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Executive Insight Brief

January 13, 2023

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Aerospace & Defense

[Ukrainian troops to travel to US for Patriot missile training \(Financial Times\)](#)

The Pentagon has announced it will teach Ukrainian troops to use Patriot missile systems in the United States, marking one of the few occasions Kyiv's forces have been trained on American soil since Russia's full-scale invasion last year. The program, which is expected to begin next week and last several months, will be held at Fort Sill in Oklahoma, where the United States trains its own troops to use the Patriot, Pentagon press secretary Patrick Ryder said on Tuesday. The United States will train 90 to 100 Ukrainian soldiers, who will learn to operate, maintain and sustain the Patriot system. Ukrainian officials have long sought to be supplied with the Patriot, one of the most advanced American air defense systems, which will play a crucial role in helping Kyiv maintain an integrated air defense structure. The United States has pledged one Patriot system to Ukraine, and Germany has said it will send one.

[Britain to give Ukraine heavy tanks, as German 'Leos' are on hold](#)

[Space Launches Should Withstand Chinese Challenge, Pentagon Mandate Says \(Wall Street Journal\)](#)

The next generation of rockets built to launch U.S. spy satellites into orbit will have to be capable of fending off interference by China and Russia, according to people briefed on a coming Pentagon competition. The Defense Department is preparing to issue new requirements for the contractors vying to build the rockets, intended to counter China's growing capabilities in space. That marks a change from previous contract awards, which were driven primarily by reliability and cost concerns. The Defense Department's National Security Space Launch program has a budget of \$1.2 billion in fiscal 2023, buying large and midsize rocket missions to carry spy and military satellites to orbit for the Space Force and intelligence agencies such as the National Reconnaissance Office. Space officials have highlighted a range of threats to satellites, including direct attacks from other satellites, ground-launched missiles and cyber threats, and the Pentagon has changed its strategy in an effort to make its communications systems less susceptible to attack and interference. This includes distributing their functions across hundreds of small satellites instead of larger ones that are easier to target.

[Airbus retains crown over Boeing as world's biggest jet maker](#)

[Navy frustration building over late weapons, ship deliveries \(Defense News\)](#)

Exasperation is growing over the U.S. Navy's inability to get missiles and weapons delivered fast enough to keep its own magazines full, let alone offer more assistance to Ukraine or other partners in need, several leaders said at this week's annual Surface Navy Association conference. "I'm not as forgiving of the defense industrial base," Adm. Daryl Caudle, the commander of U.S. Fleet Forces Command, said Jan. 11. "I am not forgiving the fact that they're not delivering the ordnance we need, I'm just not." "All this stuff about COVID this, parts, supply chain this, I just don't really care," he continued. "I need [Standard Missile]-6s delivered on time. I need more [torpedoes] delivered on time." Caudle oversees the readiness-generation of all ships, submarines and aircraft on the Atlantic side of the Navy. He said the service is working internally to boost its readiness, including announcing this week the surface fleet would aim to have at least 75 mission-capable ships at all times to send on missions with little notice — but this progress is being hampered by backlogs in industry. The Navy is buying two submarines a year, but industry is only delivering at a rate of 1.2 a year.

Budget & Appropriations

[House establishes tough-on-China select committee \(Politico\)](#)

The House voted to establish a select committee to assess the myriad military, economic and technological challenges posed by China — kicking off an effort that was a major pillar of the Republican national security agenda. Lawmakers voted 365-65 to set up the panel, which will be chaired by Wisconsin Rep. Mike Gallagher, a steadfast China hawk. The new committee, which will last the length of this Congress but can be reupped, is the latest signal of growing bipartisan concern over China's military might and deepening skepticism over trade with the world's second-leading economy. The Biden administration, like the Trump administration, has singled out China as the most significant long-term threat to U.S. security. Congress has approved significant increases in defense spending as the Pentagon looks to match a rapidly modernizing Chinese military and deter a possible invasion of Taiwan.

