



Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, right, greets Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Gen. Mark Milley, left, and Deputy Defense Secretary David Norquist at the Pentagon. (DOD/LISA FERDINANDO)

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Austin sworn in as defense secretary

The history-making first Black American to be defense secretary is retired Army Gen. Lloyd Austin, a 67-year-old former Army vice chief of staff and former U.S. Central Command commander who has close ties to President Joe Biden.

The Senate on Jan. 22 confirmed Austin for the job on a 93-2 vote after the House and Senate voted Jan. 21 to waive a law that requires a minimum seven-year gap between active-duty service and an appointment to be defense secretary.

Austin, a 1975 West Point graduate, retired from the Army in 2016.

"I believe my past experience has provided me the necessary leadership skills, geo-political acumen and deep understanding of joint and combined operations to serve this country as

secretary of defense," Austin told the Senate Armed Services Committee. "I know how to work collaboratively with interagency partners, and I know how to lead, plan and operate with allies and partner nations."

"Having been to war, I also know well the life and death decisions any secretary of defense has to make," he said. "I am prepared to make those decisions, informed by my own experience. Finally, I believe the experiences gained in the five years since I retired—with nonprofit organizations, academia and private sector businesses—have broadened my skills and my views."

Austin said he believes one of his responsibilities in the new post is to help bridge the gap between the military and the rest of the nation.

"Though it is clear the American people support their military, it is not clear to me that they fully understand the scope of the sacrifices that military personnel and their families make each day," he said. "My time in uniform, and frankly my time thus far as a civilian, provide me a unique opportunity to help close this gap in understanding."

He said the most urgent challenge facing DoD as he takes on the new job is the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I will immediately review DoD's support to the broader U.S. government effort and increase the speed and scale of our support while maintaining military readiness."

While "urgent," the pandemic isn't the most significant challenge, he said.

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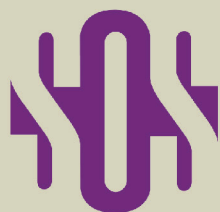
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Army announces updated grooming, uniform standards

Big changes to grooming and uniform standards are on the way, as are updates to outdated terminology and imagery used in Army regulations to illustrate proper soldier appearance.

The changes represent the first update since 2017 to Army Regulation 670-1, the “Guide to Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia,” and are aimed at reflecting the Army’s renewed focus on equity, diversity and inclusion while adhering to functionality, good order and discipline.

The changes were developed over several months in 2020 and reviewed in late November by a panel of soldiers that included 15 women and two men, plus non-voting subject matter experts. They will become effective at the end of February when the Army issues its guidance to the force.

“This is about listening to our soldiers, taking what they’re saying and how we can incorporate that into the Army within our good order and discipline and standards,” Sgt. Maj. of the Army Michael Grinston said Tuesday. “I’m really excited we’re getting a chance to roll out something our soldiers are excited about.”

Some of the uniform changes include switching the name of the combat patch, known as the Shoulder Sleeve Insignia-Former Wartime Service, to the Shoulder Sleeve Insignia-Military Operations in Hostile Conditions; a new Military Horseman Identification Badge; and the return of the name plate to the new Army



A soldier demonstrates medium-length hair secured into a ponytail, one example of upcoming changes to Army grooming and appearance standards. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

Green Service Uniform, the design for which is still under development.

Chief among several grooming changes are rules on hairstyle, hair length and applied hair color.

Women will be permitted to wear short ponytails if their hair texture or length won’t fashion into a bun, and women with long hair will be able to have a ponytail or braid while wearing their utility uniform to conduct physical training or tactical exercises, as long as it can be tucked into their uniform top.

Women will also be permitted to wear buzz cuts or tapered haircuts, and many of the styles worn in the African American community, such as braids, locs or twists, will be allowed alone or in blended hairstyles.

Men and women will be allowed to have hair highlights that are uniform and natural-looking; small gold, silver or diamond post earrings will be per-

mitted for women; and while women will be able to wear demurely colored nail polish and lipstick, men will be permitted to wear clear nail polish.

Terminology once used to describe certain prohibited mustache or hair styles will be discontinued, as will the accompanying images, in favor of more neutral terms and pictures.

Lt. Gen. Gary Brito, deputy Army chief of staff for personnel, said that “grooming standards help to foster our ability to recruit, retain the best talent” as the Army works to broaden its appeal to people “from all 50 states and the territories.”

