Madam Chairman.

23 Senator McCaskill. Ms. Martin.

24 Ms. Martin. Yes. I will certainly fall back to the  
25 area that I am most familiar with, which is the contract

1 management and oversight. You mentioned the fact of the  
2 funds that had not been recovered, and that is especially  
3 important to have accurate contract data because that allows  
4 you to be able to track and identify where the funds are.  
5 And in our report, we talked about the fact that Arlington  
6 also has no year money. So with money that does not have a  
7 fiscal year kind of an ending, it is even more important to--  
8 -

9 Senator McCaskill. Why is that? Why do you have no  
10 year--why is it that Arlington does not have a fiscal year  
11 like every other part of Government?

12 Ms. Martin. Well, at least the funds--some of the  
13 funds for the Cemetery are no year funds. I mean--

14 Senator McCaskill. I know, but why? Why is that? Why  
15 do we not change that?

16 Ms. Martin. I am not sure--

17 Senator McCaskill. Can we change that?

18 Ms. Martin. --in terms of why. I do not think  
19 Arlington or the Army would necessarily come forward to ask  
20 it be changed, but--I am not sure. I mean, there is some  
21 history there in terms of the fact that it is no year money,  
22 but--

23 Senator McCaskill. Yes, but that is exactly what led  
24 to this problem.

25 Ms. Martin. The-

1           Senator McCaskill. I mean, setting a different set of  
2 rules for Arlington contributed to the lack of  
3 accountability at Arlington for many years. And if it were  
4 not for brave whistleblowers, we still would not be where we  
5 need to be. I mean, people that worked at Arlington knew  
6 that things were going badly and nothing was happening, and  
7 part of that was this, you know, no year end money, I think.  
8 Is there a recommendation that should be made that we should  
9 end the notion that Arlington should not have fiscal year  
10 appropriation like anybody else would?

11           Ms. Martin. Well, Senator, we did not look at that as  
12 a part of our audit, but GAO is on record as saying when you  
13 have no year funds, then obviously there is more  
14 accountability involved in that. So from the perspective  
15 for me in terms of--or from GAO and contracting going  
16 forward, I would say it is the insight and the oversight in  
17 terms of contracting that is important. While strides have  
18 been made, there are still some things that need to be done.

19           Senator Tester talked about the importance of looking  
20 to see, can we consolidate. Ms. Condon and her staff have  
21 certainly done that. She mentioned having several contracts  
22 for landscaping, and now they have fewer contracts. All of  
23 that is important. Leveraging the expertise of ITA, all of  
24 those are very important steps. Now it is a matter of,  
25 again, getting that insight and continuing with the

1 oversight of the contracts from our perspective is very  
2 important going forward.

3 Mr. Lepore. Madam Chairman, you asked what we thought  
4 were sort of the key things that the Cemetery needs to focus  
5 on going forward. I certainly agree with what my colleagues  
6 have stated today.

7 I would also suggest that one of the key things from  
8 where I sit is going to be ensuring that the changes that  
9 have been made to date are sustainable and will outlive the  
10 current leadership team, and I think, to their credit, the  
11 review that we did suggests they have begun that process of  
12 pivoting, if you will, from going through the crisis,  
13 working through the crisis, and beginning to put in place  
14 the kinds of policies, procedures, and systems that, if  
15 implemented fully, and the Campaign Plan is a great example  
16 of it--if fully implemented should outlive the current  
17 leadership team so we do not ever have a situation again  
18 where it takes Herculean efforts from very dedicated senior  
19 people to make this work. The whole idea here is that  
20 eventually they will move on to some other thing, whatever  
21 it is, some other stage of their life, and whoever the next  
22 generation of leaders are coming into Arlington should not  
23 have to reinvent it. The systems should be in place.

24 Senator McCaskill. Turnkey.

25 Mr. Lepore. A turnkey operation, or a plug-and-play

1 operation, absolutely. And it seems to us that is where our  
2 recommendations went and I think that is the key issue for  
3 them right now.

4 Senator McCaskill. Ms. Condon.

5 Ms. Condon. Senator McCaskill, if I could address the  
6 no year money--

7 Senator McCaskill. Yes, let us talk about that.

8 Ms. Condon. Okay. The first--

9 Senator McCaskill. How did that happen, and when did  
10 it happen?

11 Ms. Condon. Arlington was designated as a civil works  
12 activity and, hence, it was no year funds. But one of the  
13 first things that I did, and with the help of our Assistant  
14 Secretary for Financial Management and Comptroller, is to  
15 put in an accounting system. And now that Arlington is part  
16 of the General Fund Enterprise Business System, we are now  
17 going to be fiscally transparent. So the financial  
18 management community can now see how we expend each and  
19 every dollar.

20 The benefit of having no year money was one of the  
21 benefits of being able to recoup those unliquidated  
22 obligations from prior years and to be able to apply them to  
23 the projects that we have ongoing right now. Because of  
24 those unliquidated obligations, ma'am, we were able to start  
25 and finance the ninth columbarium. That was one of--and we

1 were able to put in all of those IT issues. We will be able  
2 to address and put in the technology and buy the right  
3 equipment to get Arlington to where it is today.