[CEOs Say They Expect a U.S. Recession, but Most Think It Will Be Short](#)

[Biden Administration's Big Manufacturing Push Could Transform Global Trade \(Wall Street Journal\)](#)

In just over a year, the U.S. has passed three huge budget measures aimed at transforming its domestic economy—by rebuilding infrastructure, accelerating a clean-energy transition, and boosting manufacturing in semiconductors and the automotive industry. Each of these initiatives is focused on strengthening the U.S. economy and on boosting U.S. competitiveness in the world. But there is another crucial consideration as well: How these three policies are implemented in the months ahead could reshape global trade relations for years to come. If U.S. policy makers use this opportunity to promote domestic industries at the expense of foreign competitors, other governments are likely to respond with their own protectionist policies, leading to a costly breakup of global trade, government officials and trade specialists say. But, these same experts say, if instead the U.S. is more welcoming to products from friendly nations, and works with them to achieve what some call “friend shoring”—shifting production of critical materials to friendly nations, away from adversaries including China and Russia—the countries could continue to enjoy the benefits of trade while strengthening their supply chains, these people say.

[Fed seen stopping rate hikes shy of 5% as inflation slows](#)

[Meet the House GOP's appropriations 'cardinals': The 12 subcommittee chairs who'll have big power of the purse in the new Congress \(Politico\)](#)

Newly installed House Appropriations Chair Kay Granger (R-Texas) has selected her dozen subcommittee chiefs, known colloquially as “cardinals,” for the next two years. The list will still need to be ratified by the GOP steering committee, which plans to meet next week. Each subcommittee chair will control the budgets of key agencies and departments, many with hundreds of billions of dollars within their purview. They’ll be tasked with holding hearings with department heads and scrutinizing those agency budgets over the next two years. And they’ll have a big mandate: Speaker Kevin McCarthy has promised to bring all 12 annual appropriations bills to the floor, despite his threadbare margin of control.

Advanced Technologies

[Dell looks to phase out 'made in China' chips by 2024 \(Financial Times\)](#)

US computer maker Dell aims to stop using chips made in China by 2024 and has told suppliers to significantly reduce the amount of other “made in China” components in its products as part of efforts to diversify its supply chain amid concerns over Washington-Beijing tensions. The world’s third-largest computer maker by shipments told suppliers late last year that it aimed to “meaningfully lower” the amount of China-made chips it uses, including those produced at facilities owned by non-Chinese chipmakers, three people with direct knowledge of the matter told Nikkei Asia. Dell’s goal was to have all chips used in its products produced in plants located outside China by 2024, they said. The move is the latest example of how the tech war between the US and China is accelerating electronics makers’ efforts to diversify production away from Asia’s biggest economy.

[How Biden’s microchip ban is curbing China’s AI weapons efforts](#)

[Biden Calls for Limiting Tech Companies’ Use of Personal Data, Targeted Ads \(Wall Street Journal\)](#)

President Biden called on lawmakers of both parties to come together to pass legislation to hold big technology and social-media companies accountable, accusing some in the industry of exploiting users’ personal data and endangering children. In an opinion piece for the Wall Street Journal, Mr. Biden said that legislation should protect users’ privacy by putting in place limits on how companies use, collect and share personal data. He recommended limiting targeted advertising and banning it altogether for minors. The president reiterated his long standing push to rewrite Section 230 of the 1996 Communications Decency Act, which shields companies from liability for content users post on their sites. In addition, Mr. Biden pressed for more information about the algorithms companies use to filter information to users. He also called for greater competition in the tech sector.

[The rockets NASA and SpaceX plan to send to the moon](#)

[Google argues it doesn't block rivals in bid to kill U.S. government antitrust lawsuit \(Reuters\)](#)

Google parent Alphabet on Wednesday argued that a court should toss out a government antitrust lawsuit against it, saying that agreements it made with Apple and others to make Google the default search engine do not bar smartphone makers from promoting rivals.

The statements, which were revealed in a redacted version of a motion filed last month asking the judge to toss out the lawsuit, preview the tech giant's arguments for a high-stakes court case expected to go to trial in September. The Justice Department's lawsuit, filed by the Trump administration, alleged that Google violated antitrust law in how it maintained dominance in search and search advertising. For example, it pointed to billions of dollars that Google paid annually to Apple, LG Electronics Inc., and others to ensure that Google search was the default on their devices. The company also argued that its search engine was popular with browsers and consumers entirely because of its quality, and that it was inappropriate for the government to require Google to refrain from competing to be the default on smartphones.