“We’re going to get both genders, nationalities, Black, white, straight hair, curled hair, you name it, it’s important that our standards of discipline and grooming standards anchor to that very important population,” Brito said.

For more on the changes, [click here](#).

Austin

From Page 1

Preparing and strengthening the U.S. for “a dynamic, future security landscape driven by accelerating competitions with China and with Russia” is the biggest task, he said.

Austin is also a member of the Association of the U.S. Army.

“Congratulations to Secretary of De-

fense Lloyd Austin! All of us at AUSA extend our best wishes to him and his family and express our confidence that he is, indeed, the right leader at the right place and time,” said retired Gen. Carter Ham, AUSA president and CEO, in a Facebook post.

Ham continued, “I’ve known Secretary Austin since he and I were captains serving in Recruiting Com-

mand, he in Indianapolis, me in Lima, Ohio. It was clear to me then, and subsequently reinforced as we crossed paths over many years, that Lloyd Austin is a leader of strong character, unwavering integrity.”

The United States “will be well-served with him at the helm of our armed forces,” Ham said.

Read Austin’s day one message [here](#).

National Guard will remain deployed in Washington, D.C., through March



More than 25,000 National Guard troops converged on the nation's capital to support security operations in the run-up to Inauguration Day. (ARMY NATIONAL GUARD/BRYAN MYHR)

About 7,000 National Guard troops will remain in Washington, D.C., in the coming days to support federal and local law enforcement, officials announced.

More than 25,000 Guard soldiers and airmen converged on the nation's capital to support security operations in the run-up to Inauguration Day on Jan. 20. The increased security came after rioters stormed the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6.

"I am incredibly proud of our National Guard airmen and soldiers serving in support of local and federal law enforcement activities," said acting Army Secretary John Whitley. "These missions show the breadth, flexibility and resolve of the National Guard's sacrifices and service to this nation."

About 13,000 Guard troops remained in D.C. on Monday, said Gen. Daniel Hokanson, chief of the National Guard Bureau.

That number will drop to about 7,000 in the coming weeks "as we continue to work to meet post-inauguration requirements," Whitley said.

He added that he expects the Guard presence to draw down to about 5,000 troops by mid-March.

The Guard received and leaders approved four requests for follow-on support—from the U.S. Park Police, the U.S. Secret Service, the U.S. Capitol Police and the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, D.C., Whitley said.

About 500 troops will support the Park Police and about 550 will support the police department through the end of January or the first week of February, he said.

Another 600 will support the Secret Service, and about 5,000 will support the Capitol Police.

"National Guard service members will provide a variety of support including security, communication, medical evacuation, logistics and safety support," Whitley said.

Whitley and Hokanson, who spoke during a press briefing alongside Maj. Gen. William Walker, commanding general of the D.C. National Guard, praised the Guard troops from across the country for their quick response.

Hokanson also noted that the Guard remains busy across the country and around the world, with more than 23,000 troops supporting COVID-19 response and about 72,000 engaged in the homeland and overseas.

AUSAExtra

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Military seeks blood donations during ‘low turnout period’

Military officials are asking for blood donors to step forward in the new year, especially as the force continues to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The public health guidelines to reduce interaction with others, social distancing, reducing time outside the home ... it translates into a decreased donor turnout,” Col. Jason Corley, director of the Army Blood Program, said in a press release. “We’re no different from our civilian blood agency counterparts. They’ve been experiencing the same things since March.”

The pandemic has surged during the winter months, and blood drive cancellations have again increased, Corley said.

“In December and January, historically, even without COVID, that’s always a low turnout period due to



As the pandemic has surged during the winter months, blood drive cancellations have also increased. (U.S. ARMY/MICHELLE GORDON)

the holidays, people going on vacation, and due to the weather,” he said.

“Everybody’s trying to do the right thing. Commanders and donors want to be safe and healthy,” Corley said. “It makes it difficult to continue and schedule blood drives. It’s just harder to meet our required quota numbers.”

Quarantines, restricted movement

and changes in health protection levels have also affected blood donations, said Mark Salcedo, a blood donor recruiter with the Armed Services Blood Program, which has 21 locations worldwide.

When ASBP cannot collect enough blood from donors, the blood bank must reach out to other military donor centers for blood or try to buy blood from the civilian market, Salcedo said.

