

UNCLASSIFIED

**House Armed Services Committee
Air and Land Forces and Seapower and Expeditionary Forces Subcommittee**

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Subject: TACAIR

**Combined Statement of
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I. Introduction

Your Air Force is actively fighting terrorism and insurgents around the world in the Global War on Terror (GWOT), and we appreciate the House Armed Services Committee's continued support of our Nation's air, space, and cyberspace forces. Since the GWOT began, congressional supplemental funding each year, including the \$5.5 billion provided for FY08, ensured that your Airmen deployed in combat overseas are trained, equipped, and ready day-to-day to perform their mission. As we prepare for the next year of global operations, the Air Force is grateful for the Subcommittee's support provided through the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act, and as always, we appreciate the great lengths to which the subcommittee has gone to support Airmen, their pay, and their quality of life.

In the GWOT, we continue to fulfill our roles as Airmen for the Joint team working with our sister services to provide the desired effects to the Combatant Commanders. Simultaneously, we stand prepared for rapid response and conflict across the globe as our Nation's sword and shield. For over 17 years, the United States Air Force has been engaged in continuous combat operations providing our Nation unparalleled advantage in three war fighting domains: Air, space, and cyberspace. Your Airmen have maintained constant watch, deployed continuously, engaged America's adversaries directly, responded to human crises around the world, and provided the *Global Vigilance*, *Global Reach*, and *Global Power* to secure our Nation.

Your Air Force is the most battle-tested in Air Force history, and every day your Airmen find innovative ways to accomplish their mission more efficiently and effectively. Your Airmen are dedicated to the defense of this Nation and have committed themselves to go to the ends of the Earth, to the most dangerous or austere locations, in our Nation's hour of need or in the world's moment of despair. If tonight, tomorrow, or in 20 years America calls; we will go, because it is our sacred oath to provide America and its Joint team, wherever it might be engaged, the full might of air, space, and cyberspace power.

To ensure success, your Air Force is organizing, training, and equipping our Airmen for both the current and future fights, building in the flexibility to operate across the entire spectrum of conflict. It is no accident that America's Air Force has unprecedented *Global Vigilance*, *Global Reach*, and *Global Power*. We learned our lessons from our own history and others', and we invested resources and effort to establish and maintain dominance in our three warfighting domains: Air, space and cyberspace. Even after the victory in Operation DESERT STORM, the Air Force upgraded, modernized, and completely changed its training mindset and programs. The result was a flexible, responsive, and lethal force that contributed greatly to the Joint successes in Operations ALLIED FORCE (OAF), ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF), and IRAQI FREEDOM (OIF). Even with these advances, Airmen continue to find ways to improve the combat power provided to the Joint team. Your forces engaged in combat today are fully ready to perform their missions, but future dominance is at risk.

America faces a dangerous and uncertain future and our enemies do not sit idly by. Instead, adversaries – both declared and potential – are developing and fielding new and better means to threaten our Nation, our interests, and stability around the world. At the same time, the average age of our air and space craft continues to rise, and our ability to overcome future threats is diminishing. We also face increased operations, maintenance, and personnel costs that cut into

our ability to finance future dominant capabilities. We are doing all they can to become even more efficient and effective and to defray these costs. Despite our best efforts, we face declining readiness and soaring recapitalization rates. Therefore, we have taken significant steps to self-finance a vital recapitalization and modernization effort for our aging air and space force. The Air Force must be capable of setting the conditions for America's success against emerging threats in the uncertain years that lie ahead.

II. Win Today's Fight

Our first priority is to win today's fight. Air Force GWOT missions are only the latest in a string of over 17 continuous years of combat since Operation DESERT STORM began. Throughout this period, our strategic forces have remained on constant alert. In fact, the United States Air Force has underwritten the national strategy for over 60 years by providing a credible deterrent force, and we continue to serve as the Nation's force of first and last resort, reassuring allies, dissuading competitors, and deterring adversaries by maintaining an always-ready nuclear arm.