Military Installations & Communities

[Get Ready for Fort Liberty: The Pentagon Begins Changing Confederate Base Names \(Military.com\)](#)

The Pentagon has started the process of renaming Fort Bragg and other bases, as well as ships and hundreds of signs and roads, as it plans to scrub ties to the Confederacy from all installations by the start of 2024. William LaPlante, the undersecretary of defense for acquisition and sustainment, directed all Department of Defense organizations to implement this week the recommendations handed down by the Naming Commission, an independent panel created by Congress and charged with reviewing and replacing the names, according to a press release. It's a heavy undertaking that includes new names for nine Army bases -- Bragg will become Fort Liberty -- two Navy ships and upward of 1,000 other items located on America's military installations. But Brig. Gen. Pat Ryder, the Pentagon's press secretary, told reporters Wednesday he was optimistic it could all be done within the year.

[Maryland Launches New Tools to Support Military and Community Compatibility](#)

[Pentagon Rescinds COVID-Vaccine Mandate](#)

U.S. troops are no longer required to get vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus. On Tuesday, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin issued a memo rescinding the pair of 2021 memos that required active-duty and reservists to get vaccinated. The move was required by the 2023 defense policy bill.

[New Law Expands VA Program for Veterans to Buy Vehicles Adapted for Their Disabilities](#)

[US Army to spend \\$290 million on cloud uptake in coming months \(Defense News\)](#)

The U.S. Army plans to invest hundreds of millions of dollars in cloud migration and uptake in the next year or so, amid a push by the military's largest service to be digital-first and access data anytime, anywhere. Roughly \$290 million will be spent over the coming months, Army Under Secretary Gabe Camarillo said at the Army IT Day conference, hosted by the Northern Virginia chapter of the communications- and electronics-focused group AFCEA. The Army has migrated hundreds of legacy applications to the cloud. Other services — such as the Air Force, with its Cloud One and Cloud One Next initiatives — are making similar moves.

Homeland Security

[Mark Green beats Dan Crenshaw in race to chair Homeland Security Committee \(Washington Examiner\)](#)

Rep. Mark Green won the coveted gavel for the House Committee on Homeland Security on Monday, beating Rep. Dan Crenshaw for the position. Green, a combat veteran described by his colleagues as a rising star in the party, said that strengthening the border would be a top priority as he gears up to helm the panel. Green is a member of the House Freedom Caucus, giving conservatives a win and placing them in more positions of power as Republicans assume the majority. Green has maintained a strong relationship with leadership, helping Kevin McCarthy get over the finish line during his heated floor battle for speaker.

[Global Homeland Security Market to reach US\\$ 300 Billion by 2032; Cyber Security to be Most Prominent Area of Operations](#)

[Biden Visits Southern Border Amid Fresh Crackdown on Migrants \(New York Times\)](#)

President Biden on Sunday made his first visit to the border since taking office, arriving at

a city swamped by migrants amid a historic surge in illegal immigration and anger from both parties about how he is handling it. In a brief visit to El Paso's busiest crossing and a migrant services support center, Mr. Biden acceded to demands by Republicans that he make the trip he had not taken for two years. But as he arrived in El Paso, he found himself under siege from all sides. Democrats and human rights activists condemned his new enforcement plan as a "humanitarian disgrace." Republicans blasted his delay in coming to a border they say is "wide open" to illegal immigration. And Mexican officials — who are preparing to welcome him to a summit of North American leaders on Monday — warned that his proposals would cross a "red line" for them.

[Panic Buttons, Classroom Locks: How Schools Have Boosted Security](#)

[DHS, CISA plan AI-based cybersecurity analytics sandbox \(The Register\)](#)

Two of the US government's leading security agencies are building a machine learning-based analytics environment to defend against rapidly evolving threats and create more resilient infrastructures for both government entities and private organizations. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) picture a multicloud collaborative sandbox that will become a training ground for government boffins to test analytic methods and technologies that rely heavily on artificial intelligence and machine learning techniques. It also will include an automated machine learning "loop" through which workloads — think exporting and tuning data — will flow. The CISA Advanced Analytics Platform for Machine Learning (CAP-M) — previously known as CyLab — will drive problem solving around cybersecurity that encompasses both on-premises and cloud environments, according to the agencies.

