**Department of Defense**

**From The Black Vault Encyclopedia Project**

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| **Dept. of Defense** | |
|  | |
| **Established:** | [July 26](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=July_26&action=edit&redlink=1), [1947](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=1947&action=edit&redlink=1) |
| **Activated:** | [September 18](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=September_18&action=edit&redlink=1), [1947](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=1947&action=edit&redlink=1) |
| **Renamed:** | [August 10](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=August_10&action=edit&redlink=1), [1949](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=1949&action=edit&redlink=1) |
| [**Secretary**](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Secretary_of_Defense&action=edit&redlink=1)**:** | [Donald H. Rumsfeld](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Donald_H._Rumsfeld&action=edit&redlink=1) |
| [**Deputy Secretary**](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Deputy_Secretary_of_Defense&action=edit&redlink=1)**:** | [Gordon R. England](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Gordon_R._England&action=edit&redlink=1) |
| [**Budget**](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_federal_budget&action=edit&redlink=1)**:** | $419.3 billion (2006 official) |
| **Employees:** | 700,000 civilian 2.3 million military (2004) |

The **United States Department of Defense**, abbreviated as **DoD** or **DOD** and sometimes called the **Defense Department**, is a civilian [Cabinet](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Cabinet&action=edit&redlink=1) organization of the [United States](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States&action=edit&redlink=1) [government](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Federal_government_of_the_United_States). The Department of Defense controls the [U.S. military](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_armed_forces&action=edit&redlink=1) and is headquartered at [The Pentagon](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/The_Pentagon). It is headed by the [Secretary of Defense](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Secretary_of_Defense&action=edit&redlink=1), who is currently [Donald Rumsfeld](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Donald_Rumsfeld&action=edit&redlink=1).

**History**

Proposals to coordinate the activities of the military services were initially considered by [Congress](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Congress_of_the_United_States&action=edit&redlink=1) in 1944. Specific plans were put forth in 1945 by the [Army](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Army&action=edit&redlink=1), the [Navy](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Navy&action=edit&redlink=1) and the [Joint Chiefs of Staff](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Joint_Chiefs_of_Staff&action=edit&redlink=1). In a special message to Congress on [December 19](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=December_19&action=edit&redlink=1), [1945](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=1945&action=edit&redlink=1), President [Harry Truman](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Harry_Truman&action=edit&redlink=1) proposed creation of a unified Department of National Defense. A proposal reached Congress in April 1946, but was held up by the Naval Affairs Committee held hearings in July 1946 due to objections to the concentration of power in a single department. Truman eventually sent new legislation to Congress in February 1947, where it was debated and amended for several months.

On [July 26](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=July_26&action=edit&redlink=1), [1947](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=1947&action=edit&redlink=1), Truman signed the [National Security Act of 1947](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=National_Security_Act_of_1947&action=edit&redlink=1), which set up the **National Military Establishment** to begin operations on [September 18](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=September_18&action=edit&redlink=1), 1947, the day after the [Senate](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Senate&action=edit&redlink=1) confirmed [James V. Forrestal](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=James_V._Forrestal&action=edit&redlink=1) as the first Secretary of Defense. The Establishment had the unfortunate abbreviation 'NME' (the obvious pronunciation being "[enemy](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Enemy&action=edit&redlink=1)"), and was renamed the "Department of Defense" (abbreviated as DOD or DoD) on [August 10](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=August_10&action=edit&redlink=1), [1949](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=1949&action=edit&redlink=1); in addition, the Secretary of Defense was given greater authority over the three military departments ([Army](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Army&action=edit&redlink=1), [Navy](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Navy&action=edit&redlink=1), and [Air Force](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Air_Force&action=edit&redlink=1)). Prior to the creation of the National Military Establishment / Department of Defense, the Armed Forces of the United States were separated into different cabinet-level departments without much central authority.



