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HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIR AND LAND FORCES
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
PRESENTATION TO HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE AIR AND LAND FORCES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SUBJECT: Current and Future Department of Defense Aircraft Programs (TACAIR)

COMBINED STATEMENTS OF:
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Lt Gen Carroll H. Chandler (AF/A3/5)

March 22, 2007

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House Armed Services Committee - Air and Land Forces Subcommittee
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Combined Statement of
Lt Gen Carrol H. Chandler (AF/A3/5)
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I. Introduction

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss Air Force Tactical Aircraft Programs and other programs that are important to your Air Force and the Nation.

Your Air Force is fully engaged around the world, fighting terrorism and insurgents in the Global War on Terror (GWOT) while fulfilling our roles as Airmen for the joint team.

Simultaneously, we stand prepared for rapid response to conflict around the globe as our nation's strategic reserve. Air forces succeed when they anticipate and are allowed to shape the future strategic environment and develop the 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—giving the United States 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 16 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.

Through 12 March 2007 your Air Force has flown over 82% of the coalition's 284,565 sorties in Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and 78% of the coalition's 161,454 sorties in Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. In addition to our daily operations, the Air Force has also seen several surge periods over the past 16 years, resulting in unexpected wear and tear on our people and platforms. And, like each of the other Services, we have suffered combat losses. On an average day, the Air Force flies more than 430 sorties in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM. Of this number, approximately 120 sorties are intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR), and strike. Of the remaining, 275 are airlift sorties (both inter- and intra-theater) and 35 are air refueling sorties.

Supporting CENTCOM is just a small part of what we do for our nation's defense. The Air Force has responded to or has been prepared to respond across the entire spectrum of conflict from rapid humanitarian aid to major combat operations. We have flown over 46,982 sorties in support of Operation NOBLE EAGLE and over 3,280 counter drug sorties, while also supporting operations in the Horn of Africa (HOA) and the Philippine Islands.

III. Air Force Programs

As requested by the sub-committee, the following is an update on Air Force programs:

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, track, and target enemy air- and surface-based threats ensures air dominance and freedom of maneuver for all Joint forces. In addition, the F-22A will be the only airborne system in the US military that can conduct network-centric warfare and provide ISR capability from inside adversary battlespace in the opening moments of any contingency. Currently we have 12 F-22A aircraft deployed to the Western Pacific in support of the PACOM Commander's area of operations.

A world-class production line delivers 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 89 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.

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, especially the F-22A, joint air forces can win a major combat operation (MCO) with forces remaining to win the next MCO. The study determined attrition would be unacceptably high with a legacy-heavy force and the follow-on win would be in jeopardy. The F-22A force also optimizes capability return on investment. Fewer mobility assets are required with smaller force packaging, and lower combat attrition. The average procurement unit cost is reduced as we build to our requirement.

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. Conventional take-off and landing test aircraft, AA-1, successfully conducted its first flight on 15 Dec 06. Since then it has flown eight 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 the contract is scheduled to be awarded 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. Currently, the Government Accounting Office (GAD), the Cost Analysis Improvement Group (CAIG), and the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) are each conducting studies that re-examine the costs and benefits associated with an alternate engine program.

F-117

The F-117 was the first low observable aircraft in the DoD inventory to provide critical "first night, surgical, knock the doors off" capability since its first employment in 1990. However, advances in technology and capabilities have mitigated the need to rely upon this aging and expensive-to-maintain aircraft and the Air Force intends to retire the platform while maintaining an acceptable risk level. Congress approved retiring ten aircraft in FY07. The FY08 PB requests authorization to retire the remaining 42 aircraft of the F-117 fleet. B-2 and Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM), as well as F-22 capabilities will fulfill previous F-117 requirements. The Defense Department deems the risk of retiring the F-117A to be acceptable.

AEA and SOJ

The Airborne Electronic Attack (AEA) System of systems (SoS) is designed to enhance the

current and future survivability of joint forces against enemy integrated air defense systems (IADS). The AEA SoS will provide a variety of electronic attack (EA) capabilities, from standoff ranges through stand-in ranges, supporting Joint and Air Force operations. Current efforts include overall systems engineering, network requirements development, component systems requirements allocation, technology risk mitigation demonstrations, and development / maintenance of the AF electronic warfare investment strategy.