Today, Air Force operations are on-going in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Horn of Africa (HOA). Every day, your Air Force flies over 300 sorties in Iraq and Afghanistan directly integrated with and enhancing ground operations. Since GWOT operations began, your Air Force has flown over 80% of the coalition's combat sorties in support of OIF and OEF. These missions provide the Joint and Coalition team airlift, aero-medical evacuation, air-refueling, Command and Control, close air support to ground operations, strike, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR), and electronic warfare. We have flown over 385,000 mobility sorties moving equipment and troops to and from the CENTCOM Area of Responsibility (AOR). Our intra-theater airlift missions shift convoys to the air eliminating the need to place troops and vehicles in harms way. Aero-medical evacuation missions move wounded Soldiers, Sailors,

Marines, and Airmen to higher levels of medical care at hospitals as far away as the continental United States. In 2007, America's Airmen conducted nearly 1,600 precision strikes in Iraq and Afghanistan, many under the control of Joint Tactical Air Controllers. In Iraq, strikes increased by 171% over the previous year. Added to those numbers, your Air Force has flown over 50,000 sorties protecting the homeland for Operation NOBLE EAGLE.

Air Force engagement in CENTCOM is only the tip of the iceberg. Airmen operate around-the-clock and around-the-globe to provide all Combatant Commanders (COCOMs) with critical capabilities. Over 40 percent of the total force and 53 percent of the active duty force are directly engaged in or supporting COCOM operations everyday. On any given day, the Air Force has approximately 206,000 Airmen (175,000 active duty plus an additional 31,000 guard and reserve) fulfilling COCOM tasks. This includes approximately 127,000 Airmen conducting activities such as operating and controlling satellites, standing alert in our Inter-Continental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) facilities, operating unmanned aerial vehicles, launching airlift and tanker sorties, providing intelligence assessments, and many other functions critical to each of the COCOMs. There are a further 57,000 Airmen stationed OCONUS in direct support of the PACOM and EUCOM missions. Finally, a portion of the above forces plus an additional 22,000 Airman from the current AEF rotation are made available for deployments in support of other COCOM requirements. At any given time, 34,000 of these Airmen are deployed with 25,000 of them deployed to the CENTCOM AOR of which approximately 6,200 are in-lieu-of (ILO) taskings with Airmen filling Army deployment requirements. Since 2004, we have deployed approximately 24,000 Airmen to perform ILO taskings.

III. Air Force Programs

As requested by the subcommittee, the following information provides updates on Air Force programs:

Joint Strike Fighter Alternative Engine Program

The Department continues to believe the risks associated with a single source engine supplier are manageable and do not outweigh the investment required to fund a competitive alternate engine. However, the Air Force and Navy are executing the \$480M appropriated by Congress in the 2008 budget to continue development. We have completed the Critical Design Review for the alternate engine in February 2008 and we have completed over 300 hours of engine testing for the conventional take-off and landing aircraft.

The cost to complete remaining F136 development is estimated at \$1.4B in Research, Development, Test and Evaluation through 2013. Starting in 2009, continuing the F136 program would require increased procurement to fund the costs of having a second engine on the production line and increased sustainment.

Airborne Electronic Attack (AEA)

A validated requirement for the AEA was established when the Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) approved the Initial Capabilities Document (ICD) on 8 November 2004. The ICD findings are congruent with the results of the AEA analysis of alternatives (AoA) released in 2002 and revalidated by Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics in 2007. The ICD highlighted three requirements: Timely and accurate threat detection, identification and location; neutralize, destroy, and degrade enemy air defenses; provide access and protection, and affect adversary's information process, systems, and networks.

The Defense Department solution for electronic attack, as reported to Congress in March 2004, included stand-in jamming with the Miniature Air-Launched Decoy - Jammer (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 (AESA) 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.

Congress deferred PB-08 funding for MALD initial production to the FY08 GWOT supplemental. With Congress' inclusion of this funding in the FY08 GWOT supplemental, the MALD program is on schedule and on cost with initial fielding expected in FY10. MALD-J begins System Development and Demonstration (SDD) in FY10 with initial fielding in FY12.

