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## Senate Armed Services Committee – AirLand Subcommittee

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**Subject: Tactical Aviation**

**Combined Statement of  
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### **I. Introduction**

Senator Lieberman, Senator Cornyn and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss Air Force Tactical Aviation and other matters that are important to our Air Force and the Nation.

Your Air Force is fully engaged around the world, fighting the war against terror while fulfilling our roles as Airmen for the joint team. Simultaneously, we stand prepared to rapidly respond to conflicts around the globe. Air forces succeed when they anticipate and shape the future strategic environment and develop capabilities for the next fight. Air forces succeed when they remain focused on their primary mission as an independent force that is part of an interdependent joint team. We fly, fight and dominate in three warfighting domains – air, space and cyberspace – providing our nation sovereign options to employ military force like no other nation.

### **II. We Are At War**

The missions your Air Force is flying today are the latest in a string of sixteen continuous years of Air Force combat in the Central Command (CENTCOM) Area of Responsibility (AOR), beginning with our initial deployments to Operation DESERT SHIELD in August 1990 through ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

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To date your Air Force has flown over 82% of the coalition's 353,373 sorties in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and 78% of the coalition's 211,427 sorties in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. On a typical day, the Air Force flies more than 430 sorties in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM.

In addition to our daily operations, the Air Force has also seen several surge periods over the past sixteen years, resulting in higher than projected wear and tear on our people and platforms. The Air Force has responded to or has been prepared to respond across the spectrum of conflict – from rapid humanitarian aid to major combat operations (MCO). We have flown over 47,285 sorties in support of Operation NOBLE EAGLE and over 3,411 counter drug sorties, while also supporting operations in the Horn of Africa (HOA) and the Philippine Islands. Currently, your Air Force has over 30,000 Total Force airmen deployed in support of global operations, while over 200,000 are supporting daily COCOM operations from other than deployed locations. We have Airmen manning Inter Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) facilities, flying strategic bombers and performing special operations as well as search and rescue missions. Airmen continue to stand watch around the clock to protect and defend our national security and respond to any adversary should deterrence fail.

While the global war on terror is the obvious and appropriate priority for the near-term, the USAF must prepare for emerging global threats. We expect to be engaged in the CENTCOM AOR for many years; yet at the same time we must continue to be able to detect, deter and dissuade other potential enemies, both traditional and non-traditional. The future security environment will be different from today, and a full range of military capabilities and advanced technologies will be needed to maintain relevance and advantage. We must not fail to anticipate increasingly lethal enemies or how they will conduct war in the future. The last time an American soldier was shot at by enemy aircraft was 1953. The ability to look up in the sky and

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know there's nothing to fear is priceless, but guaranteeing that precondition is costly. Today, America depends on air power to an unprecedented extent. The Air Force underwrites the national strategy of reassuring allies, while deterring, dissuading and decisively defeating enemies – this is not a luxury.

**III. Threat and Deterrence**

We are a Nation at war; however, it would be incorrect to assume that recent combat operations represent the high-bar of what the future may hold. Our ability to sustain the long-term focus required to ultimately prevail in this global war depends in large part on the decisions of certain other Nations to forgo reckless adventurism—the kind of reckless behavior that could drag the United States and her Allies into a protracted, costly, and large-scale war. For all their costs and successes, operations like DESERT STORM, Kosovo, and even the invasion of Iraq in 2003 were at the very low intensity end of major combat operations. None of our adversaries had a viable air force, and the air defenses they did have were precisely the systems our F-117 and B-2 aircraft were designed to defeat.

We must not confuse the present lack of large-scale, regional, state-on-state violence with an absence of conflict between nations. Disputed territory and natural resource competition are very real problems throughout the world and so is the risk that they will worsen under future demographic and energy stresses. We must not take comfort in the belief that our Nation will never enter a costly, large-scale war, especially in light of our experience in Iraq. Our interests, alliances, and sense of moral obligation could lead us into war in response to many predictable adversary actions, even if our existence or survival were not seriously threatened. Therefore our strategic requirement to win two, nearly simultaneous, major combat operations is better viewed as the bare minimum for America's armed forces. It would be far better to deter the types of behavior that could make such costly warfare inevitable.

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Perhaps more so than any other capability of the joint force, the ability of U.S. airpower to respond quickly and violently, throughout the depth and breadth of their territory keeps potentially rogue regimes from following their worst instincts. Most importantly, this deterrence works even in the midst of a multiyear commitment of over 100,000 U.S. ground forces in Iraq. If we do not replace our aging combat aircraft with sufficient numbers of advanced, modern platforms, we will surrender a deterrent of immeasurable value.

