

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

PRESENTATION TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND
MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

UNITED STATES SENATE

SUBJECT: READINESS ISSUES

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INTRODUCTION

The United States continues to confront a dynamic international environment requiring the military to remain strong and agile in the face of a diverse range of threats. Along with our Joint partners, the Air Force defends and advances the interests of the United States by providing unique core function capabilities required to succeed in today's fight and future conflicts.

Underpinning the work of all Air Force Core Functions are the capabilities inherent in Agile Combat Support (ACS). ACS is the ability to create, protect, and sustain air and space forces across the full spectrum of military operations, spanning the entire set of our diverse functional capabilities. The Fiscal Year 2012 budget request of \$33.8 billion for ACS impacts our entire Air Force—from the development and training of Airmen, maintaining and supporting weapon systems, and regaining acquisition excellence. ACS enables the Air Force to remain a mission-focused and highly capable force; a difficult task given over 20 years of constant combat operations.

SUPPORTING THE WARFIGHTER

Our enduring commitment to readiness and the Joint fight is evidenced by the nearly 37,000 forward deployed, and more than 57,000 forward stationed Airmen at 135 locations worldwide. These Airmen contribute to the fight in a variety of ways by fulfilling traditional roles as Air Liaison Officers, Combat Control Teams, Combat Communications and Battlefield Weather personnel, as well as non-traditional roles supporting Joint Expeditionary Taskings as Provincial Reconstruction Teams, Ground Convoy Operators and Agricultural Development Teams. The many outstanding Airmen that form the "logistics chain" – maintainers, security forces, vehicle operators, explosive ordnance disposal teams, engineers, aerial porters, and others have enabled the Air Force to conduct more than 45,000 sorties supporting Operation IRAQI FREEDOM/NEW DAWN, and almost 101,000 sorties supporting Operation ENDURING

FREEDOM, deliver over 1.78 million passengers and 712,000 tons of cargo, and employ almost 2,580 short tons of munitions.

The full impact of agile combat support cannot be expressed by mere statistics of tonnage moved and sorties generated. ACS covers virtually every aspect of Joint and coalition operations and one example of our support to the entire Joint and coalition team is Basic Expeditionary Airfield Resources (BEAR). BEAR includes virtually everything the Joint warfighter might need for airfield operations in an austere environment such as shelters, generators, hygiene kits, and airfield matting. A recent example of how BEAR was used is when the 49th Materiel Maintenance Group at Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico and the Army's Surface Deployment and Distribution Command rapidly packed and shipped BEAR assets to Afghanistan. This movement equated to 14,550 short tons of equipment enabling the set of 15 housing encampments supporting 8,250 personnel. Additionally, the Air Force has transferred 22 BEAR sets to the Army and Marine Corps to support the stand-up of Forward Operating Bases throughout Afghanistan as well as two BEAR sets to the Navy to support the initial stand-up of detainee operations at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. These tremendous efforts exemplify our unmatched Agile Combat Support—not just to Air Force units—but also to our Joint and coalition partners.

PERSONNEL AND READINESS

With Air Force personnel deployed to more than 135 locations worldwide on an average day, we rely heavily on the total force. Of the 37,000 forward deployed Airmen, nearly 30,000 are continuing on a rotating basis to contribute to operations in the United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) AOR, including 10,000 Airmen in Afghanistan. An additional 57,000 total force Airmen are forward stationed overseas providing capabilities in direct support of our combatant commander requirements. And from home stations here in the U.S.,

approximately 216,000 Total Force Airmen also provide daily support to combatant commanders' worldwide operations.

This level of activity reflects our commitment to provide Global Vigilance, Reach, and Power in today's Joint fight. However, this high operations tempo (OPTEMPO) has also had some detrimental effects on our overall readiness. Readiness for full spectrum military operations is a challenge for our combat air forces and some other limited-supply/high-demand units. Since 2003, we have seen a slow but steady decline in reported readiness indicators. Our OPTEMPO since 2001 has produced lower deploy-to-dwell ratios for high-demand skills. At present, 16 enlisted and six officer career fields are "stressed". However there are a number of programs in place to bolster manning in these career fields, as well as mitigate potential negative effects on our Airmen and their families.

Regardless, the readiness of the Mobility Air Forces (MAF) remains high while meeting robust and dynamic operational requirements. Our airlift fleet continues to provide strategic airlift as well as theater and direct support airlift missions moving personnel and a wide variety of equipment and supplies. MAF assets continue to directly support our Joint and coalition partners, achieving a mission capable (MC) rate of 82.7 percent despite a 350 percent increase in hourly utilization within the AOR. Stateside, MAF fleet MC and aircraft availability (AA) rates have steadily improved over the last few years, attaining current rates of 78 percent and 65 percent, respectively. These improvements are attributed to initiatives such as the C-5 Reliability Enhancement and Re-Engining Program and the C-130 Avionics Modernization Program.

The readiness of Combat Air Forces (CAF) aircraft is adequate despite challenges from accumulating hours on our fleet faster than envisioned when the aircraft were first fielded. We're now flying the oldest Air Force fleet in our history as a result of 20 years of continuous

combat operations. The average age of all CAF aircraft is 21.3 years. Our CAF aircraft fleet has shown a slight decline in MC and AA rates of 3 percent and 4.5 percent, respectively over the past 5 years, settling at 75 percent and 65.5 percent for Fiscal Year 2011. In the AOR, the current MC rate is 84 percent. This is to be expected due to the focus on warfighter support. To offset these challenges, we are conducting full-scale structural and durability tests and engineering analysis to assess the longevity of our CAF fleets. These actions to extend and modernize the legacy fleet as a bridge to 5th generation capabilities are not considered replacement actions. The F-16 Service Life Extension Program is one example of the ongoing efforts to mitigate fighter force challenges.