In December 2005, PBD-720 cancelled the B-52 SOJ program due to requirements creep and escalating costs, which jeopardized the ability of the Air Force to meet stand-off jamming requirements by 2012. In response, the Air Force proposed Core Component Jammer (CCJ), refocusing the B-52 SOJ program using fewer assets and more tightly focused radio frequency (RF) spectrum receivers and jammers. CCJ will fulfill the ICD validated requirement for stand-off jamming, and the program adjusts the number of aircraft requiring modification while leveraging receiver technology from the Navy's EA-18G. To date, the proposed CCJ program is unfunded. However, the Air Force is pursuing technical maturation efforts for a possible stand-off jamming solution. Toward this effort, the Air Force increased technical maturation funding in PB08 by \$20.5 million and in PB09 by \$52 million. The Air Force also applied the \$4 million Congressional add in PB08 to risk reduction efforts in pod development and design. The Air Force is investigating phased array weight and power requirements; systems architecture refinement; and development of low-band and mid-band phased array suppliers in order to increase technical readiness levels and position the Air Force for a possible program start of an affordable stand-off capability in the near future.

The EC-130 Compass Call is a low density/high demand asset. The demand for its capability continues to increase with aircraft performing in both theaters. There are currently no plans for recapitalizing the Compass Call fleet or modernizing its avionics.

In summary, to meet the validated AEA requirements, the Air Force must provide a complete AEA capability composed of: sufficient sensing (e.g. threat identification and geo-location) to support reactive jamming; full frequency coverage; stand-in jamming; and specialized high power jamming along with modernized self protection systems and electronic support systems. The Air Force must bring MALD-J to the field by 2012; keep Compass Call viable; modernize the fleet with: digital Radar Warning Receiver (RWR) and Electronic Warfare Integrated Reprogramming (EWIR) capability; and update self-protection pods with Digital Radio Frequency Memory (DRFM) capability. Finally, it is imperative that the Air Force continue technical maturation of Core Component Jammer, to include the possible funding in the Program Objective Memorandum (POM) 10 process for a flight demonstration, in order to achieve a stand-off jam solution.

JASSM and JASSM-ER

The ability to neutralize an enemy's defenses and warfighting infrastructure in an anti-access environment provided by Joint Air to Surface Stand-off Missile (JASSM) remains essential to national security and the Air Force continues to support it. JASSM recently completed a flight test characterization program to clearly understand the missile reliability, demonstrate corrective actions, and provide a complete body-of-knowledge assessment for the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics. These flights support the Nunn-McCurdy certification process. We are confident that the missile's merits and recent flight test successes will allow this critical weapon system to gain certification, return to full rate production and restart the enhancement efforts.

If the program is recertified in the April/May timeframe, the baseline JASSM would not require a restructure; however, beyond May, the program is in jeopardy of a production break. JASSM-Extended Range (JASSM-ER) will require a restructure based on a production delay.

The first JASSM-ER activity upon recertification is to complete procurement and assembly of the 12 operational test assets and resume flight testing.

F-22A Procurement Plans

We're proud to tell you the F-22 program has established a world class production program. The F-22A production program is currently delivering Lot 6 aircraft ahead of scheduled contract delivery dates at a rate of about two per month. Additionally, construction has started on Lot 7 Raptors, the first lot of the three-year multiyear procurement contract we awarded last summer. When the plant delivers the last aircraft of Lot 9 in December 2011, we will have completed the program of record of 183 Raptors. The Air Force supports the President's Budget and greatly appreciates the SECDEF commitment to keep the F-22 production line open through a supplemental request. Because of our economic order quantity buy under the multiyear contract, some vendors early in build process will complete deliveries and begin shutdown in November this year (2008). As such, we are on track to release a shutdown request for proposal later this summer and we anticipate FY09 shutdown costs to be \$40M.

On the current unfunded requirements list, we requested an additional \$600M to buy four more aircraft to replace GWOT losses of legacy aircraft. These aircraft would be dovetailed in at the end of Lot 9 and will only keep the production line open for an additional two months. If we want to keep the line open and deliver an additional F-22 Lot, then the Air Force would require \$595.6M in FY09 for Advance Procurement of 24 aircraft. In either case, we are at a critical cross-road: we must make a decision by November to avoid increased costs and a break in the production line before our suppliers begin to exit the market.

F-22A Future Capabilities & Modifications

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 multi-role F-22A's combination of speed, stealth, maneuverability and integrated avionics gives this remarkable aircraft the ability to penetrate and survive in 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.

