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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Lethal drone strike conditions disclosed

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The White House has released a version of President Barack Obama's 3-year-old guidance on the use of lethal force against terrorists overseas, laying out what it says are safeguards to minimize civilian deaths and errant strikes while preserving the capability to take quick action with drone attacks and other means.

The "presidential policy guidance" stipulates that the U.S., when operating outside areas of active hostilities, will take direct only action when there is "near certainty" that the terrorist target is present and that noncombatants won't be killed or injured. Lethal force also can be undertaken only against a lawful target that poses a "continuing, imminent threat" to Americans.

The principles, released with redactions, provide more detail on the conditions for drone strikes and other direct action than the White House revealed earlier when it summarized the document in a fact sheet in 2013. Obama or his

aides have spoken previously, though, about the "near certainty" standard at the heart of the guidance — a standard that hasn't silenced criticism over civilian deaths from drones.

Ned Price, spokesman for the White House's National Security Council, said in a statement Saturday that the policy standards "offer protections for civilians that exceed the requirements of the law of armed conflict."

"As the president has said, 'near certainty' is the 'highest standard we can set,'" Price said. The U.S. "takes feasible precautions to minimize the risk of civilian casualties" even when the U.S. is not operating in conditions covered by the guidance, he added, "or when we act quickly to defend U.S. or partner forces from imminent attack."

The American Civil Liberties Union had sued for disclosure of the guidance under the Freedom of Information Act and welcomed the development. The release "will inform an ongoing debate about the

lawfulness and wisdom of the government's counterterrorism policies," said Jameel Jaffer, ACLU deputy legal director.

But Jaffer said questions remain about where the guidance applies, whether Obama has waived its requirements in particular instances, and how the "relatively stringent standards can be reconciled with the accounts of eyewitnesses, journalists and human rights researchers who have documented large numbers of bystander casualties."

Among the conditions set out in the guidance: Approval from the president is required for a lethal strike against a U.S. citizen or when relevant officials in the administration disagree on whether a particular non-American "nominated" for a deadly attack should in fact be targeted.

In cases where the officials are unanimously in favor of a lethal attack against a foreigner, the president needs to be notified but his approval is not required to proceed.

In July, the administration

said it had killed up to 116 civilians in counterterrorism attacks in Pakistan, Yemen and other places where the U.S. is not engaged in active, on-the-ground warfare.

It was the first such public assessment and a response to growing pressure for more information about lethal U.S. operations overseas. Human rights and other groups quickly complained that the administration undercounted civilian casualties.

The report by National Intelligence Director James Clapper said the U.S. conducted 473 counterterrorism strikes, including those by unmanned drones, between January 2009 and December 2015, killing 2,372 to 2,581 combatants in those years.

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China flies combat patrol over disputed islands

Associated Press

BEIJING — China's air force said Saturday that it has conducted a combat air patrol over disputed areas of the South China Sea to improve its fighting ability.

The announcement came after Beijing said it wanted to tamp down tensions following its strong rejection of an international tribunal that ruled that its claim to virtually all of the South China Sea has no legal basis.

China refused to take part in

the case, which was taken by the Philippines to the Hague-based Permanent Court of Arbitration, and the country continues to assert that islands in the South China Sea are its territory.

The air force didn't say when the exercises took place. Last month, after the July 12 ruling, the air force said it had conducted patrols over the South China Sea and would make it "a regular practice."

Air force spokesman Senior Col. Shen Jinke said in an online statement that the patrol

was "to enhance combat capabilities to deal with various security threats" and to safeguard the country's sovereignty and maritime rights and interests.

Shen said bomber and fighter aircraft, early warning aircraft, reconnaissance planes and planes that can refuel in flight patrolled the airspace around the Spratly Islands, the Scarborough Shoal and surrounding areas.

The Spratlys and the Scarborough Shoal are claimed by both China and the Philippines. Brunei, Malaysia, Taiwan

and Vietnam also claim the Spratlys.

Last week, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi said the U.S., Japan and Australia were "fanning the flames" of regional tensions after they released a joint statement urging China not to construct military outposts nor to reclaim land in disputed waters.