“I’ve been at this nearly 40 years both in and out of uniform,” Salcedo said. “I can say this has probably been one of the toughest years for the blood program and for many donor centers. But our leadership and our staff members continue to fight every day because they know the value in what we do for our health care mission.”

For more information and to find a blood donor center, click here.



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WWII tank commander's story told through letters, diary

By Joseph Craig

Every soldier has a story, but not every soldier tells it.

During World War II, Col. Henry Gardiner kept a written record of his experiences in uniform. His diary entries and personal letters are the basis of *1,271 Days a Soldier*, the latest title in the Association of the U.S. Army's Book Program.

Gardiner's story tracks the course of the war from his preparations for action after Pearl Harbor to his deployment to North Africa and his

Book Program

part in the battle at Kasserine Pass, then through the long slog fighting up the Italian peninsula, where he saw action in Anzio, Cassino, and Rome before reaching Lake Como.

Dominic Caraccilo edited Gardiner's papers and supplemented the information with footnotes, photographs and maps to tell the full tale in *1,271 Days a Soldier*.

The AUSA Book Program recently sat down with Caraccilo to discuss the new book.

AUSA: How did you initially encounter Col. Gardiner's papers?

Caraccilo: In the mid-1990s, I served as an assistant professor for systems engineering at West Point.

It was there that I came across the boxed diaries, letters and papers belonging to Col. Gardiner in the Cadet Library Archives.

AUSA: What led you to create this edited collection?

Caraccilo: What led me to peruse the top floor archives was a parallel effort to edit and publish *Surviving Bataan and Beyond: Colonel Irvin Alexander's Odyssey as a Japanese Prisoner of War*.

Much like the effort I put into editing Alexander's story, capturing Col. Gardiner's notes, diaries, letters and manuscripts was an intriguing prospect for a book, especially since his experiences in Northern Africa, Kas-



Col. Henry Gardiner, right, is the subject of a book compiled of his diary entries and letters while serving as a tank commander in World War II. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

serine, and Italy are often referenced in other works.

Compiling it into one volume gives the reader access to this resource replete with dozens of footnotes in an organized single volume.

AUSA: Why are mid-level officers' accounts of the war so difficult to find?

Caraccilo: The diaries kept by World War II soldiers are very rare,

given that keeping a chronological journal was generally forbidden due to the danger of its falling into enemy hands.

Gardiner's work is one of the few that made it through the war intact, especially at this magnitude.

AUSA: Which of Gardiner's experiences resonated most strongly with you?

Caraccilo: Commanding in battle is an honor few experience.

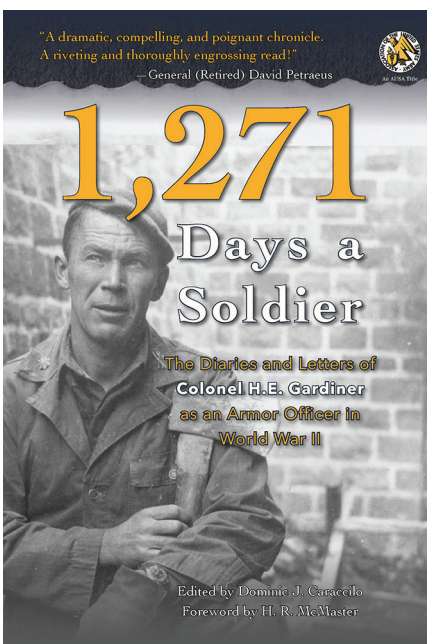
Gardiner's time as a commander in North Africa, most notably at Kasserine Pass, is well documented, and this book highlights the valor he displayed as a tank commander during that fight.

AUSA: What do you have in mind for your next project?

Caraccilo: I tend to alternate between strategy and history. I am next interested in putting together a think piece, much like my book *Beyond Guns of Steel: A War Termination Strategy*.

To order a copy of *1,271 Days a Soldier*, visit www.ausa.org/books.

Joseph Craig is AUSA's Book Program Director.



Chapter event highlights Army sustainment capabilities

The Army is building sustainment capabilities that are critical to modernization, readiness and force projection for the future fight, a senior sustainment commander said during a virtual briefing hosted by the Association of the U.S. Army's Marne chapter.

