



Protection of Civilians in Military Operations Act

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Section 1 – Title: Protection of Civilians in Military Operations Act

Section 2 – Sense of Congress

Section 3 – Integrity of Civilian Harm Investigations

- Requires that any investigation into civilian harm be conducted outside the immediate chain of command of the unit responsible.
- Requires each investigation of harm to include interviews of civilian survivors and witnesses and to consult with civil society and incorporate any information or documentation available to them.

Section 4 – Coordination Between Geographic Combatant Commands and Special Operations Command and The Department of State

- Requires the Secretary of Defense to direct each U.S. combatant command to coordinate with the Department of State to establish a line of communication with the Chief of Mission in any country in which the United States is conducting military operations with the goal of coordinating and responding to reports of civilian harm.

Section 5 – Database on Reports on Assessments and Investigations

- Requires the Secretary to establish and regularly update a public database that preserves and organizes reports of the Department on assessments and investigations of harm to civilians resulting from United States military operations, no later than one year after enactment of this law.

Section 6 – Resources to Implement Department of Defense Policy on Civilian Harm in Connection with United States Military Operations

- Authorizes \$5 million for the Secretary to establish and assign to each combatant command and the Office of the Under Secretary for Policy personnel who will be responsible for overseeing, analyzing, and reporting on reports of civilian harm resulting from U.S. military operations.

Section 7 - Department of Defense Center of Excellence for The Protection of Civilians

- Creates a Center of Excellence for the Protection of Civilians within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, which will serve as the focal point of the United States government for civilian harm.
- Establishes the Center as the primary advisor to DoD and the federal government on best practices for preventing, mitigating, responding to civilian harm, and responsibility for ensuring the full implementation of the Department of Defense Instruction on Responding to Civilian Harm in Military Operations and any subsequent guidance.
- Enhances civilian oversight by establishing the position of Director of the Center, who is required to be a civilian with significant experience and expertise relating to the protection of civilians and authorizes \$25 million to hire a general officer and analysts and investigators detailed from across the federal government and civil society.
- Requires that the Director submit an annual public report to Congress detailing the actions of the Center and assessment of U.S. policy on civilian harm.

Section 8 - Report on Department of Defense Practices Regarding Distinction Between Combatants and Civilians in United States Military Operations

- Requires the Secretary to contract with a federally funded research and development center to publish an unclassified report on how DoD has distinguished between combatants and civilians in United States military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Somalia, Libya, and Yemen since 2001.

Section 9 - Definitions