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SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES  
UNITED STATES SENATE

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

PRESENTATION TO THE  
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES  
UNITED STATES SENATE

SUBJECT: Strategic Systems

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Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations,  
Plans and Requirements

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Today, the Air Force flies, fights, and wins in air, space, and cyberspace--globally and reliably--as a valued member of our Joint and coalition teams. Last year the Air Force conducted more than 45,000 sorties supporting Operation IRAQI FREEDOM/NEW DAWN and almost 101,000 sorties supporting Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. Just recently, the AF led the way in executing and supporting Operation ODYSSEY DAWN in Libya, flying hundreds of sorties to date. As we continue to accomplish our current mission sets and plan for future threats, we must remain mindful of the increasing age and costs of operating our aging air fleet which is 33.7 years old, on average. Our Air Force leadership is scrutinizing programs and budgets to find acceptable solutions to meet growing demands that are competing for limited funds.

Our fleet of 156 bombers remains engaged in today's fight while retaining an ability to meet future challenges. Air Force bombers have maintained a continuous presence in Southwest Asia since shortly after September 11th. Bombers have also provided the US Pacific Commander with a continuous presence throughout the area of responsibility (AOR) since 2004. The Air Force continues its commitment to future long-range strike capabilities as part of a comprehensive, phased plan, valued at \$5.5 billion over the FYDP, to modernize and sustain our bomber force.

## **B-1**

The B-1 currently provides long-range persistent airpower in direct support of NATO/ISAF, US and Afghan troops in three major operations. The B-1 also provides real-time intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance with full-motion video, enhanced situational awareness and a demonstrable overwatch presence. The Air Force added the SNIPER Advanced Targeting Pod capability to B-1 aircraft in summer 2009 to provide aircrews with positive identification capability and the ability to share video with ground forces. The B-1 has proven to be the workhorse of current combat operations, flying the majority of the bomber combat sorties in the Central Command AOR. Most recently, two B-1s launched from Ellsworth AFB, and dropped munitions in Libya in support of Operation ODYSSEY DAWN. With less than two days from first notice to takeoff, Ellsworth Airmen prepared several aircraft and hundreds of weapons to provide the combat configuration needed halfway across the globe. This is the the first time the

B-1 fleet has launched combat sorties from the continental United States to strike targets overseas. The B-1 is beginning to show its age and requires multiple upgrades to maintain critical combat capability. B-1 modernization and sustainment programs include the Integrated Battle Station program, combining Fully Integrated Data Link (FIDL), Vertical Situational Display Upgrade (VSDU), and Central Integrated Test System (CITS) programs under one installation contract. Four B-1 upgrades are required to prevent grounding of the B-1 fleet. The four grounding modifications are: VSDU, CITS, Radar Maintainability and Improvement Program (RMIP), and the Inertial Navigation System (INS).

B-1 upgrades are a must, but funding has proved challenging. The AF has decided that force structure adjustments can provide the necessary cost savings that will allow us to keep the B-1 fleet viable. As such the Air Force is retiring six, from an overall force of 66, B-1s to fund the four grounding modifications plus Fully Integrated Data Link (FIDL) through the remainder of the B-1 fleet. This is strictly a programming action, taking acceptable (moderate) risk to the overall bomber capability requirement. This retirement will not impact current operations because real-world taskings will always take priority over home-station training missions.

B-1 aircraft availability rates remained relatively level for FY02-07 with a drop in FY08 and FY09 primarily driven by modernization efforts. To mitigate manpower shortages and reduced maintenance experience levels, B-1 bases have been augmented by contract field teams which will continue through April 2011. Manning authorizations have been approved but B-1 aircraft availability will be affected into the distant future while personnel are trained and gain experience. The Air Force places great emphasis on sustaining and maintaining the B-1 fleet, ensuring that this key capability and keeping it available to support our Warfighters.

## **B-2**

The B-2 has participated in every combat action, including ODYSSEY DAWN, since Operation ALLIED FORCE and is pivotal to US Strategic Command's plans as well as to Pacific Command's (USPACOM) Continuous Bomber Presence to assure allies and support US interests in the Pacific. The B-2 Spirit provides a lethal combination of range, payload, and stealth. It remains the world's sole long-range, low observable dual-role bomber. It is the only platform capable of delivering 80 independently targeted 500-lb Joint Direct Attack Munitions (GBU-38).

It is the only platform capable of carrying the developing Massive Ordnance Penetrator; a weapon crucial to our capabilities against hardened, deeply buried targets. While B-2 availability has steadily increased over the past five years, in part due to enhancements in low observable maintenance such as the highly successful Alternate High Frequency Material program, it faces increasing need for upgrades to avionics originally designed over twenty years ago.