Our potential adversaries understand that through continued development of anti-access systems, they can deny large-scale military responses. Many of them are developing or acquiring air defenses that would make a replay of the overwhelming success of Operation DESERT STORM unlikely, and they seek systems that would make a replay of Kosovo impossible, in large part because they understand and fear U.S. airpower.

We make no claim that our Nation can rely solely on airpower to execute our military strategy. However, as we look to the future and seek to posture ourselves for the evolving challenges of the war on terror, we must not undermine the very force structure and capabilities that have for so long deterred regional, state-on-state warfare. At the same time, if deterrence fails, it is the Air Force that sets the conditions necessary for successful joint operations. Our joint and coalition partners have enjoyed unmatched freedom of operational access due to Air Force capabilities and it is our responsibility to deliver that capability in current and future conflicts as well. From a national perspective, aircraft are some of the best military investments the United States can make for its future security. Both Air Force and independent studies and analysis support this assertion. A decision to seriously curtail essential aircraft procurement programs, especially in response to today's war in Afghanistan and Iraq, would be extremely shortsighted and costly to the Nation in the next 20 years.

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Fifth generation fighters like the F-22A and the F-35 are key elements to our Nation's defense and deterrence. As long as hostile Nations recognize the ability of U.S. airpower to strike their vital centers with impunity, all other U.S. Government efforts are enhanced, which reduces the need for military confrontation. This is the timeless paradox of deterrence; the best way to avoid war is to demonstrate to your enemies, and potential enemies, that you have the ability, the will, and the resolve to defeat them.

**IV. Fleet Management**

The duration and tempo of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have accelerated service life consumption for numerous USAF platforms. Additionally, our aircraft inventory is the oldest it has ever been, at an average age of more than 24 years. Our five-year trend in mission capable and aircraft availability rates has declined in certain low density / high demand platforms and remained steady only through the incredible efforts of our dedicated personnel. Our recapitalization challenge is meeting the near-term needs of our Nation, while at the same time ensuring that Airmen inherit an Air Force that is relevant, capable and sustainable. We must recapitalize our aging fleet to ensure our continued advantage over future adversaries. We must also have the authority to manage our existing fleets including the retirement of our oldest aircraft.

**a. Legacy Aircraft**

**1. F-117 --** The F-117 was the first aircraft in the DoD inventory to provide critical stealth capability and it has been in service for over 20 years. Advances in technology and demonstrated capabilities of other systems such as the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM), F-22A and B-2 have mitigated the need to rely upon this aging and expensive-to-maintain aircraft. As a result, the Air Force intends to retire the F-117. Congress approved retiring ten aircraft in FY07. The FY08 PB requests authorization to retire the remaining 42

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aircraft. Cost savings realized from retiring these outdated aircraft will allow us the flexibility to better sustain our remaining fleets.

**2. JSTARS** -- The E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (Joint STARS) is an airborne battle management, command and control, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance platform. Its primary mission is to provide theater ground and air commanders with surface moving target indications (SMTI) and tailored surveillance in support of operations and targeting. Joint STARS has been a significant contributor to U.S. Air Force fighting effectiveness in Operations DESERT STORM, JOINT ENDEAVOR, ALLIED FORCE, OEF, and OIF. Continuing modifications and enhancements will sustain Joint STARS viability beyond 2034.

E-8 JSTARS has been heavily deployed since 9/11, maintaining above steady state surge operations tempo. Combined with recently approved crew ratio increases, this has created a significant backlog of students awaiting training. For example, Air Battle Manager training is approximately one year behind. To mitigate some of the training backlog, we have maximized the use of simulators and conducted some training while in deployed status. We have also reduced or cancelled major exercise events in order to surge programmed flying training, as well as doubled training aircraft from two to four. The training backlog has now been reduced enough to adjust training aircraft down to three aircraft.

Joint STARS' current engines are unable to meet a number of performance requirements. Re-engining the Joint STARS fleet will increase range and time on station, improve fuel efficiency, and reduce dependence on tankers. It will also improve reliability and maintainability, significantly decrease operating and maintenance expenses, increase available power and cooling for aircraft systems, improve take-off performance, increase maximum altitude, and comply with international noise and emission requirements.

