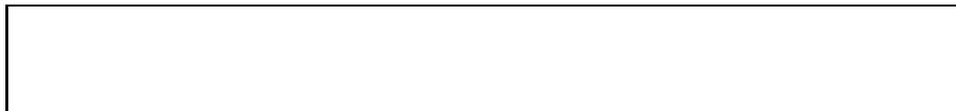


Wright, Michelle

From: Rick Dwyer <rdwyer@hrmffa.org>
Sent: Friday, August 23, 2024 8:15 AM
To: Rick Dwyer <rdwyer@hrmffa.org>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Executive Insight Brief

Ladies & Gentlemen,
Below please find this week's edition of *Executive Insight Brief* from The Roosevelt Group.

Rick Dwyer
Executive Director
Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance
Office: 757-644-6324
Mobile: 850-499-1068



August 23, 2024

Headlines - Aerospace & Defense - Budget & Economy - Advanced Tech - Military Installations & Communities -
Homeland Security - Transportation & Infrastructure - Biotech & Healthcare - Climate & Development

Received this as a forwarded email? [Sign up](#) to be on the official distribution list!

Notable Headlines

- [Gov. Abbott sent zero migrant buses from Texas to blue cities in July](#)
- [RFK Jr. expected to drop out of race by end of week, plans to endorse Trump: Sources](#)
- [FDA OK's new COVID vaccine shots for fall 2024 from Pfizer and Moderna](#)
- [Supreme Court allows Arizona to enforce part of voting law](#)
- [Bill Pascrell, longtime N.J. congressman and fierce Trump critic, dies at 87](#)

Worth reading: [Harris accepts nomination, vows to be a 'common sense' president who 'unites us'](#)

Aerospace & Defense

[Trump anxiety spurs investment in European defense startups \(Reuters\)](#)

Former President Trump's comments surrounding NATO have worried allies of the United States, so much so that a flurry of investment in defense-technology has begun. Trump has said on multiple occasions that the US would withdraw from NATO and would not defend allies that did not increase their defense budgets. Those threats, whether empty or not, have ignited defense start-ups across Europe. Global military spending has skyrocketed to a record of \$2.4 trillion in 2023, largely in part due to the wars in Ukraine and Israel. In June of this year, the NATO Innovation Fund "announced partnerships with venture capital firms and defense startups across Europe, aiming to bolster security on the continent." The European Union also unveiled their first ever defense industrial strategy earlier this year, committing more than \$1 billion towards military innovation. While Trump's comments were not the only factor behind the increases in investment, they were certainly a driving force. If Trump does somehow act on his words Europe does not want to be without their own investments in the defense space.

[Work begins on Germany's 5,000 strong military base in Lithuania \(DefenseNews\)](#)

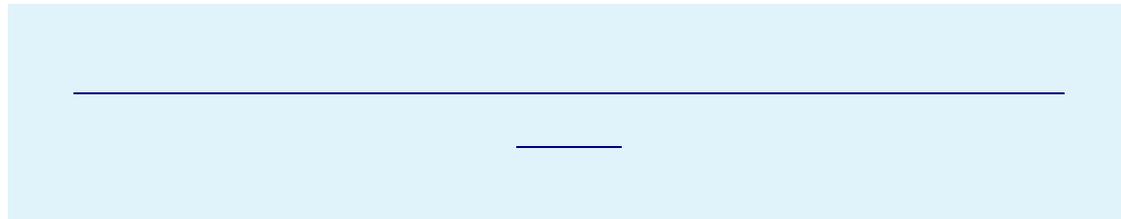
Germany is beginning to construct their first permanent military base abroad, which will be located in Lithuania. Germany is set to move a brigade to “the Baltic country by the end of the decade.” The two nations agreed in December 2023 to “station the 4,800 military and 200 civilian German personnel.” According to the Ministry of Defense in Vilnius, once complete, this base will be the largest military installation in Lithuanian history. The brigade will be put into service next year and will reach full operational ability by 2027. In addition to the personnel that will be stationed at the base it will also house 2,000 vehicles, according to the German Ministry of Defense. Germany is providing the troops for the base while Lithuania will be responsible for building the infrastructure. It will be located in the southeastern part of the country and will cost around \$139 million. While Germany has had a presence in Lithuania on a rotational basis, this permanent base ushers in a new era when it comes to security in Europe and how Germany views its military. Nearly 85 years since Germany almost tore the continent apart, they have taken on a leading role in Europe and on the world stage. They have boosted “defense spending, positioned themselves as a key NATO partner, and were only second to the US in funding to Ukraine.”

