



THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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HEALTH AFFAIRS

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MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (M&RA)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (M&RA)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE (M&RA)
DIRECTOR, JOINT STAFF

SUBJECT: Policy for Release of Genetic Sequence Data of Influenza Viruses with
Pandemic Potential to the Public Domain

A number of Department of Defense (DoD) activities are currently engaged in, or have the potential of, determining the genetic sequencing of influenza viruses with pandemic potential, such as H5N1, the current virus of concern. Such sequencing data are critical components in developing effective countermeasures when an influenza pandemic occurs. I am directing DoD activities to release these data to the public domain. Data may be shared with other US government agencies that would, in turn, release the data to the public domain, or directly released to gene sequencing data banks with access to the public domain such as the Los Alamos National Laboratory, the Influenza Sequence Database, or GenBank.

The National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza Implementation Plan includes a tasking that the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Defense, in coordination with the Department of State, enhance open source information sharing efforts with international organizations and agencies to facilitate the characterization of genetic sequences of circulating strains of novel influenza viruses within 12 months. This policy reflects compliance with this tasking.

I am directing that such genetic sequence information, as specified, is released in a timely manner. My point of contact for this policy is LTC Wayne Hachey at (703) 575-2669 or by e-mail at *Wayne Hachey@tma.osd.mil*.


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