Army Chief of Staff Gen. James McConville has charged sustainment leaders “to become more capable” and create better procedures “in a fiscally smart way”

Marne

for the Army's waypoints in 2028 and 2035, said Col. Steve Erickson, commander of the 3rd Infantry Division Sustainment Brigade at Fort Stewart, Georgia.

Erickson said that by 2035, the Army aims to “be ready, completely changed and modernized, and able to operate in a multidomain environment.” Along the way, in 2028, the Army will assess its progress and make any needed adjustments to reach the 2035 goal.

Responsive, ready

But building a force that is responsive and ready isn't a one-size-fits all process, and “we can always do better,” he said.



Capt. Joshua Moore, right, a 3rd Infantry Division Sustainment Brigade engineer, ensures proper delivery of supplies at Fort Stewart, Georgia. (U.S. ARMY/SGT. LAURISSA HODGES)

For the last two decades, the Army has been focused on a counterinsurgency fight, requiring the rotation of brigades to forward operating bases around the world, “falling in on infrastructure that was already in place,” Erickson said.

“What we quickly found was about 70% of our sustainment forces are in the reserve component,” making it difficult to perform theater opening, fuel and ammunition resupply and mobility operations, he said.

As the Army has changed its focus to larger, division-level conflicts, sustainment units are improving distribution, tactical mobility and materiel and maintenance, Erickson said.

In the next few years, “we're going to start seeing additional growth and capability in sustainment brigades” as platoons and companies are added to help with distribution management, he said.

Future goals

In the long term, modular sustainment and logistics units will be put in place so “we have fewer soldiers and more capability on the battlefield,” Erickson said.

Technology such as a “combat cloud” will tie different platforms and systems together, allowing for a “real-time response” and better predictive capability for commanders.

The overall goal is to have maximum capacity in each division, requiring less dependence on support from higher echelons, Erickson said.

He anticipates sustainment growth in all formations between now and 2035, along with some migration of capabilities from the Army Reserve and National Guard back to the active component.



In the next few years, ‘we're going to start seeing additional growth and capability in sustainment brigades,’ Col. Steve Erickson said. (U.S. ARMY/JUSTIN CONNAHER)

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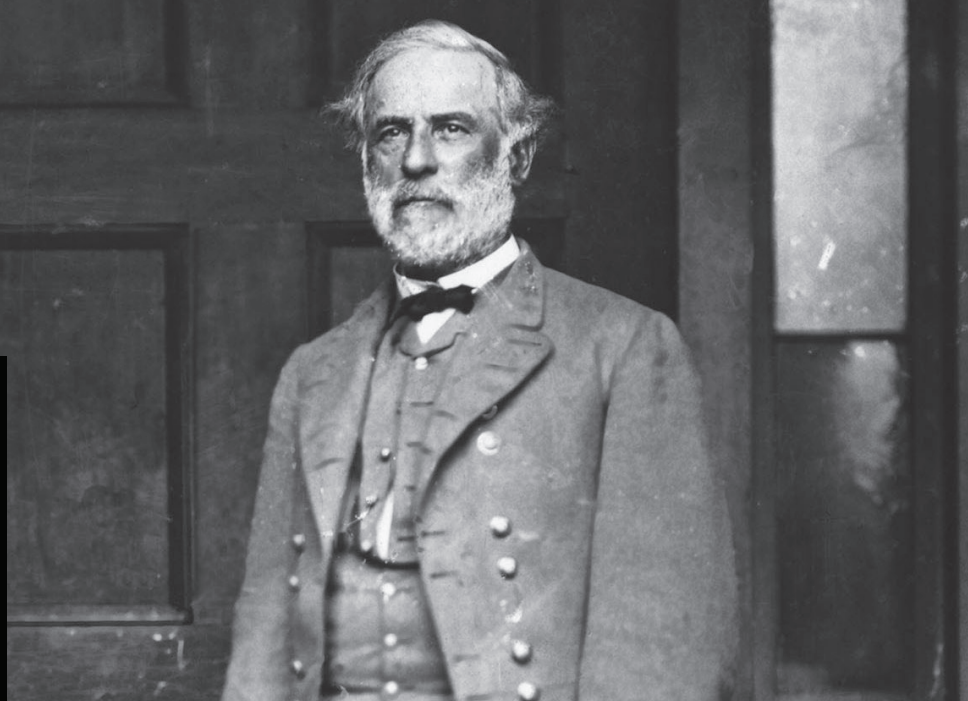
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