

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
HOUSE 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: ICBMs, HELICOPTERS, CRUISE MISSILES, BOMBERS, AND WARHEADS

STATEMENT OF: Maj Gen Richard Webber, AF/A3/5

March 12, 2008

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I. Introduction

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss our Strategic Nuclear posture. Your Air Force is fully engaged around the world fighting terrorism and insurgents in the Global War on Terror (GWOT) and 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 have the resources to shape the future strategic environment and prepare for tomorrow's challenges. Air forces succeed when they remain focused on their primary mission as an independent force that is part of an interdependent joint team. Above all, the U.S. Air Force delivers sovereign options for the defense of the United States and its global interests: To fly and fight in air, space, and cyberspace.

II. Win Today's Fight

Supporting U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) and the GWOT is a portion of what your Air Force does for our nation's defense. Your Air Force is prepared to respond across the entire spectrum of conflict from rapid humanitarian aid to major combat operations.

Fighting and winning the GWOT is the number one priority; however, it is important to focus on protecting our nation from other potential enemies, both traditional and nontraditional.

Air Force engagement in CENTCOM is only the tip of the iceberg. Your 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 Intercontinental 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. Also included are 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 6,600 are in-lieu-of (ILO) taskings. Since 2004, we have deployed approximately 24,000 Airmen to perform ILO taskings.

III. Strategic Nuclear Forces

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 ultimate backstop, dissuading opponents and reassuring allies by maintaining an always-ready nuclear arm. Airmen continue to stand silent sentry around-the-clock to protect our national security, and respond to any adversary should deterrence fail.

Since the weapons-transfer incident of 30 August 2007, we have initiated multiple levels of review to ensure we have not only investigated the root causes of the incident, but more importantly taken this opportunity to review Air Force policies and procedures in order to improve the Air Force's nuclear capabilities. The Commander of Air Combat Command commissioned a Commander Directed Investigation (CDI), a tactical level investigation that

focused on the facts of the incident and determined accountability. The Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF) commissioned the Blue Ribbon Review (BRR), an operational-level review that focuses on the entire Air Force enterprise including both the aircraft and Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) and reviews policies, procedures. The Secretary of Defense commissioned the Defense Science Review Board (DSB) review, a strategic-level independent review that focuses on the Department of Defense (DoD) enterprise and joint organizations. The Air Force takes its nuclear obligations seriously, and will continue to take any measure necessary to deliver this strategic capability safely. Consequently, we have identified the actions required to both enhance our strengths and correct those areas needing improvement. We have also submitted the Air Force unfunded requirements list to the House Armed Services Committee with a number of nuclear surety and security initiatives for consideration. The United States Air Force is committed to the nuclear mission.

Air Force Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles

Minuteman is and will remain the nation's land-based strategic deterrent through 2030.

The FY07 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) mandated that the Air Force modernize Minuteman III (MM III) ICBMs in the United States inventory as required to maintain a sufficient supply of launch test assets and spares to sustain the deployed force of such missiles through 2030. The Air Force is currently analyzing MMIII missile and ground systems to determine what activities are required to sustain the force through 2030. The Air Force has ongoing life-extension programs designed to extend ICBM service life beyond 2020.

During the 2005 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), the Defense Department agreed with the U.S. Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) recommendation to reduce the ICBM force from 500 to 450. The USSTRATCOM analysis concluded a 450 Minuteman III force was

sufficient to assure allies and deter potential adversaries. Headquarters Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) recommended and the USAF agreed that the 564th Missile Squadron (564 MS) at Malmstrom AFB, MT was best candidate for deactivation. The 564 MS increased logistics sustainment costs because of its unique operating system versus other Minuteman III squadrons. Reduction of 564 MS also standardized the unit size and configuration at three bases.

The FY08 NDAA requires the Secretary of Defense to submit a report to the Congressional Defense Committees "...on the feasibility of establishing an association..." between the 120th Fighter Wing, Great Falls, MT (Air National Guard) and the 341st Space Wing, Malmstrom AFB, MT (Active Duty Air Force). The Air Force must submit the report 15 days before removing the 41st missile from the 564th Missile Squadron. The report is currently in coordination and anticipated delivery to Congress is April 2008.

AFSPC commenced deactivation activities within the 564 MS in June 2007. The Air Force will retain and modernize the 50 removed ICBMs for use in the Force Development Evaluation (FDE) program. Conversion of the 50 missiles for use as flight test, replacement and aging/surveillance assets meets Congressional direction to extend Minuteman operations through 2030.