On Wednesday, Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying said that "China stands ready to continue its efforts to peacefully resolve relevant disputes in the South China Sea."

Military community split over Trump feud

Associated Press

NORFOLK, Va. — Robin Starck is a retired submarine commander who still lives in the shadow of America's largest naval base, and he's heard all the shouting about Donald Trump and his tangle with the parents of a U.S. Army officer killed in Iraq.

Doesn't matter. He's still for Trump.

"Trump goes to the extreme," said Starck, 79. "Sometimes he goes off the wall." But, he added, "I don't see myself changing my mind."

The Hampton Roads area of Virginia — home not only to Naval Station Norfolk but to a vast collection of defense contractors, including the shipyards that build America's aircraft carriers — has been a Trump stronghold. The New York billionaire won most of the counties that make up the area along the James River in Virginia's March 1 primary.

It's the sort of place where Trump's days of criticism of Khizr and Ghazala Khan, a Muslim-American family whose son, Capt. Humayun Khan, was killed while serving

in Iraq in 2004, might be expected to alienate people, many with deep and personal ties to the military.

But Starck is one of several interviewed by The Associated Press last week who said they have other concerns that are keeping them loyal to Trump, among them picking a conservative Supreme Court justice to replace the late Antonin Scalia and getting rid of President Barack Obama's health care law, which Hillary Clinton pledges to defend.

But not all said they could look past Trump's fight with the Khans, joining with the many senior Republicans who condemned his remarks and urged him to apologize.

Among them is Republican Scott Taylor, a former Navy SEAL who is running for Congress in Hampton Roads. "Donald Trump's back-and-forth engagements with the Khans are counterproductive," Taylor said last week in a statement. "I encourage him to sincerely apologize to them and to end this issue now."

Rebels in Syria breach siege on parts of Aleppo

Associated Press

BEIRUT — Rebels breached the Syrian government siege on opposition neighborhoods in Aleppo, opening a corridor in the south and marking a major breakthrough. The push prompted an intensive airstrike campaign Sunday as insurgent groups put up a massive defense to protect the new corridor and gained new ground.

The battle for Aleppo, Syria's largest city and former commercial heart, is pivotal for the Syrian civil war. It is not clear

if the rebels would be able to keep their gains, but the breach causes a dent in the Syrian government's new confidence and territorial expansion, bolstered by Russian air support.

In a major offensive Saturday, an alliance of more than two dozen rebel groups pushed government forces and allied fighters out of parts of the southern Ramouseh district.

The rebels hailed the breach as a major collaborative achievement a week after launching their counteroffensive.

Navy announces end of blue camo uniform

BY WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

The Navy is mothballing the unpopular, blue digital camouflage uniform that sailors must wear while working ashore.

Starting Oct. 1, sailors can begin wearing a green camouflage uniform formally known as NWU Type III.

The blue uniform, known as Type I, was phased in in July 2010 as the Navy's only authorized work uniform. But the clothing was widely panned by sailors as uncomfortable and heavy, and was found to be unsafe near fire.

Complaints appear to have been a driving force behind the switch. Sailors around the world brought up the topic with top Navy officials, including the chief naval officer, Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus said in a statement.

"They want uniforms that are comfortable, lightweight, breathable ... and they want fewer of them," he said. "We have heard the feedback and we are acting on it."

This is the Navy's first step in a process of consolidating the service's uniform require-

ments. Type III uniforms will be issued to new recruits beginning Oct. 1, 2017, the Navy said. By Oct. 1, 2019, the Navy plans to eliminate the blue camo pattern from the seabag.

During that three-year period, sailors can wear either uniform when ashore or at port, the Navy said.

For the time being, black boots will remain the standard footwear worn with the green uniform in the U.S. and its territories, the Navy said.

Expeditionary forces in the U.S. or any forward-deployed forces, however, may wear the desert tan or "coyote brown" boots with the green uniform at the discretion of unit commanding officers.

The Navy is continuing its wear test of an improved flame-resistant uniform for shipboard wear, the statement said.

There is now a preliminary design for a "more professional looking two-piece utility shipboard uniform that can be worn both at sea and operational support jobs ashore," the Navy said.