'[The Pentagon](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/The_Pentagon)' is often used as a [metonymy](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Metonymy&action=edit&redlink=1) for the Defense Department

The Department of Defense is based in [The Pentagon](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/The_Pentagon) in [Arlington County](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Arlington_County,_Virginia&action=edit&redlink=1), [Virginia](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Virginia&action=edit&redlink=1) outside [Washington, DC](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Washington,_DC&action=edit&redlink=1), across the [Potomac River](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Potomac_River&action=edit&redlink=1). It was created by combining the [War Department](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Department_of_War&action=edit&redlink=1) (founded in 1789) with the [Navy Department](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Department_of_the_Navy&action=edit&redlink=1) (founded in 1798; formerly the Board of Admiralty, founded in 1780), and the newly created [Department of the Air Force](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Department_of_the_Air_Force&action=edit&redlink=1). The department was formed in order to reduce interservice rivalry which was believed to have reduced military effectiveness during [World War II](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=World_War_II&action=edit&redlink=1).

It includes the [Army](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Army&action=edit&redlink=1), [Navy](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Navy&action=edit&redlink=1), [Air Force](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Air_Force&action=edit&redlink=1), [Marines](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Marine_Corps&action=edit&redlink=1), as well as non-combat agencies such as the [National Security Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/National_Security_Agency) and the [Defense Intelligence Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Intelligence_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1).

In wartime, the Department of Defense also has authority over the [Coast Guard](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Coast_Guard&action=edit&redlink=1); in peacetime, that agency is under the control of the [Department of Homeland Security](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Department_of_Homeland_Security&action=edit&redlink=1). Prior to the creation of DHS, the Coast Guard was under the control of the [Department of Transportation](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Department_of_Transportation&action=edit&redlink=1). The Coast Guard has not been formally militarized since World War II, although it has participated in various military and law enforcement operations over the years.

The DoD's annual budget is roughly $425 billion (~$1,600 per capita), which does not include tens of billions more in supplemental expenditures allotted by Congress throughout the year.

The command structure of the Department of Defense is defined by the [Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Goldwater-Nichols_Act_of_1986&action=edit&redlink=1). Under the act, the chain of command runs from the [President of the United States](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=President_of_the_United_States&action=edit&redlink=1), through the Secretary of Defense, to the regional commanders within one of several commands who command all military forces within their area of operation. The [Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Joint_Chiefs_of_Staff&action=edit&redlink=1) and the several [Chiefs of Staff](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Joint_Chiefs_of_Staff&action=edit&redlink=1) are responsible for readiness of the U.S. military and serve as the President's military advisers, but are not in the chain of command. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is by law the highest ranking military officer in the United States.

On [February 22](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=February_22&action=edit&redlink=1), [2002](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=2002&action=edit&redlink=1), the Department of Defense Office of the Inspector General has reported that DOD has not and will not account for $1.1 trillion of "undocumentable adjustments." In addition, there have been several high-profile [Government Accountability Office investigations of the Department of Defense](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Government_Accountability_Office_investigations_of_the_Department_of_Defense&action=edit&redlink=1).