In the logistics arena, we've improved funding to Weapon System Sustainment (WSS); however, sustainment challenges continue as we field new weapon systems and balance contract versus organic sources of repair. To address these readiness issues, we must keep aircraft recapitalization and procurement programs on track while continually managing our force to ensure we maintain the right numbers and mix of skills in our highly tasked and highest priority mission areas. The dedicated work and professionalism of our Airmen ensure our aircraft inventory is ready, despite extensive use in contingency operations and increases in fleet service life. Notwithstanding these challenges, modernization and recapitalization of our aircraft remains a very high priority.

FY12 BUDGET OVERVIEW

For Fiscal Year 2012, the Air Force is requesting \$150 billion in our baseline budget and \$16 billion in the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) supplemental appropriation. Our budget request represents a careful balance of resources among the Air Force core functions necessary to implement the President's national security strategy, and an extraordinary effort to ensure America gets the maximum value out of every dollar.

Last year, the Secretary of Defense directed the Services to identify a hundred billion dollars in efficiencies in overhead and support, and move it to war fighting and readiness. Our Fiscal Year 2012 budget supports the Office of the Secretary of Defense efficiency request and incorporates over \$33 billion in efficiencies across the future years defense plan (FYDP). The savings will be shifted to higher priority combat capability as we reduce overhead costs, improve business practices and eliminate excess, troubled or lower priority programs. As we consider how we can achieve efficiencies, the Air Force is looking across the enterprise, thinking broadly and creatively across business areas – from our organizational structures, to reducing fuel and energy consumption, to improving depot and supply-chain business processes and sustaining weapons systems.

Specifically in the logistics area and weapon systems sustainment, we conducted an end-to-end review of over 5500 sustainment tasks, resulting in a reduction of \$1.2 billion in requirements. We also looked at supply chain management processes which led to expanding the use of strategic sourcing, the consolidation of accounts, and reductions in manpower and overhead. Finally, we standardized requirements using improved collaboration and supportability reviews to increase planning accuracy and on-time depot performance. To date, our efforts have yielded \$3 billion in efficiencies over the FYDP and will allow the Air Force to fund WSS at 85 percent, including funding in the OCO budget, in Fiscal Year 2012.

In the energy area, the Air Force continues as a Federal energy-conscious leader by advancing energy independence by reducing aviation fuel use, installation energy intensity, and vehicle fleet petroleum consumption. Our Fiscal Year 2012 budget request includes over \$550 million for energy initiatives and focuses on reducing energy consumption through enhanced efficiencies. We are already making significant reductions in aviation fuel use through the implementation of demand reduction initiatives adopted from commercial industry best

practices. As we recapitalize our mobility fleets, we expect an annual savings of nearly 70 million gallons of fuel.

The Air Force is also committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and carbon footprint through the reduced use of fossil fuels consumed directly through vehicles and facilities and indirectly through consumption of fossil fuel-generated electricity from the national electric grids. From replacing outdated heating/air-conditioning systems, to using energy efficient light bulbs, to working with local communities to build large solar arrays and wind turbines on installations, we are utilizing practical and innovative solutions to meet our goal of reducing energy intensity by 30 percent by 2015.

In Fiscal Year 2012, we will continue our energy conservation efforts, which have already reduced facility energy intensity nearly 15 percent from 2003 levels. In Fiscal Year 2010, we exceeded our renewable goals and produced or procured nearly 7 percent of our total facility energy from renewable sources, and we continued to lead the Department of Defense as the number one purchaser of renewable energy for the fifth year in a row. To reduce our use of vehicle fleet petroleum on our installations, we maintain over 7,000 flex fuel and hybrid vehicles and over 1,800 low-speed vehicles. The Air Force has made significant progress and is committed to further energy efficiencies wherever we can find them.

Realization of cost-savings initiatives like the ones mentioned above will allow the Air Force to reallocate funding to modernize and recapitalize weapons systems, improve capabilities, and enhance warfighter operations, especially in the current fiscally constrained environment.

NUCLEAR DETERRENCE OPERATIONS

Continuing to Strengthen our nuclear enterprise remains the number one Air Force priority. Toward that end, we have taken positive steps within the Fiscal Year 2012 budget request related to this core function.

The Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center continues to pursue vital and deliberate sustainment of the nuclear enterprise through efforts such as the Air Force Comprehensive Assessment of Nuclear Sustainment process. ICBM modernization and sustainment includes on-going programs to replace aging support equipment such as weapons load trailers, electronic systems test sets, weapons storage, and security systems. In addition to these important efforts, we are strengthening positive inventory control and accountability for Nuclear Weapons Related Materiel by creating improved visibility and performing semi-annual inventories. We're also refining the inspection process by using a self-assessment philosophy, examining the scope and size of the inspections, and performing rigorous root cause analysis of all major write-ups.

Beyond nuclear weapon system sustainment and modernization, the Air Force is focusing on human capital as we carefully balance requirements for our limited, intensively scrutinized, high-demand Airmen in the nuclear field. We've instituted changes to improve the long-term professional fitness of our most precious resource—our Airmen. Our Airmen must be trained, educated, and experienced through professional development initiatives designed to create the capabilities and culture this critical mission demands, and our nation deserves. The Nuclear Enterprise Human Capital Execution Plan seeks to improve the development and retention of Airmen with appropriate experience and critical skills. Our new approach to managing enlisted talent will give us the capability to evaluate Airmen in the nuclear field and provide a deliberate process for developing them.

CONCLUSION

Air Force personnel, weapon systems, equipment, and organizations are prepared for today's operations and tomorrow's uncertain challenges, despite fiscal challenges and high operations tempo. With an uncompromising commitment, the Air Force remains ready to provide Global Vigilance, Reach and Power for America.