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**3. C-130 --** Changes in military force structure, including the President's proposed troop strength increase and the Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy (IGPBS) reset, could increase airlift requirements and subsequently create the need for additional lift capacity. In the case of the aging C-130, the combination of vanishing vendors, obsolete parts, costly structural repairs, non-compliance with air traffic management requirements, SecDef directed safety modifications, and decreased access to international airspace limit the overall effectiveness of this workhorse. Although strategic lift is vitally important for moving personnel and equipment, the lynchpin to the warfighter is the ability to go the last tactical mile. A synchronized intra-theater airlift system empowers the Combatant Commander with the ability to employ the Air Force's unique core competencies in their AOR. The active duty Air Force possesses 75% of the oldest C-130 aircraft in the DoD fleet – at an average age of 42 years. The most pressing challenges today are un-programmed repair costs associated with cracks in the center wing box (CWB) and modernizing a portion of the fleet to meet the needs of the nation in the future.

As of April 2007, 53 Air Force C-130 aircraft are grounded or restricted due to surpassing equivalent baseline hour (EBH) milestones. All but one of those aircraft resides in the active duty. At 38,000 equivalent baseline hours (EBH), restricted aircraft are deemed combat ineffective due to flight maneuver and cargo capacity limitations. At 45,000 EBH, aircraft are unworthy of safe flight and are grounded. Maintaining these aircraft adds an unnecessary expense while increasing workloads on our maintenance personnel. Only through innovative management and great cooperation with our Reserve and Guard Total Force partners have we been able to meet the needs of the warfighter to fill the airlift shortfall gap produced by the grounding of our oldest C-130s. To mitigate the immediate effects, we have implemented both short-term and long-term strategies to maintain a combat effective intra-theater airlift fleet, which meets warfighter requirements. The Air Force is retiring 24 of its oldest and least capable

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C-130E aircraft as allowed by Congress, we need to retire more as they reach the end of their useful service life.

The Center Wing Box (CWB) inspect-and-repair program provided the short-term fix to keep C-130 aircraft operational while awaiting CWB replacement. Aircraft inspected and repaired can operate up to 7,000 EBHs beyond the unrestricted limit. We have had near term success in repairing 27 of the CWBs and plan to repair up to 62 C-130E/H aircraft at an estimated average cost of \$700K per aircraft. However, not all aircraft inspected will be repairable. Recently, three C-130E aircraft were inspected and found to have substantial damage; repair estimates exceeded \$2M per aircraft and were not considered fiscally prudent given their limited life expectancy.

The Air Force is using the C-130 Avionics Modernization Program (AMP) to upgrade the fleet. The purpose of the C-130 AMP is to lower the cost of ownership while complying with the Air Force Navigation and Safety (Nav/Safety) Master Plan and applicable Communications, Navigation, Surveillance/Air Traffic Management (CNS/ATM) mandates. AMP is a cockpit modernization program that replaces aging, unreliable equipment and adds equipment necessary to meet Nav/Safety and CNS/ATM requirements. The new equipment will lower the cost of ownership by reducing cockpit crew manning, increasing aircraft reliability, maintainability, and sustainability as well as reducing the number of different aircraft configurations. The C-130 AMP includes improved precision airdrop capability, Night Vision Imaging System (NVIS), and improvements to the precision approach and landing capability. The standardized cockpit will allow crewmembers to be trained to fly in one aircraft type and require only one mission qualification thereby reducing training cost.

The Air Force supports the C-130 AMP and considers it a “must do” program. The Air Force must start equipping the C-130 fleet with a more modern, more capable, and more cost effective cockpit to meet current and future warfighter requirements.

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**C-130J** -- The C-130J is a completely modernized version of the workhorse C-130 that has served us admirably for over 50 years. The C-130J will climb higher more quickly, and fly faster and longer than its predecessors. Its ability to takeoff and land in shorter distances will allow use of more locations. Improved reliability and maintainability will mean longer time between scheduled maintenance, reducing cost.

The Air Force is currently funded to complete Multi-Year Procurement #1 (MYP1) in FY08, delivering 79 USAF C-130J aircraft (62 Combat Delivery, 10 WC-130J and 7 EC-130J). Three aircraft were added in the FY06 Supplemental budget with delivery expected in FY10, bringing the total to 82 aircraft. GWOT Supplemental for FY07 and FY08 added five and fifteen MAF aircraft respectively.

The Commander of Air Mobility Command declared IOC for the C-130J on 5 October 2006.

