



US Department of Defense

QDR 101: What You Should Know

The Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) is a legislatively-mandated review of Department of Defense (DoD) strategy and priorities.

- **The National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 1997 established the requirement for a QDR in 1997.**
 - “The Secretary of Defense shall every four years, ...conduct a comprehensive examination (to be known as a “quadrennial defense review”) of the national defense strategy, force structure, force modernization plans, infrastructure, budget plan, and other elements of the defense program and policies of the United States with a view toward determining and expressing the defense strategy of the United States and establishing a defense program for the next 20 years. Each such [QDR] shall be conducted in consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.” – *USC 10, §118(a)*
- **Title 10 of the U.S. Code tasks the Secretary of Defense to conduct a comprehensive examination of the:**
 - National defense strategy
 - Force structure
 - Force modernization plans
 - Infrastructure
 - Budget plan
 - Other elements of the defense program and policies of the United States
- **The QDR provides direction for the future of the Department:**
 - Develops a common assessment of the security environment
 - Explores new approaches to addressing the most pressing near and long-term challenges
 - Establishes strategic priorities to drive the Department’s force structure, modernization, and resource decisions
 - Provides the foundation for follow-on strategic planning and other DoD processes
- **There have been three previous QDRs: 1997, 2001, and 2006. The 2010 QDR will be the second to be conducted in wartime.**
- **NDAA for FY2003 amended legislation to require the publication of the QDR to coincide with the issuance of the next year’s 2007 budget request.**
 - This was first implemented with QDR 2006 and the FY2007 budget.
- **NDAA for FY2008 amended legislation for QDR 2010 report to examine capabilities of armed forces to respond to climate change.**
 - “Requires the first national security strategy, national defense strategy, and quadrennial defense review prepared after the enactment of this Act to include guidance on the effect of projected climate change on current and future DOD missions, including preparedness for natural disasters from extreme weather events.” – *NDAA 2008, Subtitle F, Sec. 951*