Budget & Economy

[US added 818,000 fewer jobs than thought, adding to concerns about the economy \(NBC\)](#)

US job gains over the 12 months ending in March “were revised downward Wednesday by 818,000 – a significant revision that adds to recent concerns that the economy has been slowing.” The change means that roughly 2.1 million jobs were created in the past year, instead of 2.9 million. It is important to note the revisions do not indicate job losses, but estimates how many jobs were actually created. While the economy has grown steadily, sometimes outpacing expectations, “the unemployment rate recently climbed to a new post-pandemic high of 4.3%.” White House Chief Economic Advisor Jared Bernstein said the preliminary estimate “doesn’t change the facts that the jobs recovery has been and remains historically strong, delivering solid job and wage gains, strong consumer spending,

and record small business creation.” The update from the Bureau of Labor Statistics was the largest negative revision since 2009, with some fearing the revisions could have been as high as 1 million.



[Fed minutes point to 'likely' rate cut coming in September \(NBC\)](#)

Federal Reserve officials at their July meeting moved closer to a long-awaited interest rate reduction, but “stopped short while indicating that a September cut had grown increasingly probable, minutes released Wednesday showed.” The summary said that a vast majority of participants observed “if the data continued to come in about as expected, it would likely be appropriate to ease policy at the next meeting.” A cut in September would be the first since the emergency easing in the early days of the covid pandemic. The minutes of the July meeting made clear that officials were confident about the direction of inflation and were ready to start easing policy. Of course, nothing is written in stone, but signs are pointing to a rate cut in this September.

Advanced Technologies

[Reliant on Starlink, Army eager for more SATCOM constellation options \(DefenseNews\)](#)

For advanced command and control, the Army is leaning heavily on SpaceX’s Starlink satellite network. However, service officials want to keep their options open as new commercial mega constellations materialize. The importance of proliferated low Earth orbit satellite networks was on display “at the service’s most recent Project Convergence Capstone event, where the Army experiments with multi-domain connectivity concepts.” At the conference was Mark Kitz, the Army’s program executive office for tactical command, control and communications said “I don’t think you could take 10 steps without tripping over a Starshield Terminal...I would say the Army is very committed to pLEO and Starshield.” Starshield is SpaceX’s military business unit, which provides access to the company’s Starlink constellation, “a fleet of more than 6,000 satellites in LEO, about 1,200

miles above Earth's surface." Starshield has expanded heavily with the Ukrainian military relying heavily on Starlink throughout its war with Russia, and last year the US Space Force awarded Starshield a contract for their satellite service. While they are the dominant company providing space-based communications, several other companies like Amazon, OneWeb, and Intelsat are looking to join them.

[Reliant on Starlink, Army eager for more SATCOM constellation options \(DefenseNews\)](#)

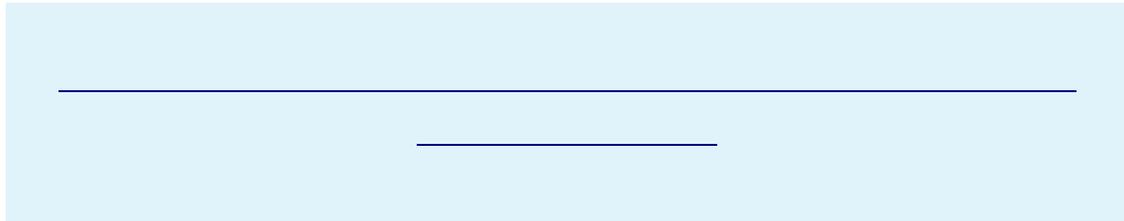
For advanced command and control, the Army is leaning heavily on SpaceX's Starlink satellite network. However, service officials want to keep their options open as new commercial mega constellations materialize. The importance of proliferated low Earth orbit satellite networks was on display "at the service's most recent Project Convergence Capstone event, where the Army experiments with multi-domain connectivity concepts." At the conference was Mark Kitz, the Army's program executive office for tactical command, control and communications said "I don't think you could take 10 steps without tripping over a Starshield Terminal...I would say the Army is very committed to pLEO and Starshield." Starshield is SpaceX's military business unit, which provides access to the company's Starlink constellation, "a fleet of more than 6,000 satellites in LEO, about 1,200 miles above Earth's surface." Starshield has expanded heavily with the Ukrainian military relying heavily on Starlink throughout its war with Russia, and last year the US Space Force awarded Starshield a contract for their satellite service. While they are the dominant company providing space-based communications, several other companies like Amazon, OneWeb, and Intelsat are looking to join them.