**Organization**



2005 DoD Structure

* [Office of the Secretary of Defense](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/United_States_Office_of_the_Secretary_of_Defense)
  + [Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Policy_Board_Advisory_Committee&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Office of Net Assessment](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Office_of_Net_Assessment&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + Office of Inspector General
    - [Defense Criminal Investigative Service](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Criminal_Investigative_Service&action=edit&redlink=1)
* Military Departments
  + [Department of the Army](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/United_States_Department_of_the_Army) including the [U.S. Army](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Army&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Department of the Navy](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Department_of_the_Navy&action=edit&redlink=1) including the [U.S. Navy](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Navy&action=edit&redlink=1) and [U.S. Marine Corps](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Marines&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Department of the Air Force](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Department_of_the_Air_Force&action=edit&redlink=1) including the [U.S. Air Force](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Air_Force&action=edit&redlink=1)
* [Joint Chiefs of Staff](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Joint_Chiefs_of_Staff&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [United States Naval Observatory](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Naval_Observatory&action=edit&redlink=1)
* Unified Combatant Commands
  + [Central Command](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Central_Command&action=edit&redlink=1) (CENTCOM)
  + [European Command](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_European_Command&action=edit&redlink=1) (EUCOM)
  + [Joint Forces Command](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Joint_Forces_Command&action=edit&redlink=1) (JFCOM)
  + [Northern Command](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Northern_Command&action=edit&redlink=1) (NORTHCOM)
  + [Pacific Command](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Pacific_Command&action=edit&redlink=1) (PACOM)
  + [Southern Command](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Southern_Command&action=edit&redlink=1) (SOUTHCOM)
  + [Special Operations Command](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Special_Operations_Command&action=edit&redlink=1) (SOCOM)
  + [Strategic Command](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Strategic_Command&action=edit&redlink=1) (STRATCOM)
  + [Transportation Command](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Transportation_Command&action=edit&redlink=1) (TRANSCOM)
* Defense Agencies
  + [Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Advanced_Research_Projects_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Defense Commissary Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Commissary_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Defense Contract Audit Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Contract_Audit_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Defense Contract Management Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Contract_Management_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Defense Finance and Accounting Service](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Finance_and_Accounting_Service&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Defense Information Systems Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Information_Systems_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Defense Intelligence Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Intelligence_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Defense Legal Services Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Legal_Services_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Defense Logistics Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Logistics_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Defense Security Cooperation Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Security_Cooperation_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Defense Security Service](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Security_Service&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Defense Threat Reduction Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Threat_Reduction_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Missile Defense Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Missile_Defense_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [National Security Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/National_Security_Agency)
  + [National Reconnaissance Office](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=National_Reconnaissance_Office&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=National_Geospatial-Intelligence_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Pentagon Force Protection Agency](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Pentagon_Force_Protection_Agency&action=edit&redlink=1)
* Department of Defense Field Activities
  + [American Forces Information Service](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=American_Forces_Information_Service&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Prisoner_of_War/Missing_Personnel_Office&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Department of Defense Education Activity](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Department_of_Defense_Education_Activity&action=edit&redlink=1)
    - [Department of Defense Dependents Schools](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Department_of_Defense_Dependents_Schools&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [DoD Human Resources Activity](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=DoD_Human_Resources_Activity&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Office of Economic Adjustment](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Office_of_Economic_Adjustment&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Tricare Management Activity](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Tricare_Management_Activity&action=edit&redlink=1)
  + [Washington Headquarters Services](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Washington_Headquarters_Services&action=edit&redlink=1)

In 2003, the [National Communications System](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=National_Communications_System&action=edit&redlink=1) was moved to the [United States Department of Homeland Security](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Department_of_Homeland_Security&action=edit&redlink=1).

**See also**

* [Military badges of the United States Department of Defense](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Military_badges_of_the_United_States_Department_of_Defense&action=edit&redlink=1)
* The [Berry Amendment](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Berry_Amendment&action=edit&redlink=1), a [US](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=United_States_Code&action=edit&redlink=1) law that requires most goods used by the armed forces to be produced domestically.

**Related legislation**

* 1947 - [National Security Act of 1947](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=National_Security_Act_of_1947&action=edit&redlink=1)
* 1958 - [Department of Defense Reorganization Act](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Defense_Reorganization_Act_of_1958&action=edit&redlink=1) PL 85-899
* 1963 - [Department of Defense Appropriations Act](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Department_of_Defense_Appropriations_Act&action=edit&redlink=1) PL 88-149
* 1963 - [Military Construction Authorization Act](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Military_Construction_Authorization_Act&action=edit&redlink=1) PL 88-174
* 1967 - [Supplemental Defense Appropriations Act](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Supplemental_Defense_Appropriations_Act&action=edit&redlink=1) PL 90-8
* 1984 - [Department of Defense Authorization Act](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Department_of_Defense_Authorization_Act&action=edit&redlink=1) PL 98-525
* 1986 - [Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Goldwater-Nichols_Act_of_1986&action=edit&redlink=1) or [Department of Defense Reorganization Act](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Department_of_Defense_Reorganization_Act&action=edit&redlink=1) PL 99-433
* 1996 - [Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php?title=Antiterrorism_and_Effective_Death_Penalty_Act&action=edit&redlink=1) PL 104-132

**External links**

* [United States DOD website](http://www.defenselink.mil/)
* [Read Congressional Research Service (CRS) Reports regarding the Department of Defense](http://digital.library.unt.edu/govdocs/crs/search.tkl?q=%22department+of+defense%22&search_crit=subject&search=Search&date1=Anytime&date2=Anytime&type=form)

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[Category](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Special:Categories): [Government](http://www.theblackvault.com/wiki/index.php/Category:Government)