DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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JAN 11 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS
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UNDER SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
DEPUTY CHIEF MANAGEMENT OFFICER
ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OF DEFENSE
GENERAL COUNSEL OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DIRECTOR, OPERATIONAL TEST AND EVALUATION
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ASSISTANTS TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
DIRECTOR, ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT
DIRECTOR, NET ASSESSMENT
DIRECTORS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES
DIRECTORS OF THE DOD FIELD ACTIVITIES

SUBJECT: Release from "Secrecy Oaths" Under Chemical and Biological Weapons Human Subject Research Programs

In the 1990s, several reviews of military human subject research programs from the World War II and Cold War eras noted the common practice of research volunteers signing "secrecy oaths" to preclude disclosure of research information. Such oaths or other non-disclosure requirements have reportedly inhibited veterans from discussing health concerns with their doctors or seeking compensation from the Department of Veterans Affairs for potential service-related disabilities.

Pursuant to section 709 of the Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2003 (Public Law 107-314), the Department of Defense continues to work with the Department of Veterans Affairs to identify veterans who may have been exposed to chemical and biological agents in connection with research projects and to provide information potentially relevant to current health concerns.

To assist veterans seeking care for health concerns related to their military service, chemical or biological agent research volunteers are hereby released from non-disclosure restrictions, including secrecy oaths, which may have been placed on them. This release pertains to addressing health concerns and to seeking benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs. Veterans may discuss their involvement in chemical and biological agent research programs for these purposes. This release does not affect the sharing of any technical reports or operational information concerning research results, which should appropriately remain classified.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics shall support implementation of this memorandum in the ongoing review of records of chemical and

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biological research programs. The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness shall continue to facilitate coordination with the Department of Veterans Affairs on behalf of veterans who were research volunteers in these programs.

This memorandum, which is effective immediately, does not affect classification or control of information, consistent with applicable authority, relating to other requirements pertaining to chemical or biological weapons.