Military Installations & Communities

[Flaw in Osprey gears was known a decade prior to deadly Japan crash, internal report shows \(Military.com\)](#)

Internal safety documents show that warnings related to a mechanical issue that caused an Air Force Osprey to crash off the coast of Japan last year, killing eight airmen, "had been identified as far back as 2013 but seemingly went unaddressed." An investigation

released earlier this month by the service pointed to an issue in the tilt-rotor aircraft's prop rotor gearbox as the cause of the crash. But, an internal Safety Investigation Board "showed that other gears in that gearbox similarly failed in 2013 and warnings related to the part failure were brought to the Pentagon a year later." The reports go on to fault the Air Force Special Operations Command crew for "not heeding the warning lights even though", according to members of the Osprey community, "the warnings the crew received were considered common and the community often saw them as just part of the aircraft's operation."



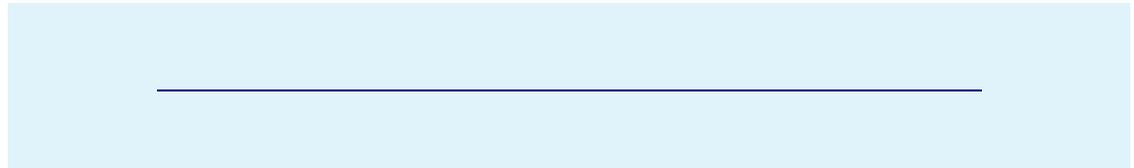
[Army's pier system now faces second watchdog review after troubled Gaza mission \(Military.com\)](#)

Following the bungled Army mission establishing a pier off the Gaza strip to deliver aid to the region, the "Pentagon's internal watchdog has launched an investigation into the service's capabilities to conduct such a mission." The Department of Defense's Office of Inspector General announced earlier this month they are investigating how the military runs Joint Logistics Over-The-Shore (JLOTS) operations. The investigation is separate from the ongoing review "examining the DoD's involvement in facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid to Gaza through the maritime corridor." The Gaza mission was important because it not only stress-tested a unit that had little real world experience, but served as a pseudo test bed for how the Army may operate in the Pacific if a war with China ever breaks out. In that potential conflict, "Army planners are anticipating a war could involve a complex island-hopping campaign akin to the fight against the Japanese during World War II." That type of campaign would push Army logistics to their limit, and "could see watercraft units serve at the tip of the spear, moving troops into combat and carrying critical supplies to the front lines under fire."

Homeland Security

[DHS watchdog warns of 'urgent issue' after immigration officials allegedly lose track of unaccompanied children \(ABC\)](#)

The DHS internal watchdog is sounding the alarm on how immigration officials handle cases involving unaccompanied migrant children, warning in a new report “that the Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agency has been unable to keep track of all unaccompanied minors released from government custody.” The report sent to Congress earlier this week said that in the past five years “more than 32,000 unaccompanied migrant children failed to appear for their immigration court hearings and ICE could not account for all of their locations.” The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is responsible for the care of unaccompanied migrant children by placing them in shelters or qualified sponsors’ homes. However, it is ICE’s responsibility to ensure their transfer to HHS. Inspector General Joseph Cuffari wrote in his interim report, “without an ability to monitor the location and status of unaccompanied migrant children, ICE has no assurance they are safe from trafficking, exploitation, or forced labor.” Cuffari urged ICE to take immediate action.