Wear tests for the two-piece prototype are slated for 2017.

24 treated over drug-laced candy at Ohio rap concert

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Two dozen concertgoers in northeastern Ohio suffered medical symptoms Saturday after they ate candy laced with a drug found in marijuana.

No fatalities were reported at the Ohio Dreams sports camp complex in Butler, about 60 miles northeast of Columbus, where the weekendlong EST 2016 rap music festival was being held. The concert was dubbed "The Last Weekend on Earth."

Maj. Joe Masi, of the Richland County Sheriff's Department, told the Mansfield News Journal someone began tossing

out bags of the colorful candies Saturday about 11 a.m. The packages contained about 20 pieces each and were marked "prescribed medibles" with a reference to a commercial candy brand, according to photos posted to social media.

Masi said each piece had "a very, very high dose of THC," the chemical that gives marijuana its mind-altering effects. Only one or two candies would get a user high, but some people were eating whole packages, officials said.

The festival, headlined by Cleveland rapper Machine Gun Kelly, was set to continue through the weekend.

From The Associated Press

Yanks' A-Rod to play last game Friday

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Alex Rodriguez will play his final major league game Friday with the New York Yankees and then become a special adviser and instructor with the team.

Rodriguez and the club made the announcement before Sunday's home game against Cleveland.

"This is a tough day. I love this game and I love this team," he said, often choking up. "And today I'm saying goodbye."

A-Rod will play against Tampa Bay at Yankee Stadium on Friday night before ending his career as one of the most prolific and polarizing figures in baseball history.

The 41-year-old designated hitter, a three-time AL MVP and 14-time All-Star, is hitting .204 this season with nine home runs and 29 RBIs in 216 at-bats. His worsening slump finally relegated him to the

bench for most of the past month, with Rodriguez getting only one start and seven at-bats in 14 games since July 22 — he wasn't in the starting lineup Sunday against the Indians.

With Brett Gardner, Brian McCann and his teammates in attendance at a packed news conference, Rodriguez said he was thankful he'd get a few more at-bats in front of family and friends.

Rodriguez has 696 home runs and trails only Barry Bonds (762), Hank Aaron (755) and Babe Ruth (714) on the all-time list.

After Rodriguez's last game, he will be unconditionally released by the club and he'll go back home to Florida. He said he thought his off-the-field duties would begin at spring training next year in Tampa.

Rodriguez has a \$20 million salary this year and is owed \$20 million more in 2017, the final season of a \$275 million, 10-year contract that was the baseball's larg-

est when he signed it. He'll get that full amount.

Rodriguez won his second and third AL MVP awards with the Yankees but has been a pariah for some since his 2009 admission he used performance-enhancing drugs while with Texas earlier in his career.

Major League Baseball suspended him on Aug. 5, 2013, for the remainder of that season and all of 2014 for violations of baseball's drug and labor contract caused by use and possession of numerous prohibited performance-enhancing substances and attempting to cover up his violations.

Rodriguez started his big league career with Seattle in 1994 and signed a \$252 million, 10-year contract with Texas before the 2001 season, the largest agreement in baseball history. When the Rangers decided to trade him, a proposed deal to Boston fell through before the trade to New York.

Suzuki gets 2,999th hit in Marlins' loss

Associated Press

DENVER — Ichiro Suzuki nearly got his 3,000th hit and Giancarlo Stanton hit a record-long home run. It should have been a night to celebrate for the Miami Marlins, but the Colorado Rockies' relentless offense spoiled the party.

Suzuki grounded out in his first try at 3,000 hits and the Marlins, despite a 504-foot home run by Stanton, lost to the Colorado Rockies 12-6 on Saturday night.

Charlie Blackmon homered among his four hits and drove in four runs for the Rockies, who moved within three games of the Marlins and St. Louis for the second NL wild-card spot on a night when history was nearly made.

Suzuki, the 42-year-old Japanese star, will become the 30th player in major league history to reach 3,000 with his next hit.

Cubs 4, Athletics 1: Jake Arrieta pitched eight innings of three-hit ball to get his first victory in more than a month, leading visiting Chicago past Oakland.

