

exhaustive baseline test plans, to pivot to quickly testing key weapons systems upon strategic warning of war.

(5) Enhancing Operational Cybersecurity Study—where the DAF SAB advocated for identifying the most critical cyber systems for fighting a war in the Pacific and hardening those systems, on timeline compatible with the danger of war, in preference to other systems.

Additionally, DAF SAB's recommendations promote that economics is essential to warfighting and that technology can be used to reduce the cost of weapon systems. Many DAF SAB studies recommend innovative ways to enhance system performance at low cost. A specific example includes the SAB advocating for AFRL programs to produce low-cost mission systems for CCAs and even lower cost systems for Low-Cost Cruise Missiles (LCCMs) which ultimately lead to AFRL taking up the challenge.

7. *Explanation of why the committee/subcommittee is essential to the conduct of agency business.*

Since its establishment in 1944, the DAF SAB has continuously served as the principal external advisory body to the Secretary of the Air Force and to senior leaders in Headquarters Air Force, Air Force Major Commands, and more recently U.S. Space Force Field Commands, for S&T matters relating to the DAF mission. The DAF SAB renewal is essential to the DAF, the broader DoW mission, and the Nation.

Dated: May 4, 2026.

Stephanie J. Bost,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Office of the Secretary

Renewal of Department of War Federal Advisory Committee-U.S. Strategic Command Strategic Advisory Group

AGENCY: Department of Defense (DoD).

ACTION: Renewal of Federal Advisory Committee.

SUMMARY: The Department of War (DoW) is publishing this notice to announce that it is renewing the U.S. Strategic Command Strategic Advisory Group (USSTRATCOM SAG) as a discretionary Federal advisory committee.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jim Freeman, Advisory Committee

Management Officer for the Department of War, 703-692-5952.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The USSTRATCOM SAG is being renewed in accordance with chapter 10 of Title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.) (commonly known as “the Federal Advisory Committee Act” or “FACA”) and 41 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 102-3.50(d). The public or interested organizations may submit written statements about the USSTRATCOM SAG mission and functions. Written statements may be submitted at any time or in response to the stated agenda of planned meetings of the USSTRATCOM SAG. All written statements shall be submitted to the USSTRATCOM SAG's Designated Federal Officer (DFO), and this individual will ensure that the written statements are provided to the membership for their consideration. The USSTRATCOM SAG's DFO is Mr. Derrick Besse, and he may be contacted at (402) 912-0322, or derrick.j.besse.civ@mail.mil.

Consistent with 41 CFR 102-3.65(a), the DoW is publishing the USSTRATCOM SAG's Public Interest Determination.

Pursuant to 41 U.S.C. 102-3.60(a), to establish, renew, reestablish, or merge a discretionary (agency discretion) advisory committee, an agency must first consult with the General Services Administration's Committee Management Secretariat (the Secretariat) and, as part of the consultation, provide a written public interest determination approved by the head of the agency to the Secretariat with a copy to the Office of Management and Budget. In addition, pursuant to 41 U.S.C. 102-3.35, an agency shall follow the same consultation process and document in writing the same determination of need before creating a subcommittee under a discretionary committee that is not made up entirely of members of a parent advisory committee.

Information on the following factors for the committee is provided to the Secretariat to demonstrate that merging the committee is in the public interest:

1. *Annual Budget:* The DoW estimates annual operating costs to support the USSTRATCOM SAG are \$400,000, which includes personnel travel, meetings, and contract support.

a. *Federal Personnel on a Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Basis:* The estimated annual personnel costs to the DoW are 3.0 FTE at \$330,000, which includes basic pay with cost-of-living allowance.

b. *Other Federal Internal Costs:* \$0.

c. *Proposed Payments to Members:* Consistent with 10 U.S.C. 173, members

of the USSTRATCOM SAG are not compensated for their services, except for travel and per diem reimbursement for official USSTRATCOM SAG-related business.

d. *Proposed Number of Members:* As authorized by the Secretary of War (SecWar), the USSTRATCOM SAG will be composed of not more than 20 members. The USSTRATCOM SAG's permanent subcommittee, the Stockpile Assessment Team (SAT) will be composed of not more than 15 members.

e. *Reimbursable Costs:* The estimated reimbursement costs for USSTRATCOM staff and members are \$70,000.

2. *If applicable, the total dollar value of grants is expected to be recommended during the fiscal year.* N/A.

3. *Criteria for selecting members to ensure the committee has the necessary expertise and fairly balanced membership:* As described in its proposed charter and membership balance plan, the USSTRATCOM SAG is composed of members who are eminent authorities in the fields of strategic policy formulation; nuclear weapon design; national command, control, and communications; electromagnetic spectrum operations, intelligence, disruptive technologies (Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning, Quantum Computing/Sensing, Cyber, Space), and information operations; or other important aspects of the Nation's strategic forces of interest to the DoW.

In selecting members, the DoW seeks to capitalize on recognized talented, innovative private and public sector leaders to provide the broadest knowledge and expertise based on a balanced USSTRATCOM SAG membership composition. The USSTRATCOM SAG membership is not static, and the SecWar and Deputy Secretary of War (“the DoW Appointing Authority”) or the Commander, U.S. Strategic Command (CDRUSSTRATCOM) on behalf of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), as the USSTRATCOM SAG's DoW Sponsor may change the membership based upon work assigned to the USSTRATCOM SAG.