[DHS launches 'Keeping Families Together' initiative to support noncitizen spouses and stepchildren of US citizens \(HS Today\)](#)

The Department of Homeland Security announced a federal register notice to implement Keeping Families Together, “a process for certain noncitizen spouses and stepchildren of US citizens.” Director of US Citizenship and Immigration Services said “too often, noncitizen spouses of US citizens - many of them mothers and fathers - live with uncertainty due to undue barriers in our immigration system. This process to keep US families together will remove these undue barriers for those who would otherwise qualify to live and work lawfully in the US, while also creating greater efficiencies in the immigration system.” USCIS will immediately begin accepting requests from eligible individuals on August 19, 2024. DHS estimates that 500,000 noncitizen spouses and 50,000 noncitizen stepchildren of US citizens may meet the criteria.

Transportation & Infrastructure

[German prosecutors open probe into drone flights over critical infrastructure \(Reuters\)](#)

On Thursday German prosecutors announced they are opening an investigation into repeated drone flights over critical infrastructure in Northern Germany on “suspicion of espionage activity.” The Flensburg public prosecutor’s office has initiated a preliminary investigation on suspicion of “agent activity for sabotage purposes in connection with repeated drone flights.” A newspaper, The Build, was the first to report the investigation citing an internal police report that said “a no-fly zone over a nuclear power plant had been violated several times this month.” Authorities with the Schleswig-Holstein state criminal police agency assume that the so-far unidentified drones are Russian Orlan-10s, which have a range of 310 to 370 miles and can fly over 62 miles an hour. Germany has been Ukraine’s biggest European supplier and has been on increased alert over sabotage activity. They recently sealed off a military base on suspicions of contaminated water that later turned out to be false. The threat is real with two German-Russian nationals being arrested on suspicion of plotting sabotage attacks in April of this year.

[Labor dispute stops Canadian freight railroads and could cause major economic disruption in US](#)

[Gov. Tim Walz’s record on transportation and planning: successes, but work to do \(Minnesota Reformer\)](#)

As the Biden-Harris administration and allies touts their Bipartisan Infrastructure Law during the Democratic Convention this week, Harris’ selection for VP has a strong transportation/infrastructure record to run on. In 2023, Walz signed a transportation funding bill into law that included “a metro sales tax increase to fund transit, walking and biking infrastructure, and a gas tax indexed to inflation.” The Twin Cities received a ton of funding including “\$230 million for general operations, \$173 million for Metro Mobility to support senior/disability services, \$50 million for planning along the Blue Line Extension Light Rail, and \$82 million for Bus Rapid Transit investments.” Transit fare evasion has been decriminalized in Minnesota which allowed the Met Council to bring on “trip ambassadors who are civilian workers, not police – to issue citations similar to parking tickets, creating more touch points for transit staff to increase rider safety.” One big climate aspect of the 2023 bill is that major highway expansion projects are now subject to a climate impact

assessment rule. This new standard will require changes to projects determined to increase emissions, as measured by vehicle miles traveled.

Biotechnology & Healthcare

[Epic Systems is building more than 100 new AI features for doctors and patients. Here's what's coming \(CNBC\)](#)

Epic Systems is a healthcare software giant “whose technology is used in thousands of US hospitals and clinics.” The company holds medical records for more than 280 million individuals in the US, though patients generally have data stored across multiple vendors. Thousands descended on Epic Systems campus this week to hear about new products and updates. Many announcements that occurred surrounded the company’s integration of artificial intelligence into their products. While many tools are in the early stages of development, their CEO Judy Faulkner said the company had over “100 AI features in the works.” Epic Systems said by the end of this year, “its generative AI will help doctors revise message responses, letters and instructions into plain language that patients can understand.” They are also working on producing AI tools that can help doctors carry out time-consuming tasks like drafting insurance denial appeal letters and reviewing prior authorization requirements. Epic also says by the end of 2025, their generative AI will “be able to pull in the results, medications and other details that a doctor might need when responding to a patient’s message through MyChart.” The future is full of AI and Epic Systems seems to be leading the way in the healthcare industry.