Tigers 6, Mets 5: J.D. Martinez threw Jay Bruce out at the plate on the final play of the game, enabling host Detroit to hold off New York.

Brewers 15, Diamondbacks 6: Ryan Braun tied a team record by driving in seven runs, hitting two homers and powering visiting Milwaukee past Arizona.

Dodgers 3, Red Sox 0: Newly promoted Ross Stripling and the Dodgers' bullpen combined on a five-hitter, leading host Los Angeles over Boston.

Giants 7, Nationals 1: Eduardo Nunez got four hits, including two triples and a double off Nationals ace Stephen Strasburg, and San Francisco beat host Washington.

White Sox 4, Orioles 2:

Omar Navarez's foul ball turned into a tiebreaking RBI single in the seventh inning after a replay challenge, and host Chicago beat Chris Tillman and Baltimore.

Indians 5, Yankees 2: Corey Kluber put Cleveland's rotation back on track, Andrew Miller earned a save against the team that traded him last weekend and the Indians beat host New York.

Mariners 8, Angels 6: Shawn O'Malley capped Seattle's comeback with a three-run home run in the seventh inning and the Mariners rallied from a four-run deficit to beat visiting Los Angeles.

Pirates 5, Reds 3: Ivan Nova pitched seven innings to win his first start with Pittsburgh, Homer Bailey struggled in his second start since having Tommy John surgery and the host Pirates beat Cincinnati.

Royals 4, Blue Jays 2: Danny Duffy outpitched Aaron

Sanchez, stopping the Toronto ace's 10-game winning streak and leading host Kansas City past the Blue Jays.

Padres 9, Phillies 7: At San Diego, Padres starter Paul Clemens briefly wore the wrong uniform but still outpitched Jake Thompson in the Philadelphia right-hander's major league debut.

Rangers 3, Astros 2: Jonathan Lucroy homered twice, Carlos Beltran had a tiebreaking single and three hits and visiting Texas beat Houston.

Braves 13, Cardinals 5: Freddie Freeman and Adonis Garcia hit three-run home runs and Atlanta got enough from Roberto Hernandez in his first start of the season to beat host St. Louis.

Rays 7, Twins 3: Evan Longoria, Bobby Wilson and Logan Forsythe homered to back starter Chris Archer in host Tampa Bay's victory over Minnesota.



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US women crush Senegal in opener

Associated Press

RIO DE JANEIRO — The U.S. women have started their run for a sixth straight Olympic gold medal in basketball in record-setting fashion.

The Americans scored their most points ever in beating Senegal 121-56 Sunday, while also notching their largest margin of victory in the Olympics in topping the 60-point win over Zaire in 1996 in Atlanta.

They also won their 42nd straight Olympic game, easily handling an African nation still looking for its first victory in its second Olympics.

Diana Taurasi finished with 15, all on 3s.

The Americans led 35-9 after the first quarter with Taurasi shooting so well. Senegal got a boost from local fans embraced the underdog, cheering every shot. It didn't help as the United States led 64-21 at halftime and 94-38 after the third. That left

only the final margin in doubt.

Men's basketball: Kevin Durant and this new-look U.S. Olympic basketball team look just as dominant as the ones who slammed and jammed their way to the last two gold medals.

Durant picked up right where he left off in the 2012 Olympics with 25 points, and the Americans routed China 119-62 in their opening game.

The new Golden State Warriors star scored 30 points four years ago in the gold-medal game, when the Americans held off Spain for the championship.

DeMarcus Cousins added 17 points and Paul George 15 for the U.S., which is a heavy favorite to win a third straight gold.

Swimming: Australian sisters Cate and Bronte Campbell carried their squad to victory in the 4x100-meter freestyle relay Saturday night, with little sister Bronte snatching the

lead from Dana Vollmer on the third leg and big sister Cate pulling away from Ledecky on the final down-and-back for a record time of 3 minutes, 30.65 seconds.

That wasn't the only world record to fall on a late night of swimming. Katinka Hosszu of Hungary crushed the world record in the women's 400 individual medley to make the first Olympic medal of her career gold.