A validated requirement for the AEA SoS was established when the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) approved the Initial Capabilities Document (ICD) on 8 November 2004. The DoD solution, as reported to Congress in March 2004, included *stand-in jamming* with the Joint Miniature Air-Launched Decoy (MALD-J) and the Joint Unmanned Combat Air System (J-UCAS), *modified escort* with the EA-6B and EA-18G, *penetrating escort* using Active Electronically Scanned Array (ABSA) radar-equipped aircraft, and *stand-off jamming* using the B-52 Stand-off jammer (SOJ) for radars and the EC-130H Compass Call for communications jamming.

The MALD program is on schedule and on cost with initial fielding expected in FY09. MALD-J begins System Development and Demonstration (SDD) in FY08 with initial fielding in FY11.

The B-52 SOJ program was cancelled due to cost affordability, which was estimated at \$6.9B for the entire fleet. The cancellation put into jeopardy the ability of the Air Force to meet standoff jamming requirements by 2012. The Core Component Jammer (CCJ) refocused the B-52 SOJ program using fewer assets and more tightly focused radio frequency (RF) spectrum receivers and jammers. CCJ was initiated to fulfill the ICD validated requirement for stand-off jammers within budgetary constraints, and the program adjusted the number of aircraft requiring modification while leveraging receiver technology from the ALQ-218 due to development advances in the Navy's EA-18G. The start of the CCJ program depends upon AEA technology maturation, specifically on systems architecture and low-/mid-band jammer technology. Technology maturation can only be met when adequate technology and risk reduction funding can be procured.

CV-22

The Air Force Special Operations Force (SOF) needs modernized and upgraded platforms. The SOF lift gap is exacerbated by the loss of six MH-53 aircraft in OEF and OIF. The CV-22 provides the transformational SOF capability required for the GWOT. SOF forces are critical to the GWOT. Continued support for CV-22 multiyear procurement and recapitalization of SOF C-130 platforms is essential to fill current shortfalls in capability. The Air Force remains committed to modernizing SOF by fielding the CV-22.

The FY07 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) authorized a 5-year contract for the V-22 program beginning in FY08 for the procurement of 185 MV-22 and 26 CV-22 aircraft. The CV-22 Block 10 developmental flight test program will continue through FY07 testing the Terrain Following/Terrain Avoidance (TF/TA) radar, SOF mission avionics, and Electronic Warfare/Infrared (EW/IR) countermeasure systems. The CV-22 is progressing toward an Initial Operational Capability in FY09.

CSAR-X

The Air Force is the only service with dedicated forces organized, trained, and equipped to perform combat search and rescue (CSAR). 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.

In November 2006, the Air Force awarded a SDD contract to Boeing Integrated Defense Systems. Following this decision, Lockheed-Martin and Sikorsky filed source selection protests with the GAO. On 26 Feb 07 the GAO sustained the protests concerning CSAR-X source selection. 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 an airframe that best meets the warfighter's requirements.

Bombers

Our strategy for the future bomber fleet includes a three-phased modernization plan. We have no plans to change the current force of B-1 and B-2 aircraft. The first phase of the modernization strategy includes plans for us to divest 38 B-52s while modernizing the remaining legacy systems. President's Budget FY08 funded a B-52 force structure consisting of 56 B-52s Total Aircraft Inventory (TAI). This inventory included 32 Combat Coded (CC), 11 Training (TF), four Test, and nine backup B-52s. Following submission of the FY08 POM to OSD, Congress mandated that the Air Force "not retire more than 18 B-52s (FY07 retirements) and maintain 44 B-52s as Combat Coded." The Headquarters Air Force, Air Combat Command (ACC), and the Air Force Reserve Center are working together to abide by this restriction while meeting the Air Force need to recapitalize aging aircraft. ACC is staffing a plan to recode 11 TF B-52s and one test B-52 to combat coding which would result in a total of 44 CC B-52s. The 20 B-52s programmed for retirement would remain in the Total Inactive Inventory on XJ status.