[How US Farms could start a Bird Flu Pandemic](#)

[Nearly 60% of baby foods in the US don't meet nutritional guidelines, study says \(NPR\)](#)

According to a new study, nearly 60% of food products made for toddlers and babies did not meet nutrition standards set by the World Health Organization. Researchers tested 651 products in 2023 across eight food retailers in “North Carolina, including Korger, Walmart, Costco, Ahold Delhaize, Publix, Sam’s Club, Target, and Aldi.” Only about “30% of products complied with the agency’s protein recommendations, while 56% were compliant with sugar guidelines. About 93% of the products are aligned with the fat

recommendations.” These results came from a study published in the Nutrients journal earlier this week. About 1 in 4 products did not meet calorie requirements and about 20% exceeded recommended sodium limits. Dr. Elizabeth Dunford (Uni. of North Carolina) who co-authored the study said, “early childhood is a crucial period of rapid growth and when taste preferences and dietary habits form, potentially paving the way for the development of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes and some cancers later in life.”

Climate & Development

[Climate Change to get its moment in the sun at Democratic convention on Thursday \(NPR\)](#)

The final night of the Democratic convention featured Vice President Kamala Harris accepting her party’s nomination for President. This came about two months after a disastrous debate performance from President Biden which was the catalyst to his decision in late July not to seek re-election. The final night was also highlighted by climate and energy policy. It included videos and speakers to highlight the administration’s climate policy and to discuss the creation of “clean energy jobs.” Among the speakers are Interior Secretary Deb Haaland, Florida Rep. Maxwell Frost, and John Russell. Russell is one of the many content creators at the convention and talked about his home state of West Virginia and the benefits of a “clean energy economy.” While climate change was not a large focus the first three days of the convention it was mentioned several times in various speeches. The issue being front and center indicate Democrats believe they can run on this issue. Earlier this week a “coalition of climate groups announced a \$55 million advertising campaign supporting Harris at the top of the Democratic ticket.” The LCV Victory Fund, the EDF action Votes, Climate Power and Future Forward have all invested in ads that will run in swing states.

[This country voted to keep oil in the ground. Will it happen?](#)

Scientists closely watching these 3 disastrous climate change scenarios (USA Today)

A host of climate change catastrophes worry scientists, but some scenarios are so dire that experts are constantly monitoring how close we are to disaster.

‘Doomsday glacier’: Worst-case scenario is unlikely, for now

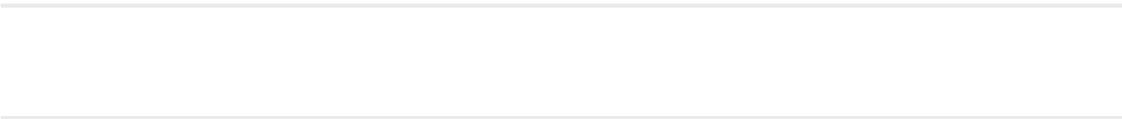
The Thwaites Glacier has been studied for years as an indicator of human-caused climate change. In one nightmare scenario, the glacier's melt fuels a 50-foot rise in sea level. The Florida Peninsula "would be submerged with the state's coastal cities underwater." A new study says this scenario looks unlikely—for now. Scientists predict with the Thwaites Glacier still retreating along with the West Antarctic ice sheet, the sea level will rise by two to three feet by the end of the century.

Greenland's ice sheet: A mix of good and bad news

The ice sheet has produced conflicting studies with one last year saying it may be more resistant to climate change and one this year that said it was melting faster than researchers originally thought. Regardless of what the studies say, Greenland is losing about "270 billion tons of ice per year which is adding to the rising sea level" according to NASA.

AMOC collapse: Scientists still studying feared 'Day After Tomorrow' ocean current

The Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC), a large system of ocean currents that carry warm water from the tropics into the North Atlantic – could collapse by the middle of the century, or possibly any time from 2025 onward. The AMOC gained international attention with the release of the scientifically inaccurate "The Day After Tomorrow" which used such an ocean current shutdown as the premise of the film. An AMOC collapse in real life could trigger rapid weather and climate changes in the US, Europe, and elsewhere. If it were to happen, "it could bring about an ice age in Europe and sea-level rise in cities such as Boston and New York."



Next Week's Hearings

Armed Service Committee:

House: NONE

Senate: NONE

Appropriations Committee:

House: NONE

Senate: NONE

Homeland Security Committee:

House: NONE

Senate: NONE



Copyright © 2017 Present The Roosevelt Group LLC, All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

200 Massachusetts Ave, NW, Suite 360, Washington DC 20001

WARNING: This email originated outside York County's email servers. Please verify the sender's identity, and use caution when clicking any links or opening any attachments.