The Air Force has accepted 113 F-22A aircraft to date, out of a programmed delivery of 183. Most of these aircraft include the Increment 2 upgrade, which provides the ability to employ supersonic JDAM and enhances the intra-flight data-link (IFDL) to provide connectivity with additional F-22s. The F-22A fleet will be upgraded under the JROC approved Increment 3 upgrade designed to enhance both air-to-air and precision ground attack capability. Raptors off the production line today are wired to accept the Increment 3.1 upgrade, which when equipped, upgrades the APG-77 AESA radar to enable synthetic aperture radar ground mapping capability and provides the ability to self-target JDAMs using on-board sensors, and allows F-22s to carry and employ 8 small diameter bombs (SDB). Increment 3.1 is funded and begins to field in FY2010. Future F-22s will include the Increment 3.2 upgrade, which are funded and feature the next generation data-link, improved SDB employment capability, improved targeting using multi-ship geo-location, automatic ground collision avoidance system (Auto GCAS) and, the capability to employ our enhanced air-to-air weapons (AIM-120D and AIM-9X). Increment 3.2 should begin to field in FY13. The Increment 3.3 upgrade is currently unfunded. It plans to include Mode 5/S, which is the next generation Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) and advanced air-traffic control transponder, radar auto search/auto detect, which gives automated target

cueing using fourth generation AESA radar, and a ground-moving-target-indicator-and-tracking capability.

CSAR-X

The Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) mission is an Air Force core competency, and the Air Force is the only service with dedicated forces organized, trained, and equipped to perform this mission. Safely securing and returning our Airmen and members of the Joint and coalition team is a moral imperative that we owe our Nation and its allies. The CSAR recapitalization program (CSAR-X) is the Air Force's number two acquisition priority. The CSAR-X helicopter will provide a more capable, reliable and responsive means for rapid recovery of downed, injured or isolated personnel in a threat environment, day or night, and under adverse weather conditions. The CSAR-X will also be capable of supporting military operations other than war such as non-combatant evacuation and disaster relief operations.

The Air Force is committed to openness and transparency while maintaining the integrity of our acquisition processes to procure an aircraft that will meet our warfighters' needs. Purchasing the entire 141 CSAR-X aircraft will relieve the strain caused by the high operations tempo placed on the current inventory of 101 aging HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters. The submission period for the Request for Proposal Amendment #5 closed on January 7, 2008 and the proposals were received. The evaluation is underway, with Army and Navy helicopter expertise on the source selection team, coupled with OSD participation on the council. We are committed to awarding the CSAR-X contract fairly and hope to announce the decision this fall.

Repeated contract protests have delayed program execution of over \$1B, reduced procurement of 15 CSAR-X aircraft through FY13, and could potentially delay the initial operational capability from fourth quarter fiscal year 2012 to third quarter fiscal year 2014. The FY08 Defense Appropriations Act transferred \$99M to support HH-60 modifications to ensure it

is capable of safely and effectively completing the CSAR mission until CSAR-X becomes operational. We will be providing the defense committees with reports on the execution of these funds.

CV-22

The Air Force Special Operations Forces need modernized and upgraded platforms. Continued support for CV-22 procurement is essential to fill current shortfalls in capability. The CV-22 is the special operations variant of the V-22 tilt-rotor and provides long-range infiltration, exfiltration, and resupply of Special Operations Forces (SOF) in politically or militarily denied areas. The CV-22 provides the transformational SOF capability required for the global war on terror (GWOT). The Air Force remains committed to modernizing the SOF by fielding the CV-22.

The CV-22 is progressing toward an Initial Operational Capability in FY09. The Navy and Air Force completed Block 10 development this past September and AFOTEC began Initial Operational Test and Evaluation in October. We expect the flying phase of IOT&E to complete in June 2008. This will support a potential first deployment for Air Force Special Operations Command in the fall of 2008. V-22 production is ramping to full rate and we understand the Navy intends to award the FY08-12 multi-year contract this month which includes 26 CV-22s.