The Extremely High Frequency Satellite Communications and Computer Upgrade Program (EHF SATCOM and Computer Upgrade) has three increments. Increment 1 upgrades the B-2's flight management computers and main data bus as an enabler for future avionics efforts. Increment 2 integrates the Family of Beyond-line-of-sight Terminals (FAB-T) along with a low observable antenna to provide secure, survivable strategic communication, and Increment 3 connects the B-2 into the Global Information Grid. Increment 1 of EHF SATCOM and Computer Upgrade is beginning procurement this year for fleet installations beginning at the end of FY-2013.

We will finish replacing the B-2's original radar antenna, upgrade selected radar avionics and change the radar operating frequency as part of the Radar Modernization Program (RMP). Thanks in large part to Congressional support, the RMP acquisition strategy was modified to include life-of-type component buys to avoid diminishing manufacturing source issues during the production run.

The Department is also investing in B-2 Defensive Management System (DMS) modernization to ensure continued survivability. This will allow the B-2 to continue operations in more advanced threat environments while decreasing the maintenance required to operate the system. The DMS faces obsolescence in light of threat system advances and diminishing manufacturing sources for critical components. \$41M is being invested in FY12 with \$560M across the FYDP to maintain B-2 penetration capability. We just completed an Analysis of Alternatives and are preparing to move towards the technology development phase.

## **B-52**

The B-52 Stratofortress is our nation's oldest frontline long-range strategic bomber with the last airframe entering service in 1962. It amplifies the consistent message of long-range US airpower

in a theater like USPACOM where distances drive decisions. Equipped with an advanced targeting pod, the B-52 can also provide real-time intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance with full-motion video, enhanced situational awareness, a demonstrable overwatch presence and precision joint fires in support of USPACOM's objectives. The Air Force has invested in modernization programs to keep the B-52 platform viable and operationally relevant. Major B-52 modernizations include the Combat Network Communications Technology (CONNECT), EHF SATCOM, Strategic Radar Replacement (SR2), and the 1760 Internal Weapons Bay Upgrade programs. CONNECT provides an integrated communication and mission management system with machine to machine data link interfaces for weapons delivery. The digital infrastructure provided in CONNECT is the backbone for EHF SATCOM. The EHF SATCOM program integrates the FAB-T providing assured, survivable two-way strategic command and control communications. The SR2 program, starting in FY10, integrates a modern non-developmental radar to address systemic sustainment issues, replacing the legacy APN-166 radar. Finally, the 1760 Internal Weapons Bay Upgrade provides internal J-series weapons capability through modification of Common Strategic Rotary Launcher and an upgrade of stores management and offensive avionics software. Updated with modern technology the B-52 will be capable of delivering the full complement of jointly developed weapons and will continue into the 21st century as an important element of our nation's defenses.

### **Long Range Strike (LRS)**

Our existing bomber force has performed exceptionally well and has provided our nation an unmatched global strike capability. However, these systems will eventually reach the end of their service lives. Our bomber fleet also faces challenges in the face of advancing threat capabilities and emerging Anti Access/Area Denied (A2/AD) environments. The Air Force must look ahead to the next generation of long range strike capability in order to provide future presidents the ability to hold any target at risk, anywhere on the globe.

On January 6, 2011 the Secretary of Defense announced that the Air Force would initiate a new bomber program as the cornerstone of the future of our Long Range Strike portfolio for the United States Air Force. Our intent is to field a new long-range penetrating bomber to join the joint portfolio of deep-strike capabilities. He directed this new penetrating bomber would be

nuclear capable, and envisioned to accommodate both unmanned and manned operations. The SecDef also directed the Air Force to procure 80-100 of these new highly survivable bombers, which should begin delivery in the mid-2020's. The FY12 President's Budget provides funding for the long range penetrating bomber program, following an extensive 18 month, OSD-led review of long range strike requirements. By leveraging proven technologies and streamlining program management during development, the Air Force will ensure the new bomber can be delivered before our current fleet goes out of service. Though details of the program, including specific system performance attributes such as range, payload and speed are classified, the total annual budget will be executed by regular appropriation of funds, with the Air Force making capability tradeoffs as necessary to hold procurement costs down to ensure affordability for the full purchase of the program of record. The President's Budget requests \$197 million in FY12 and \$3.7 billion over the FYDP for the new penetrating bomber.

In the mid-term (2017-2030), we plan to field the new penetrating bomber while continuing to develop its capability as the threat and the technology mature. Long-term (2031-2050) plans aim to complete fielding of the fleet while continuing to evolve the weapon system as the threat environment and technology mature. The Air Force LRS strategy provides present and future leaders continued and affordable global strike options within emerging anti-access area denial environments.

## **Closing**

The Air Force stands ready to win today's Joint fight and plan for tomorrow's challenges. We are committed to working together to determine the right procurement, sustainment and retirement strategy to remain prepared for the current fight as well as posturing for future demands. Dominance of air, space, and cyberspace continues to be requisite to the defense of the United States. We appreciate your continued support and look forward to working in concert to ensure our decisions enable us to strengthen our Air Force to meet future requirements.