**4. Tankers (KC-135)** -- It is noteworthy that the Air Force is providing vital air refueling capability via the oldest aircraft in the Air Force inventory. The average age of aircraft in our tanker fleet is 43.3 years. Fifteen percent of our current air refueling fleet consists of the KC-135E model aircraft, which has an average age of 49.4 years. Fourteen of our KC-135 fleet will be grounded this Fiscal Year due to Expanded Interim Repair (EIR) expiration, followed by 16 aircraft in FY08, 44 aircraft in FY09 and the remaining 11 aircraft in FY10. All 85 of our KC-135E model aircraft will be grounded by the end of FY10 due to EIR expiration.

The Air Force has programmed all 85 of the remaining KC-135E aircraft to retire by the end of FY08 and asks that the Congress not restrict our ability to do so. The projected cost to keep a KC-135E flying with no additional warfighting capability (i.e. a basic KC-135E) after EIR expiration is \$17.3M per aircraft (85 x \$17.3M per aircraft = \$1.4B for the entire fleet). The projected cost to maintain these obsolete tanker aircraft on the ramp after EIR expiration (referred to as XJ status) is approximately \$11.7M (85 x \$138K per aircraft) in FY08.

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**UNCLASSIFIED****b. Fifth Generation Fighters**

Both the F-22A and the F-35 represent our latest generation of fighter aircraft. We need both to replace capabilities inherent in our aging legacy platforms. The F-22A and F-35 present complementary capabilities – together they provide synergistic effects across the spectrum of conflict. The OSD-led 2006 QDR Joint Air Dominance study revealed two key points. The first was that our nation has a critical requirement to re-capitalize TACAIR forces. The second was that with sufficient 5th generation fighters, the F-35 and F-22A, joint air forces could win a MCO with forces remaining to win the next MCO. The study determined attrition would be higher with a legacy-heavy, 4<sup>th</sup> generation, force.

**1. F-22A --** The F-22A Raptor is the Air Force's primary air superiority fighter, providing unmatched capabilities for operational access, homeland defense, cruise missile defense, and force protection for the Joint Team. The F-22A's combination of speed, stealth, maneuverability and integrated avionics gives this remarkable aircraft the ability to penetrate denied, anti-access environments. Its unparalleled ability to find, fix, and destroy enemy air- and surface-based threats ensures air dominance and freedom of maneuver for all Joint forces.

A world-class production line produces Raptors at a rate of about two per month delivering unrivaled combat capability that ensures freedom of maneuver for all Joint and Coalition Forces. The Air Force has accepted 92 F-22A aircraft to date and is currently negotiating the Congressionally-approved multiyear contract for delivery of Lots 7, 8, and 9. The Air Force expects to award this contract in 2007. Currently we have 12 F-22A aircraft deployed to the Western Pacific in support of the PACOM Commander's area of operations.

The F-22A force also optimizes capability return on investment. Fewer mobility assets are required to provide logistic support for the aircraft with smaller force packaging, and lower

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combat attrition. The average procurement unit cost continues to decline as we mature our production learning curve.

**2. F-35 --** The F-35 program will develop and deploy a family of highly common, affordable, next-generation, stealthy, multi-role, strike fighter aircraft meeting operational needs of the Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and Allies. The F-35 provides our nation the strike capability necessary to defeat an adversary with large-scale, integrated anti-access capabilities. Studies including the OSD/Joint Study: Joint Air Dominance–2006 and Air Force Studies have demonstrated the requirement for both the payload and survivability of the F-35 in the face of these new threats. Legacy 4th generation aircraft simply cannot survive to operate and achieve the effects necessary to win in an integrated, anti-access environment. Failure to recapitalize the fighter force with the F-35 will result in significantly increased risk both to our air and ground forces.

Conventional take-off and landing test aircraft, AA-1, successfully conducted its first flight on 15 Dec 06. Since then it has flown thirteen times and its flying qualities are reported as excellent. The program is on track to meet all Low Rate Initial Production (LRIP) Lot I funding decision criteria and contract award by May 2007. The FY08 President's Budget did not support the General Electric / Rolls Royce F136 engine effort because the Defense Department concluded that a single engine supplier provided the best balance of risk and cost. The Government Accounting Office (GAO), Cost Analysis Improvement Group (CAIG) and the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) have conducted studies that re-examine the costs and benefits associated with an alternate engine program. CAIG and IDA final reports are expected in June 2007, however CAIG has indicated their study will likely support a single engine supplier, while IDA has not yet indicated which alternative their study will support. The GAO study supported an alternate engine program.