Future Fighter Shortfalls and Plans to Mitigate Shortfalls

The Air Force has been at war for 17 continuous years with operations in Southwest Asia, the Balkans, GWOT, and defending the Homeland. This extremely high operations tempo has accelerated the service life consumption for nearly all of Air Force platforms and especially the fighter force. This sustained high operations tempo has contributed to lowered readiness levels, with increasing risks to operations and maintenance.

Your Air Force aircraft are the oldest they have ever been, averaging over 24 years of age. While your Air Force remains able to carry out the missions of today, it is becoming clear that the aging of the fleet is having negative effects that are difficult to forecast. The Air Force faces a recapitalization challenge unlike anything before. Airman must ensure that adequate forces and the right balance of aircraft types are available to meet both the near-term and future needs of our Nation. Today's Airman must ensure that future Airmen inherit an Air Force that is relevant, capable and sustainable.

Fifth-generation fighters' capitalization is essential. F-35s will not field at full rates until beginning in 2014, but at that point the projected fighter retirements will outpace F-35 production. By 2025, most of your legacy air frames will be retired. The Air Force position remains that a 2250 combat aircraft inventory is the required force. However, Airmen realize this will be a difficult challenge based on likely budget availability. The Air Force is gradually retiring the oldest F-15s and plans to keep 177 F-15s, which will be categorized as "golden eagles," for the long term. These aircraft will be upgraded with the Global Positioning System (GPS) and Inertial Navigation System (INS), the Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System (JHMCS), and the APG-63v3 AESA radar. In addition, starting in FY11, all 224 F-15Es will undergo a radar modernization program that replaces the current radar with new AESA radar, avoiding major sustainability issues; this will occur at a rate of 12 per year.

Health of the F-16 and A10 Fleet

The Air Force fighter force is the oldest it has ever been, at an average age of more than 19 years, it is generally able to accomplish today's missions. However, as with all our legacy fighter aircraft, both the F-16 and the A-10 are showing signs of age. In addition, GWOT duration and operations tempo have accelerated service life consumption for numerous platforms, and the cost of keeping them in the air in terms of dollars and manpower is increasing.

This sustained high operations tempo has contributed to lower 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.

The Air Force continues to improve the fighter aircraft capability to conduct precision targeting in close coordination with our soldiers on the ground fighting today's fight by fielding the Sniper and Litening Advanced Targeting Pods (ATPs) with video downlink (VDL) capability. VDL-equipped pods are able to transmit streaming sensor video directly to ground forces equipped with the Remotely Operated Video Enhanced Receiver (ROVER) terminal, greatly speeding target acquisition and providing a revolutionary improvement in support to ground forces both in the traditional Close Air Support (CAS) and emerging non-traditional intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (NTISR) missions. There are currently 155 Sniper and 223 Litening ATPs in the Combat Air Forces. Of those, 28 Sniper and 73 Litening are VDL equipped, and 50 of the 74 ATPs in theater have VDL.

F-16

Our F-16s, the bulk of the fighter fleet, are being modified with a structural integrity program to ensure they achieve an airframe life of 8,000 hours. Wing pylon rib corrosion, a known problem with the F-16 aircraft is an issue we monitor closely. This corrosion prevents the F-16s from carrying pylon mounted external fuel tanks, which limits their effective combat range. While we currently have three F-16 aircraft grounded due to wing pylon rib corrosion, the corrosion problem is somewhat common across the fleet. For example, within the past 24 months, we identified 27 aircraft at Aviano Air Base, Italy with this problem. We currently inspect F-16 aircraft every 800 hours to monitor for this problem. Because of inspections, we have also found approximately 16% (69 of 399) of our Block 40/42 F-16 aircraft now have

bulkhead cracks. This discovery has led to 22 Block 40/42 F-16 aircraft grounded due to the severity of the cracks. An additional 41 aircraft continue to fly with flight restrictions. We will continue to monitor this situation closely.

The Common Configuration Implementation Program (CCIP) is the top F-16 priority and will enable the maintenance of a single operational flight profile configuration on both the Block-40 F-16s and Block-50 F-16s. The Block-50 modification is complete and the Block-40 modification will be complete in FY10. It combines several modifications including a new mission computer, color displays, air-to-air interrogator (Block 50/52 only), Link-16, and Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System.

