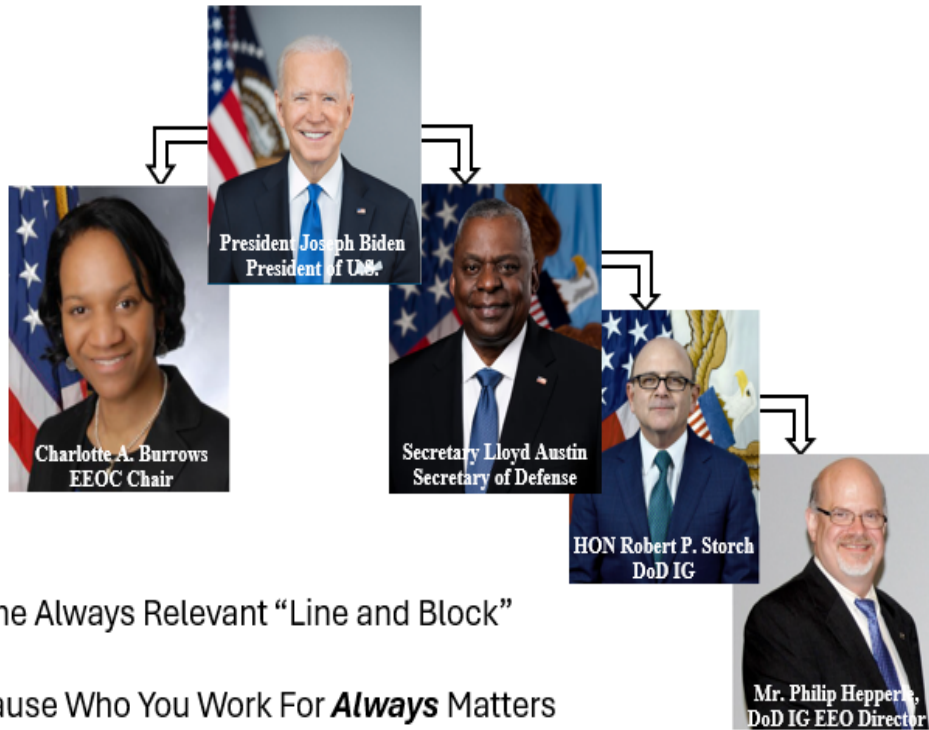


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When The System Design Unwittingly Encourages Complaints Based on Identity ... And Leaves Service Members with No Rights at All

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Did You Know: DoD Civilians who make a complaint using the EEO process have an opportunity to win cash settlements (the legal concept of [Recovery](#)) and to see all (un-redacted) documents relevant to their complaint (the [Procedural Law](#) concept of [Discovery](#)). These rights are afforded to DoD Civilians if they raise their complaint to the level of the [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#) (EEOC). No such rights exist for DoD Civilians via the IG process, and uniformed Service Members are never afforded these rights either through the EO or IG processes.

Here are some potential implications of these facts:

1. DoD Civilians who believe that they are in an environment that warrants a complaint of some type and who have any hope of justice or transparency, are wise to submit their complaint via the EEO process instead of through the IG process.
2. DoD Civilians must rely on a federal agency that is outside of the DoD, the *U.S.* EEOC, to have any chance at transparency and justice.
3. Aside from altruism (the ["Fix It"](#) mindset) and / or naiveté, likely a dangerous combination of both, there is zero incentive for a Service Member to make a complaint either through the EO or IG processes

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given the facts above and that they likely will face [reprisal](#) and/or [retaliation](#), significant financial burdens, and severe negative psychological and physical strain.

4. Given there is no “outside of the DoD” IG organization within the federal government, there is no consistent federal oversight of DoD IG policies, procedures, and / or adjudication of complaints. Thus, neither DoD Civilians nor Service Members have any real rights within the [DoD's IG](#) enterprise.
5. Given the DoD EEO Director, who also has oversight of the military EO enterprise, is a subordinate element within the DoD IG, there likely exists a harmful organizational tension within the DoD IG concerning prioritizing time and funding for EEO / EO and IG personnel, resources, and investigations.

A question to ask yourself is why Congress or POTUS are comfortable with a system design that does not allow for transparency within the IG processes, the investigatory arm concerned with use / misuse of taxpayer money. Further, one can ask why Congress and POTUS are comfortable with the fact that there is zero incentive for a Service Member to make a complaint that could make the DoD a stronger fighting force.

If you feel that you have been a victim of this "Did You Know" highlight, feel free to reach out privately or share your story in the comments.