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**UNCLASSIFIED****c. Emerging Capabilities / Platforms**

1. **KC-X** -- Since aerial refueling tankers are one of the single points of failure in modern, joint warfare, our Secretary and Chief of Staff made tanker replacement and recapitalization your Air Force's #1 acquisition priority. Our vision is a tanker born joint and able to refuel Air Force, Navy, and Allied aircraft on every mission using both boom and hose/drogue refueling capabilities.

For the past 50 years, the Air Force's primary tanker platform has been the KC-135, and it has served with distinction. However, we are carrying great risk operating this aircraft beyond expected service life. Some of the oldest models already operate well beyond the point of cost-effective repair. Tanker recapitalization is not a new idea. In 1999, a GAO report presaged the declining operational utility of our aging tankers and underscored the need for immediate investments in recapitalization. Given the increased operational requirements of our current operations around the globe, procurement of a new tanker aircraft – the KC-X – has become both an operational necessity and the most fiscally prudent option to maintain America's global presence and expeditionary capabilities.

KC-X tankers will provide increased aircraft availability, more adaptable technology, and greater overall capability than the current inventory of KC-135E tankers they will replace. Enhancements to every aspect of aircraft operation will provide the Joint warfighter with more flexible employment options. It is imperative that we begin a program of smart, steady reinvestment in a new tanker – coupled with measured, timely retirements of the oldest, least capable tankers. Recapitalizing our tankers will ensure the viability of this vital national capability. Tankers make the Air Bridge possible and are essential to the success of joint and coalition military operations. Tankers are critical to the deployment and employment of joint combat power, and are crucial to rapid response to combat and humanitarian relief operations.

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Retiring operationally cost-prohibitive and less capable aircraft allows the Air Force to focus on recapitalization and invest in transformational capabilities. The KC-135E is a good example. It is significantly less capable than the KC-135R with less fuel offload capability and fails to meet world-wide airspace and noise restrictions.

Operations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century mandate continuous modernization of our mobility platforms. To that end, the KC-X replacing the KC-135 “will revolutionize the way we do business”. The KC-X will be able to multi-point refuel joint and coalition aircraft, carry cargo or passengers and self-deploy.

Release of the KC-X request for proposal (RFP) on 30 January 2007 set the stage for a fair, full and open competition that will lead to the fielding of a flexible and versatile platform. The resultant tanker will possess numerous advantages over the current KC-135 fleet. In today’s dynamic political-military environment, and with fiscal constraints in mind, the Air Force must maximize the abilities of each platform.

The KC-X RFP defines an integrated, capability-based, best-value approach and is the first third of the fleet-wide tanker replacement program that will leverage new technologies and industry best practices. The RFP includes specific factors for assessing the capability contribution of each offeror. Along with cost and assessments of past performance and proposal risk, these factors provide the source selection authority with excellent means to determine the best value between proposals of significantly differing capabilities and cost.

The RFP stipulates nine primary key performance parameters:

- 1) Air refueling capability (same sortie boom and drogue capable)
- 2) Fuel offload and range at least as great as the KC-135
- 3) Compliant CNS/ATM equipment
- 4) Airlift capability
- 5) Ability to take on fuel while airborne
- 6) Sufficient force protection measures

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- 7) Ability to network into the information available in the battle space
- 8) Survivability measures (defensive systems, EMP hardening, chem/bio protection, etc.)
- 9) Provisioning for a multi-point refueling system to support Navy and Allied aircraft

The Air Force has gone through a rigorous review process for KC-X and has validated that the RFP accurately reflects the requirements as laid out by the warfighter. The Air Force remains committed to a full and open competition and will continue to be conducted in a transparent and deliberate manner. The Air Force expects to award the KC-X contract in 2007.

**2. CSAR-X** -- The Air Force is the only service with dedicated forces organized, trained, and equipped to perform combat search and rescue (CSAR). Air Force CSAR forces recover downed aircrew and other isolated personnel and conduct rescue operations across the spectrum of military operations including humanitarian relief, emergency evacuation, disaster relief, and civil support operations. Our average CSAR helicopter is 21 years old, is a low density high demand asset and is limited in range, payload and high-altitude capability. This is our Service's number two acquisition priority behind a new tanker aircraft. The Air Force has a moral and ethical imperative to our Airmen, fellow service members, and coalition partners to provide combat search and rescue anytime and anywhere required.

In November 2006, the Air Force awarded a System Development and Demonstration (SDD) contract to Boeing Integrated Defense Systems. Following this decision, Lockheed-Martin and Sikorsky filed source selection protests with the GAO, and the GAO sustained the protests concerning CSAR-X source selection on 26 Feb 07. The Air Force is currently reviewing the GAO's findings to ensure complete understanding of the conclusions and recommendations, while determining the way ahead. The Air Force remains committed to the timely acquisition of a helicopter that best meets the warfighter's requirements.