4. *List of all other DoW Federal Advisory Committees:* A complete listing of DoW Federal advisory committees can be located at: <https://www.facadatabase.gov/FACA/s/account/001t000000DCAooAAH/departement-of-defense>.

5. *Justification that the information or advice provided by the Federal advisory committee or subcommittee is not available from another Federal advisory committee, another Federal Government*

source, or any other more cost-effective and less burdensome source: The USSTRATCOM SAG provides an unparalleled contribution to the Nation, the DoW, and the mission of the U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) and its operations. Composed of recognized, talented, innovative public and private sector leaders the USSTRATCOM SAG provides independent technical advice that cannot be duplicated elsewhere on matters pertaining to development and implementation of the Nation's strategic deterrence objectives and other matters related to the Nation's strategic forces. These matters include, but are not limited to scientific, technical, intelligence, nuclear command, control, and communications, electromagnetic spectrum operations, and policy-related matters of interest to the SecWar, the CJCS, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the USSTRATCOM, and the Commander, USSTRATCOM (CDRUSSTRATCOM).

USSTRATCOM SAG also provides independent reviews of DoW and Department of Energy modernization efforts related to all three legs of the nuclear triad (intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, and strategic bombers) and Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications systems. These reviews include assessments of proposed technologies, evaluations of program schedules, and recommendations for consideration. The USSTRATCOM SAG will be instrumental to the National Command Authority as the Nation implements modernization plans over the next 10–20 years, requiring informed decision-making on complex technical and strategic issues.

6. *If the consultation is a committee renewal, a summary of the previous accomplishments of the committee and the reasons it needs to continue:* USSTRATCOM SAG provides insights on emerging technologies, including Artificial Intelligence/machine learning, quantum technologies, and other disruptive innovations. This expertise supports USSTRATCOM's ability to anticipate and address potential threats, develop advanced capabilities, and maintain effective deterrent and warfighting capabilities. These insights include evaluating the potential applications of these technologies to strategic systems and identifying potential vulnerabilities.

Consistent with 10 U.S.C. 6117, the CDRUSSTRATCOM is required to provide the SecWar and the Nuclear Weapons Council an assessment of the

U.S. nuclear weapons stockpile's safety, reliability, performance, and military effectiveness in meeting deterrence requirements. The USSTRATCOM SAG's subcommittee, the SAT, with independent experts with specialized knowledge of the nuclear weapons enterprise, national laboratories, and relevant USSTRATCOM Unified Command Plan mission sets, provides an independent assessment to support the Command in fulfilling this requirement. The SAT's specialized knowledge, residing outside the Command, contributes to the objectivity of this assessment, ensuring an unbiased evaluation of the stockpile's condition. This assessment is then reviewed and approved by the SecWar and the President before it is provided to Congress.

7. *Explanation of why the committee/subcommittee is essential to the conduct of agency business:* As described by the SecWar, the DoW mission is “warfighting, preparing for war and preparing to win” the Nation's wars with “victory our only acceptable end state.” A strong, viable military is essential to the defense of the U.S. homeland and hemispheric security. The USSTRATCOM SAG and SAT provides the SecWar, CJCS, CDRUSSTRATCOM key advice and recommendations on strategies, capabilities, technologies, modernization efforts related to all three legs of the nuclear triad (intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, and strategic bombers), Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications systems, the Nation's nuclear weapons stockpile and innovations to win the Nation's wars, protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the homeland and our access to key terrain throughout the region, restore American military dominance in the Western Hemisphere, deny adversaries' ability to position forces or other threatening capabilities in our hemisphere, support commitment to allies and international partners, and ensure the lethality and readiness of America's fighting force to further the goal of peace through strength. This public interest determination document for the committee is essential to the conduct of agency business and the information to be obtained is not already available through another advisory committee or source within the Federal Government.

Dated: May 1, 2026.

Stephanie J. Bost,

Alternate OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, Department of Defense.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket no. CP26–17–000]

Leaf River Energy Center, LLC; Notice of Availability of the Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Leaf River Capacity Expansion Project

Any person wishing to comment on the EA may do so. To ensure consideration of your comments on the proposal prior to making a decision on the Project, it is important that the Commission receive your comments on or before 5:00pm Eastern Time on June 1, 2026. Instructions for filing comments are provided on pages 2 and 3.

FERC is the lead federal agency for authorizing interstate natural gas transmission and storage facilities under the Natural Gas Act of 1938 (NGA) and the lead federal agency for preparation of the EA. The EA assesses the potential environmental effects of the Project in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)¹ and the Commission's implementing regulations.² The principal purposes of the EA are to: identify and assess the potential effects on the natural and human environment; describe and evaluate reasonable alternatives; identify and recommend mitigation measures; and facilitate public involvement in the environmental review process. The EA concludes that approval of the proposed project would not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

The EA addresses the potential environmental effects of the following project facilities:

- increase the working gas capacity of existing natural gas storage Caverns 2 and 4 by 2.6 billion standard cubic feet (Bscf);
- construct and operate new Cavern 5 that would have 12.5 Bscf of working gas capacity, a well pad site, wellhead

¹ National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (Public Law [Pub. L.] 91–190, 42 U.S.C. 4321–4347, as amended by Pub. L. 94–52, July 3, 1975; Pub. L. 94–83, August 9, 1975; Pub. L. 97–258, 4(b), September 13, 1982; Pub. L. 118–5, June 3, 2023; Pub. L. 119–21, July 4, 2025).

² 18 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 380.