The FY08 PB reflects the Air Force position. A fleet of 56 TAI B-52s with 32 coded for combat meets AF requirements while supporting the need to recapitalize. The FY07 NDAA mandated that no funds "be obligated or expended for retiring any of the 93 B-52H bomber aircraft in service in the Air Force as of the date of the enactment of this Act until 45 days after the date on which the Secretary of the Air Force submits a Bomber force structure report prepared by the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA)." IDA has been contracted for this report and is currently completing the information gathering phase. The Air Force expects the report to be finished by the end of 2007.

The second and third phases of the modernization strategy include fielding a next-generation long range strike (NGLRS) capability in 2018 and fielding an advanced technology system with increased speed, range, precision, connectivity and survivability in 2035.

Health of the Fleet

GWOT duration and operations tempo have accelerated service life consumption for numerous platforms. This sustained high operations tempo has contributed to lowered readiness levels, which does not allow us to take much risk in operations and maintenance. We must sustain readiness and be able to fight today. GWOT is forcing the Air Force to maintain some legacy systems to meet the current threat.

While our fighter force is the oldest it has ever been, at an average age of more than 18 years, it is generally healthy and able to carry out the missions of today's Air Force. Our five-year trend in mission capable and aircraft availability rates has remained steady. Both the A-10 and F-16 fleets are undergoing significant structural service life extension programs (SLEP) to keep the airframes viable. The F-16 service life is being extended to 8,000 hours and the A-10 service life will extend through 2028.

The recapitalization challenge is to meet 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. The Air Force must recapitalize the aging fleet to ensure our advantage over future adversaries. The need for fifth-generation fighters stems from almost 17 years of continuous operations in Southwest Asia, supporting GWOT, and maintaining our Homeland Defense posture since 9/11.

F-16C/D. The F-16C/D fleet is in the midst of standardizing capabilities through the Common Configuration Implementation Program. This modification program is a combination of several upgrades to F-16 avionics that enable integration of advanced precision weapons, Link-16 communications, improved situational awareness, and off-bore sight cueing of sensors and weapons. It provides for a new modular mission computer, color displays, advanced interrogator/transponder (Block SO/52 only), Link-16 communication capability, and the joint helmet-mounted cueing system. It also enables the Block 40/42 aircraft to use the same operational flight program (OFP) software as the block SO/52 aircraft, which will reduce the sustainment cost of future OFPs. The FY08 PB requests \$72.6M in FY08 to continue the modification of Block 40 aircraft. Block 50 modifications are complete.

F-15C/D. We are gradually retiring our oldest F-15s from the Air National Guard, while 178 long-term F-15C/D aircraft begin a complete vertical stabilizer replacement program during programmed depot maintenance this year. These aircraft continue to receive legacy upgrades such as GPS/INS, the joint helmet mounted cueing system (JHMCS), and the APG-63v3 AESA radar.

A-10. The A-10 provides lethal, precise, persistent, and responsive firepower for Close Air Support to ground forces including Special Operations Forces. It has performed superbly in operations DESERT STORM, ALLIED FORCE, OEF and OIF. The GWOT high operations tempo has accelerated the service life usage of the A-10 fleet, which has resulted in wing structural problems. In the short-term, the SLEP will keep the A-10 viable towards 16,000 hours. Other upgrade programs in progress include Precision Engagement (PE), ARC-210 Secure Line of Sight (SLOS)/Beyond Line of Sight (BLOS) communications, and the Situational Awareness Data Link (SADL).

JASSM and JASSM-ER

The joint air-to-surface standoff missile (JASSM) and the extended range version, JASSM-ER, is a "kick down the door" weapon to be used to neutralize enemy's defenses and warfighting infrastructure--high value, fixed and re-locatable targets in an anti-access environment. The program has experienced cost growth in the Average Procurement Unit Cost (APUC) attributable to the addition of the JASSM-ER and a robust reliability improvement program. A reduction in the near-term missile quantities and change in acquisition strategy also contributed to unit cost growth.

IV. Closing

We are building a 21st century Air Force prepared to dominate in the 21st century—strategically, operationally, and tactically. The above capable and lethal fighter, bomber, missile, and stand-off jammer programs provide us the means to asymmetrically provide Global Vigilance, Global Reach, Global Power, and worldwide expeditionary combat force application. These capabilities are critical today and for the future Joint force. The Air Force is committed to advancing our tactical and strategic aircraft programs, missile programs and jamming 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.