ICBM Life Extension Programs (LEP)s

- 1. *Guidance Replacement Program:*** Replaces guidance set electronics on MMIII and improves reliability on the ground and in flight. The replacement program calls for 652 kits: 450 are fielded; 180 are used for tests, spares, etc.; the final 32 will be delivered in FY09.
- 2. *Propulsion Replacement Program:*** Extends booster life through 2020 by re-pouring stages one and two, and re-manufacturing stage three. The replacement program calls for 605 kits: 376 are fielded; 173 are used for tests, spares, etc.; the final 56 will be delivered in FY09.

3. *Propulsion System Rocket Engine Program:* Refurbishes seven components and assemblies in the liquid propulsion post-boost vehicle. The Air Force installed 154 kits and will purchase 96 additional kits in FY09. The future installation of 574 total kits will complete the program.

4. *Safety Enhanced Reentry Vehicle (SERV):* Enables MMIII to carry the more advanced Peacekeeper MK 21 Reentry Vehicle (RV) while retaining the powerful MMIII MK 12A RV multiple independently re-targetable RV (MIRV) capability. Retirement of the older MK 12 RV is now possible, avoiding a costly \$1 billion LEP. The Air Force fielded 75 kits and will purchase the 111 additional kits in FY09. The fielding of 570 total kits completes the program.

Deployment of the MK 21 RV enhances nuclear safety because the MK 21 RV design incorporates three additional safety features: Insensitive High Explosive, Fire Resistant Pit, and Enhanced Nuclear Detonation Safety, which the Drell Commission recommended, but not incorporated in the older MK 12 RV design. The Insensitive High Explosive and Fire Resistant Pit features reduce the likelihood of plutonium dispersal in cases of inadvertent impact or accident. The Enhanced Nuclear Detonation Safety design protects those electrical components critical to detonation from sources of unintended energy in order to prevent premature arming in abnormal environments. The Air Force is continuing to deploy SERV, with 75 kits already fielded, and will purchase 111 additional kits in FY09. The program will procure 570 kits total.

5. *Environmental Control System:* Modernizes cooling system equipment in the Minuteman launch facilities and missile alert facilities. The Air Force installed 71 launch facility kits and 6 missile alert facility kits and will purchase 126 kits in FY09. Deployment of 499 total kits to all the launch facilities, missile alert facilities, and training sites will complete the program.

6. *ICBM Security Modernization Program:* This three-part program consists of concrete enhancements, a fast-rising secondary personnel access hatch, and a Remote Visual Assessment

(RVA) camera. This comprehensive program began in FY04. The Air Force completed concrete enhancements at all 450 launch facilities in 2007, more than a year ahead of schedule and 35 percent under budget. The Air Force installed fast-rising secondary personnel access hatches at 21 launch facilities. The Air Force also installed RVA at 5 missile alert facilities and 50 Launch Facilities. The \$10.5 million Congressional increase in FY08 allowed the Air Force to purchase 90 additional RVA kits, enough to complete deployment at the first wing. Taken together, these programs give responding security forces situational awareness and adequate time to deny adversarial access to our launch facilities. In FY09, the Air Force will purchase 100 fast-rising secondary personnel access hatches and 147 RVA kits.

Helicopters

The primary Air Force Space Command (AFSPC) helicopter mission, flown by UH-1N platforms, provides security forces with a continuous contingency response capability for the national ICBM complex. The Air Force District of Washington (AFDW) and several other MAJCOMS also use the UH-1N as an Operational Support Airlift/Very Important Person Special Air Mission (OSA/VIPSAM) platform. The UH-1N has noted deficiencies in payload, speed, range, endurance, battle space awareness, survivability, and adverse weather operations.

Your average Air Force UH-1N airframe is 39 years old and some aircraft in the inventory exceed 13,000 flight hours. The UH-1N fleet shows its age with fatigue-related cracks in the tail boom and is currently undergoing its second tail boom replacement that will enable it to meet flight safety standards.

The Common Vertical Lift Support Platform (CVLSP) is an Air Force effort to replace these UH-1Ns. AFSPC is the designated lead command and is in the process of finalizing the Analysis of Alternatives (AoA) to scope the available pool of platforms capable of

accomplishing the multiple missions required by all users of the UH-1N. Following the AoA, AFSPC anticipates a final Capability Development Document (CDD) in early FY09. Once the Joint Requirements Oversight Committee (JROC) and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) approve all requirements, the Air Force will develop an acquisition strategy to field this capability.