4 So having no year money from that perspective has  
5 really been a benefit for myself and Mr. Hallinan to truly  
6 put in the changes we need. But now that we are under  
7 GFEBs, we are fiscally transparent, so it does not matter if  
8 we are one year money or no year money. We truly--every  
9 dollar is now in an accounting system that is being  
10 monitored like every other process in the Army.

11 Senator McCaskill. Well, but I am confused. I think  
12 everyone would like no year money.

13 Ms. Condon. Yes, ma'am.

14 Senator McCaskill. We would not be dumping any fuel if  
15 we had no year money because on one would feel the need to  
16 hurry and spend year end. So there are arguments that can  
17 be made for that.

18 On the other hand, we have an appropriations process  
19 that is an annual process and a justification on an annual  
20 basis, and that also has a great deal of merit in terms of  
21 fiscal accountability. I understand you could use money  
22 that was not used for other things you needed--

23 Ms. Condon. Right.

24 Senator McCaskill. --but most parts of Government  
25 cannot do that. They have to come back and justify to

1 Congress that they have additional needs, that there should  
2 be appropriations for them. I have a hard time believing  
3 that Arlington would have difficulty getting appropriations  
4 because I think this body has great respect for what that  
5 represents to our country and would want to fund it  
6 appropriately. I am just trying to figure out, if we have  
7 got transparency, good, but maybe the year end funds is a  
8 discipline that everyone should have. I am not asking you  
9 to say yes or no here--

10 Ms. Condon. Right.

11 Senator McCaskill. --I am just thinking, I think it is  
12 something that we need to take a look at.

13 Ms. Condon. Understood, and what we do is we do report  
14 the carryover very similar to the working capital fund that  
15 you carry over from year to year.

16 Senator McCaskill. I understand.

17 Ms. Condon. So we do report those numbers, so that  
18 would be it.

19 You asked, what is the most outstanding challenge from  
20 my perspective we are facing at Arlington right now. As you  
21 know, ma'am, and as you have witnessed, the incredible  
22 changes to the business processes that we have put in place  
23 at Arlington. And what I need right now is the patience for  
24 us to allow, to look at those processes to make sure that we  
25 have the right metrics, to make sure that we have the

1 systems right so that we can truly sustain the changes that  
2 we have made at Arlington up until this point. So we just  
3 need to test all of the IT support and all of the changes  
4 that we have made to the operational procedures.

5 And so what I just need now is--my biggest challenge is  
6 patience, because in this next year, that is what the  
7 Superintendent and I are doing, is to make sure that those  
8 changes that we have put in place can be sustained for  
9 generations, not just for the immediate future.

10 Senator McCaskill. I want to thank all of you for the  
11 work on this. It was quite an undertaking, and for those  
12 out there that are skeptical about the ability of Government  
13 to fix problems on a time table, I think this is a great  
14 poster child for people deciding that this work was  
15 important and it deserved lots of eyes and a lot of effort  
16 from a lot of people, and I think that the Army--and I have  
17 said this to top leadership in the Army--I understood that  
18 the Army was more upset than anyone else about the problems  
19 at Arlington. All of us can tsk, tsk and bemoan the  
20 incompetence that had occurred there, but I do not think  
21 anybody felt it more acutely than the Army. And so I think  
22 the Army responded in a way that reflects the dedication  
23 they have to the fallen. And I am impressed that the amount  
24 of progress that has been made is substantial and  
25 significant, frankly, at lightning speed for Government.

1 Within 18 months, we have a completely different protocol at  
2 Arlington as it relates to accountability and I think it is  
3 good.

4 We still have work to do, and I have said from the  
5 beginning that the oversight of this Committee would not end  
6 until people sat in front of this dais and said, "I think  
7 the challenges have been met and I think all the processes  
8 and procedures are in place and I see no problems that need  
9 to be addressed by additional oversight." No one said that  
10 today, so we will have another hearing. I am sure it will  
11 be a year from now. And at that point in time, General, I  
12 am sure you will have more information to report because I  
13 know you are planning on going back out to take another look  
14 at Arlington.

15 I want to compliment Ms. Condon, because even when  
16 things were discovered that were not good, her office  
17 checked in with this Committee and let us know that another  
18 problem had been discovered. I think there might have been  
19 a tendency to say, well, they will never know. Let us just  
20 get it fixed. But instead, there has been transparency and  
21 that is very good. So congratulations for that, and most  
22 particularly, congratulations to all the men and women who  
23 have worked hard at Arlington, many of whom have worked  
24 there many years and care deeply about the reputation and  
25 the method in which we take care of the problems there. And

1 thank you to GAO.

2           We will have another hearing in probably about a year.  
3 In the meantime, if problems surface, I will depend on you  
4 to continue to let us know and we will continue to monitor  
5 the situation, and thank you for all the good progress that  
6 has been made.

7           This hearing is adjourned.

8           [Whereupon, at 3:46 p.m., the Subcommittee was  
9 adjourned.]