



CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

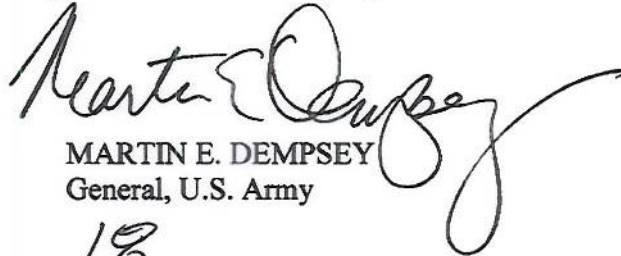
WASHINGTON, DC 20318-9999

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22 May 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR CHIEFS OF THE MILITARY SERVICES
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS

SUBJECT: Pakistan-Afghanistan Coordination Cell and Afghanistan-Pakistan Hands Program

1. In 2009, we established the Pakistan-Afghanistan Coordination Cell (PACC) and the Afghanistan-Pakistan Hands (APH) Program to provide more responsive full-time focus and support to senior decision makers and Warfighters dealing with the Afghanistan-Pakistan (AFPAK) challenge. The PACC supports the development, synchronization, implementation and assessment of policy, strategic guidance and support for our efforts in the AFPAK region. As my first priority remains achieving our national objectives in our current conflicts, even as we rebalance our strategic focus, I reiterate my support for the PACC and the APH Program.
2. The PACC provides full-time, concentrated, cross-functional AFPAK policy expertise on a wide range of issues that meets the “speed of war” demands of senior decision makers. The Director of the Joint Staff has developed a plan with decision points to evolve the PACC’s role and structure as our role in Afghanistan evolves, but I see a requirement and demand for the PACC through 2014.
3. The APH Program remains extraordinarily relevant in the AFPAK region as our forces draw down and transition from leading combat operations to a supporting role. Through its unique training and deployment format, the APH Program has improved the quality, continuity and engagement in key positions in and out of theater. I fully support the APH Program – and its associated education incentive – and expect this requirements-based program to continue beyond 2014. However, as we rebalance our strategic focus, I have directed the Joint Staff to begin exploration of a Hands-like program focused on the Asia-Pacific region. Should a prioritized requirement exist, I will take best practices from the APH Program and offset the program to provide the necessary head-room for a uniquely tailored Asia-Pacific Hands Program.
4. Finally, I want to thank the Services for their outstanding support of both of these programs. The Commanders of USCENTCOM, USFOR-A, and ODR-P have expressed appreciation and support for the AFPAK Hands and requested our renewed commitment to this program. Please continue to provide your best and brightest. I have asked my staff to provide annual updates on the career progression of AFPAK Hands. I ask you to do the same to ensure these key personnel are not disadvantaged when competing for promotions, professional military education, and key assignments. The bottom line is I need your support for the “Hands” program.



MARTIN E. DEMPSEY
General, U.S. Army

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