Transportation & Infrastructure

[U.S. Congress to investigate FAA computer outage that snarled flights \(Reuters\)](#)

U.S. lawmakers will review the cause of a Federal Aviation Administration computer system outage overnight on Tuesday that sparked a nationwide ground stop and delayed or canceled more than 10,000 U.S. flights. Senate Commerce Committee Chair Maria Cantwell, a Democrat, said on Wednesday that the panel "will be looking into what caused this outage and how redundancy plays a role in preventing future outages. The public needs a resilient air transportation system." House Transportation Committee Chair Sam Graves, a Republican, said the ground stop "highlights a huge vulnerability in our air transportation system." He referred to a recent Southwest Airlines Co. technology

meltdown that forced the carrier to cancel more than 16,700 flights. Senator Ted Cruz, the incoming top Republican on the Senate Commerce Committee, said, "The FAA's inability to keep an important safety system up and running is completely unacceptable ... The administration needs to explain to Congress what happened, and Congress should enact reforms in this year's FAA reauthorization legislation." The FAA authorization is due to expire on Sept. 30 and the outage may put pressure on Congress to complete action.

[Shipbuilders enjoy record orders for LNG tankers](#)

[NATO, EU to boost protection for pipelines, key infrastructure \(Reuters\)](#)

NATO and the EU are launching a task force to boost protection of critical infrastructure in response to last year's attack on the Nord Stream gas pipelines and Russia's "weaponizing of energy," the organizations' leaders said on Wednesday. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said the sabotage of the Russia-to-Germany pipelines in the Baltic Sea last September showed the need "to confront this new type of threat". Western and Russian officials have traded accusations over the Nord Stream blasts, but officials in Sweden and Denmark investigating the attack have not named any possible culprits.

[As Infrastructure Money Lands, the Job Dividends Begin](#)

[Biden Administration Releases U.S. National Blueprint for Transportation Decarbonization \(Railway Age\)](#)

The Biden Administration has released the U.S. National Blueprint for Transportation Decarbonization, "a landmark interagency framework of strategies and actions to remove all emissions from the transportations sector by 2050," the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced Jan. 10. Jointly developed by the Departments of Energy, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Blueprint "offers a whole-of-government approach to addressing the climate crisis and meeting President Biden's goals of a 100% clean electrical grid by 2035 and net-zero carbon emissions by 2050." The Blueprint, USDOT says, will be followed by more detailed decarbonization action plans, to be developed and implemented by these agencies in cooperation with governments at the State, local, and Tribal level, philanthropic organizations, the private sector and global partners.

Biotechnology & Healthcare

[White House extends COVID-19 public health emergency once again \(The Hill\)](#)

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on Wednesday officially renewed the ongoing public health emergency for the COVID-19 pandemic amid concerns over a more transmissible viral mutation and broad pandemic fatigue. The announcement by HHS Secretary Xavier Becerra marks the 12th renewal of the COVID-19 public health emergency, which was first declared by former HHS Secretary Alex Azar in January of 2020. Each public health emergency declaration lasts for 90 days before expiring or getting renewed. While it is not required by any laws or department rules, Becerra has publicly committed to giving state governments and health care stakeholders a 60-day notice if plans to allow the declaration to expire. When the public health emergency declaration was last renewed, health officials were concerned that another winter surge in cases could occur. While cases have risen somewhat in the past few weeks, a major surge like those observed in 2021 and 2020 has not yet come to pass.