A-10

The A-10 continues to provide 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 usage of the A-10 fleet, which has resulted in wing and landing gear structural problems. The Air Force Fleet Viability Board (FVB) recommended that the Air Force upgrade 242 thin-skin center wing A-10 aircraft to thick-skinned center wing replacements because these wings are failing and repairing them is uneconomical. The Air Force obtained funding for this effort. The FVB also has assessed the risk associated with landing gear. As a result, SPM has initiated an overhaul program to replace fracture-critical, life-limited parts. In the near-term, Service Life Extension Program (SLEP) and overhaul programs will allow us to continue flying these venerable aircraft. The Air Force is upgrading all 356 A-10s to the "C" configuration through the Precision Engagement modification. This integrates digital data links and advanced targeting pods, either Litening or Sniper, with aircraft avionics, adds two color, multi-function displays, hands on throttle and stick controls, added DC power, and a 1760 data

bus to provide compatibility with J-series weapons, such as Joint Direct Attack Munition and Wind Corrected Munitions Dispenser.

Status of F-15 Groundings and Way Forward To Restore Capabilities

The average age of the F-15A-D fleet is over 24 years old and the average age of F-15E fleet is over 17 years old. However, analysis suggests the Air Combat Command can manage the fleet through scheduled field/depot inspections under an Individual aircraft Tracking Program.

The F-15A-D fleet has returned to flying status after engineering analysis confirmed they are safe for flight. Of the 435 aircraft in the inventory, only 9 remain grounded due to the longeron crack. The Commander of Air Combat Command (COMACC) will determine how many of these 9 aircraft will be repaired after considering the projected cost versus the expected service life of each aircraft. We anticipate that most of these aircraft will be repaired this year at a cost of approximately \$235,000 each using organic materials and labor at Warner-Robins Air Logistics Center.

On the recommendation of Boeing and depot engineers, the Air Force has instituted recurring inspections of F-15 longerons every 400 flight hours to detect cracks before they become catastrophic. Analysis confirms that this interval is very conservative and will avoid a mishap such as the one that occurred on 2 November 2007. Additionally, the Air Force will conduct a full-scale fatigue test, aircraft teardown, and improved structural monitoring to help establish the maximum F-15 service life and more effectively manage structural health of the fleet. We expect these efforts to successfully enable the F-15C/D “Golden Eagle” fleet to operate safely and effectively through 2025.

Significant Aviation-Related Safety Issues

Air Force Safety (AF/SE) notified commanders that mishaps are on a rise. As of 29 February 2008, the Air Force lost eight aircraft in this fiscal year compared to six lost at this time

last year. We have suffered 12 Class A flight mishaps this fiscal year compared to ten mishaps at this time last year. The Air Force is also experiencing a rise in Class B mishaps over the last ten years: This trend rose from roughly 1.91 Class B mishaps per 100,000 flying hours in FY99 to 4.19 Class B mishaps per 100,000 flyer hours in FY07. In the last two years the Class B mishap rate remained above 4.1 Class B mishaps per 100,000 flying hours. Key mishaps include this year's F-15 mishaps (2 Nov in-flight breakup, 1 Feb loss of control, and 20 Feb midair collision) and the recent B-2 crash.

Human factors continue to dominate the mishap causal factors, consistently accounting for 67% of the last 11-years' mishaps. Specific problem areas include a lack of adherence to procedural guidance, channeled attention similar to target fixation, procedural error, and not making the right decision during operations. These observations are also consistent with similar observations across the aviation industry, and apply to all of Air Force aircraft types--not just fighter aircraft.

AF/SE stepped up emphasis on a back-to-basics approach with a hard re-look at our risk assessment techniques and again ensuring our people understand that rules and technical data are the life blood of doing things the right way. AF/SE maintains and continually improves the ongoing safety evaluation and assessment cycle, so as to determine mishap causes and precursors. This helps commanders prevent the next mishap.

IV. Closing

The United States of America depends on air, space and cyberspace power to an extent unprecedented in history. We are ready and engaged today, and looking toward securing the future. We cannot repeat the mistakes of the past nor can we rest on the laurels of our current dominance. Our Nation must invest today to ensure tomorrow's air, space and cyberspace dominance.