**3. JCA** -- The final piece to the intra-theater mix is the Joint Cargo Aircraft (JCA). The JCA will supplement the C-130 fleet by delivering smaller payloads more effectively. In

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December 2005, PDM-III directed merging the Army Future Cargo Aircraft (FCA) and the Air Force Light Cargo Aircraft (LCA) programs into the JCA with acquisition under the Joint Program Office. In June 2006, the Army Vice Chief of Staff and the Air Force Vice Chief of Staff signed a JCA Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). The USA/USAF will conduct Business Case Analyses to determine the most cost effective methods for implementing the USD (AT&L)-directed single supply chain, single training base, and single maintenance process.

In October 2006 the JCA Joint Program JPO stood up at Redstone Arsenal, Huntsville, AL, which was a huge milestone for the joint program, and a testament to the progress both services have made. Both Services are working to ensure a successful Milestone C at the end of May 2007. Assuming a successful MS C decision, Army production (two aircraft) will begin in FY07 with Air Force production beginning in FY10.<sup>1</sup>

**4. UAV Executive Agency --** The Chief of Staff of the Air Force recently sent a memo to the Deputy Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the Service Chiefs, and combatant command (COCOM) commanders articulating the benefits of designating the Air Force as the DoD executive agent for medium- and high-altitude UAVs. The intent of the Chief's UAV executive agent proposal is to improve delivery of ISR information to America's joint warriors on the ground, at sea, and in the air while increasing jointness and achieving resource efficiencies. Specifically, the benefits of designating the Air Force as executive agent for medium- and high-altitude UAVs fall in three major categories: 1) Achieving efficiencies in acquisition and sustainment; 2) Increasing warfighting effectiveness in designing an optimal medium- and high-altitude UAV concept of operations; and 3) Enhancing UAV interoperability by directing common, synchronized architectures, data links, radios, etc.

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<sup>1</sup> RAND is currently completing the Intra-theater Airlift Capabilities Based Assessment (F-Studies) and will also provide a fleet mix analysis by December 2007. These studies will analyze the intra-theater airlift capability determining the right mix (C-130 and JCA) to meet COCOM requirements.

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The 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) recognizes that an executive agent definition may vary, but the universal intent is to ensure joint efforts are efficiently managed and resourced. In the case of medium- and high-altitude UAVs, the executive agent would integrate the development, acquisition, procurement and sustainment of jointly designed, standardized UAVs and their associated equipment and ground-control stations.

The primary focus of the executive agent would be on programs where the majority of DoD's near-term investments are being made—MQ-1 Predator, MQ-1C Warrior, RQ-4 Global Hawk, Broad Area Maritime Surveillance (BAMS), and MQ-9 Reaper. It is reasonable to expect that the present medium- and high-altitude UAV investment budget could be reduced. Additional efficiencies could be achieved through common basing, training, sustainment, and employment.

Without an executive agent, the Services will likely continue their separate design and procurement efforts, and the DoD will have forfeited the considerable savings it could have realized. Additionally, the DoD will have lost an opportunity to create and harness the inter-Service synergies that would result from building upon – rather than duplicating – each Service's strengths. The Services need to be moving toward increased *interdependency*, vice resourcing to achieve *self-sufficiency*.

**V. Closing**

We are building a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Air Force prepared to succeed – strategically, operationally, and tactically. Our highly capable and lethal aviation programs provide Global Vigilance, Global Reach, and Global Power. These capabilities are critical today and for the future Joint force.

But air forces do not succeed – or fail – on their own. We request Congress' help, in particular to fix a strategic ends-means gap between the roles and missions we're expected to fulfill for the nation and the funding we're being given to accomplish the mission. We

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respectfully request relief from existing congressional language preventing us from divesting our inventories of obsolete aircraft and those grounded or restricted due to surpassing their equivalent baseline hours. The freedom to divest our inventories of these aircraft will provide us the flexibility to recapitalize your Air Force with more current and relevant capabilities, to maintain an Air Force that is second to none, to continue to provide a deterrent to potential adversaries, and to soundly defeat adversaries should deterrence fail.

The Air Force is committed to advancing our tactical and strategic aircraft programs and capabilities to fully support the Joint and Coalition Team. We appreciate your continued support in turning our vision into an operational reality. Our nation must invest today to ensure tomorrow's air, space and cyberspace dominance.