[Sitting too much is bad for your health, but offsetting the impact is easy, study shows](#)

[EU draws up plans to stockpile scarce medicines \(Financial Times\)](#)

Brussels is seeking to end a Europe-wide medicine shortage by stockpiling drugs and obliging manufacturers to guarantee supplies. The EU will also try to reduce reliance on China and increase domestic production capacity, the European Commission told the Financial Times. A surge in winter sickness in the northern hemisphere and reduced exports from China have meant patients have found it difficult to get hold of some basic medicines such as penicillin and paracetamol. Almost all 27 EU member states and the UK have reported shortages. Under pressure from governments, the commission has said it will intervene to ensure “strategic autonomy” in basic medicines through a “systemic industrial policy”.

[A flurry of pharma acquisitions kick off JPM week after a slow year for deals](#)

[Alphabet to cut staff of health sciences unit Verily by 15% \(CNBC\)](#)

In an email to employees on Wednesday, Verily CEO Stephen Gillett said the company will lay off 15% of its staff in a restructuring move, as it strives for financial independence from parent company Alphabet. The cuts will affect about 240 people, a Verily spokesperson confirmed. Verily, which specializes in health sciences, is one of Google's sister companies, operating within Alphabet's "Other Bets" category. It's the first known layoff to hit the Google parent company following a wave of industry layoffs and fears of a recession. Although Google has so far avoided the widespread job cuts that have hit other tech companies like Meta, employees have grown anxious if they could be next, CNBC has reported.

Climate & Development

[China Moves to Repair Ties With Australia by Lifting Coal Ban \(Wall Street Journal\)](#)

China effectively ended a ban on Australian coal that has been a centerpiece of a diplomatic dispute lasting more than two years, in the latest indication that Beijing is taking a less confrontational approach in its foreign policy as the economy struggles. Customs officials in the southern province of Guangdong on Thursday received notice from the local government that they can clear Australian coal shipments, two people familiar with the situation said. The move comes about a week after the country's national planning agency permitted a group of large state-owned companies to buy Australian coal again. The Guangdong government didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. An easing of the ban isn't likely to spark a rapid revival in a coal trade that was among the world's most lucrative. China ramped up domestic production to cushion the ban's impact and lessen a need for imports. Australian coal prices have surged since Russia's invasion of Ukraine redrew coal-supply routes, which could keep Chinese demand low. Meanwhile, some Australian miners have grown wary of China, which they no longer see as a reliable partner.

[The oil lobby's 2023 priorities](#)

[Sweden discovers biggest rare earths deposit in EU \(Financial Times\)](#)

Sweden's state-owned mining company LKAB has said it has discovered Europe's largest deposit of rare earth metals. The discovery bolsters the continent's ambition to rely less on imported raw materials needed for the green transition. The deposit, dubbed Per Geijer, is

located north of the Arctic Circle in Sweden's province of Lapland and contains more than 1mn tonnes of rare earth oxides — the largest known deposit of its kind in Europe, the company said. Rare earths deposits are — contrary to their name — fairly common across different geographies, but it is the extraction of the minerals that is the most challenging part, because of complex processing and intensive environmental effects. It would take 10 to 15 years before the raw materials could be delivered to the market, but if permitting processes at a Swedish and EU level can be accelerated this timescale could be cut by upwards of 50 per cent. The company plans to submit an application for an exploitation concession this year.

[Climate change: UAE names oil chief to lead COP28 talks](#)

[Bill Gates considers W.Va. to expand nuclear energy efforts \(AP\)](#)

Bill Gates is looking to West Virginia as he plans for the next phase of his effort to reboot U.S. nuclear energy technology: powering the east coast. Microsoft co-founder Gates, who visited a closed down coal-fired plant in Glasgow, West Virginia on Monday, said he needs to see how his Natrium nuclear reactor demonstration in Wyoming performs before making any announcements about new sites. The Kemmerer, Wyoming sodium-cooled nuclear reactor is taking over the site of a current coal-powered plant and was scheduled to be online by 2028, but is facing delays because its only source of fuel was uranium from Russia, now at war with Ukraine. West Virginia's new law has opened the door to discussions with American Electric Power during the last six months, said Gates, who founded TerraPower, the company behind the \$4 billion project in Wyoming.

Next Week's Hearings

Armed Service Committees

House: None Listed

Senate: None Listed

Appropriation Committees

House: None Listed

Senate: None Listed

Homeland Security Committees

House: None Listed

Senate: None Listed

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