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PENTAGON TAPS ERIC SCHMIDT TO MAKE ITSELF MORE GOOGLE-ISH



Eric Schmidt. PATRICK T. FALLON/BLOOMBERG/GETTY IMAGES

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE Ash Carter [is on a goodwill tour of Silicon Valley](#) this week. The Pentagon knows the smartest tech talent gravitates to Northern California these days and that to stay cutting-edge, it needs to court that talent to stay on top of the latest tech trends.

To that end, Carter announced plans this morning to establish what he's calling a Defense Innovation Advisory Board, meant to provide advice to the Department of

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/news/2016/03/02/alphabets-eric-schmidt-head-pentagon-advisory-board/81215640/>

Defense from a Silicon Valley point of view. To lead the new board, Carter is tapping someone savvy about the ways of Silicon Valley [and the federal government](#): former Google CEO Eric Schmidt.

The Pentagon said the board would advise it on such Google-y topics as rapid prototyping, iterative product development, business analytics, mobile apps, and the cloud. In effect, the DoD seems to be asking Schmidt to help it become more streamlined, efficient, and, well, innovative. Now the executive chairman of Google parent company Alphabet, as well as a tech adviser to the president, Schmidt (along with Carter) will pick a dozen individuals from the public and private sector to serve alongside him. (The DoD assures that none will be involved in discussions of military operations or strategy.)

Along with helping the Pentagon get out in front of the latest developments in tech, the board also makes for some positive optics. Relations between Silicon Valley and the federal government have been especially strained in recent years, starting with Edward Snowden's revelations of far-reaching government surveillance programs and extending all the way to [Apple's current showdown with the FBI](#) over whether the company should be forced to crack open the San Bernardino shooter's iPhone to give law enforcement access to its data.

At the same time, the government needs Silicon Valley more than ever as it seeks to defend from security threats in cyberspace. The Pentagon is bulking up the US Cyber Command, aiming to [reach 6,200 employees across 133 teams](#) devoted to cyberdefense. Just today, the Pentagon said it was inviting white hat hackers to seek vulnerabilities on the Defense Department's public webpages—[the first bug bounty program](#) in the history of the federal government.

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