Also, Japan's Kosuke Hagino ended American dominance in the men's 400-meter individual medley, while Australia's Mack Horton took down Sun Yang of China.

Soccer: Hope Solo was unaffected by the Brazilian boos as she made her 200th international appearance.

Solo came up big as the United States fought off France 1-0 on Saturday in an Olympic group match at Mineirao Sta-

dium. Carli Lloyd scored the lone goal for the Americans in the 64th minute.

Solo became the first goalkeeper, male or female, to reach the 200-cap mark in international play. She also became just the 11th U.S. player to reach that number of appearances.

Cycling: Greg Van Avermaet of Belgium outsprinted Jakob Fuglsang and Rafal Majka on the long run to the finish at Copacabana Beach to win the men's Olympic road race.

Van Avermaet threw his arms in the air and let out a roar when he crossed the line, blowing a kiss to the sky. Fuglsang took silver and Majka coasted across to take bronze.

The race was thrown open on the final descent of the Vista Chinesa climb, when Italian star Vincenzo Nibali and Colombian counterpart Sergio Henao crashed on a sharp bend after building a lead.

Favre, Dungy lead inductees into Canton

The Associated Press

CANTON, Ohio — They came in No. 4 jerseys and wearing cheeseheads. They chanted "Go Pack Go."

It was Lambeau Field transported to Ohio, and only one man could have caused it.

Brett Favre, welcome to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

"Believe me, I am an extremely blessed man," Favre said Saturday night during an emotional speech spiced with humor and playfulness. "Play a game that I love so much for 20 years, to have all the wonderful things happen ... to share in that joy with you guys here tonight."

And when he choked up talking about his late father, Irv, and how Favre spent his career "trying to redeem myself" to make Irv proud, the crowd offered loud and comforting support.

Football's most durable quarterback (a record 299 straight regular-season starts and 321

including playoffs) and one of its greatest passers, Favre was the first three-time MVP (1995-97) and an NFL champion in 1996. He played with four teams, defining toughness and fortitude, particularly in 16 seasons with the Packers, a franchise he helped revitalize.

A swashbuckler with no fear on the field — in addition to completing 6,300 passes for 71,838 yards and 508 touchdowns, he threw an NFL-high 336 interceptions — Favre was a three-time All-Pro and made 11 Pro Bowls. His enthusiasm and love for the game marked his career, which began in Atlanta in 1991 and ended with the Vikings in 2010. He spent 2008 with the Jets.

Joining Favre in the class of 2016 were Tony Dungy, a trailblazing coach and Super Bowl winner; one of his stars, Marvin Harrison; Kevin Greene; Orlando Pace; Ken Stabler; Dick Stanfel; and Ed DeBar-

tolo Jr.

The first black coach to win an NFL championship, Dungy has been and a mentor to dozens of players and fellow coaches. Instead of concentrating on his role as a pioneer, he paid homage to those before him in a poignant and sometimes enthralling speech.

"Many of them never got the chance to move up the coaching ladder like I did, but they were so important to the progress in this league," Dungy said of the 10 African-American coaches in the NFL when he broke in as a player in 1977. "They were role models and mentors for me and my generation ... without those 10 laying the groundwork, the league would not have the 200-plus minority assistant coaches it has today."

Harrison's 143 receptions in 2002 are an NFL record. He retired in 2008 with 1,102 catches, now third behind Jerry Rice and Tony Gonzalez. He had

eight consecutive seasons with at least 1,100 yards receiving for Indianapolis.

Always a showman who also spent some time as a professional wrestler, Greene usually found the path to quarterbacks. His 160 career sacks are third most in NFL history. In 15 pro seasons for four franchises, Greene played linebacker and defensive end with an unmitig-

Stanfel, who died last year at age 87, also was a seniors committee selection. He helped the Detroit Lions win the NFL title in 1952 and '53. He earned All-Pro honors five times in his seven-season career, four years with Detroit and three with Washington, before retiring at 31 and going into coaching.

DeBartolo's 49ers became the first franchise to win five Super Bowls. He was known as much for his compassion and care for people throughout his organization as for building a winning football team.