Nuclear Cruise Missiles

The Air Force analyzed current and future roles for nuclear cruise missiles during the 2005 QDR and the FY07 budgeting cycle. The Defense Department issued guidance on 20 December 2005 directing USSTRATCOM and the Air Force to study the nuclear cruise missile force structure, including the Air-to-Ground Missile (AGM) -86, Air Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM), and the AGM-129 Advanced Cruise Missile (ACM). The guidance also directed the Air Force to build a retirement schedule for the missiles.

The USSTRATCOM/Air Force study examined considerations such as cruise missile inventory, operational capability, reliability, Department of Defense direction and combatant commander requirements. Based on these factors, the study recommended that the Air Force retire all ACMs, reduce the ALCM force to 528, retire all excess ALCMs, consolidate the ALCM force at Minot AFB, and retain ALCMs in the inventory through at least 2020, possibly 2030. On 12 April 2006, the Deputy Secretary of Defense accepted the study recommendations. On 23 June 2006, the Commander of USSTRATCOM sent a letter to the Secretary of Defense supporting the study's findings and advocating adoption of the ALCM/ACM force structure recommendations. The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Security Council endorsed the study recommendations as they pertained to the Air Force. On 17 October 2006 the Secretary of Defense directed the Air Force to retire the ACM and reduce the ALCM fleet to 528 missiles.

The Air Force is removing from service, demilitarizing and destroying all ACMs and the excess ALCM missile bodies at the rate of 6 ACMs and 12 ALCMs per month. We forecast completion of demilitarization for excess ALCMs in FY11 and all ACMs in FY13. The remaining nuclear cruise missile force will be consolidated at Minot AFB, North Dakota. These cruise missile force structure changes are part of a balanced force reduction that supports both the President's direction to reduce the active nuclear stockpile, and the United States' obligation under the 2002 Moscow Treaty to reduce the number of operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 1700-2200 warheads.

Warhead Replacement and Refurbishment

A viable program of warhead replacement and refurbishment is essential to sustain a nuclear weapons stockpile of any size. Warhead replacement concepts continue to show promise for increasing long-term confidence in warhead reliability, and this strategy offers other advantages when compared with refurbishment. For example, a replacement warhead could incorporate improved safety and security features not considered feasible in a refurbished weapon, and replacement weapons could be better designed to interface with modern delivery platforms such as the Joint Strike Fighter. Decisions must be made very soon if we are to find the most cost-effective strategy to meet current and projected requirements. To that end, it is imperative that we pursue and complete the studies needed for informed decisions.

In the absence of a replacement warhead, the Nuclear Weapons Council commissioned a 1-year phase-one study to define concepts for refurbishment of existing warheads for current and future air-delivered systems in November 2006. We are reviewing the findings of this study, and expect to recommend further studies to the Nuclear Weapons Council.

Strategic Bombers

A new bomber is critical to upgrading the nation's long-range strike capability to ensure range and payload, and ability to hold any target anywhere at risk. The Air Force has a three-phased approach to meet the Nation's long-range strike requirements. The first phase is to continue with the modernization of legacy bomber fleet to ensure sustainability and increase combat effectiveness. The 2008 NDAA mandated that the Air Force maintain a 76 Total Aircraft Inventory (TAI) for B-52s. This inventory includes 44 combat-coded, 15 training, 4 test, 11 backup, and 2 attrition reserve B-52s. Additionally, the Air Force is complying with congressional language, which directs that no funds be obligated or expended for retiring any of the 93 B-52H aircraft 60 days after the Secretary of the Air Force submits a bomber force structure report prepared by the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA). The IDA will deliver its report to the Air Force later this month and the Secretary of the Air Force will subsequently forward the report to Congress. The Air Force will retain the B-2 fleet at the current TAI. The second phase of the Air Force's approach is to leverage near-term technologies to field a next-generation long-range strike (NGLRS) capability to replace the oldest B-52s by 2018. This could include beginning the divestiture of legacy bombers as the NGLRS bomber reaches initial operational capability. The final phase consists of a quantum leap in technology and capability that employs a system of systems technology push for advanced improvements in speed, range, accuracy, connectivity and survivability in the 2035 timeframe.

IV. Closing

The United States Air Force continues to serve as the ultimate backstop, dissuading opponents and reassuring allies by maintaining an always-ready nuclear arm. Airmen continue

to stand silent sentry around-the-clock to protect our national security, and respond to any adversary should deterrence fail.

Your Air Force is preparing to dominate in the 21st century strategically, operationally, and tactically. Air Force strategic forces, the bulwark of our strategic deterrent capability, give us the means to ensure Global Vigilance, Global Reach, Global Power, and worldwide Expeditionary Combat Support by providing sovereign options for the defense of the United States and its global interests: These capabilities are essential to the joint fight and are a critical component of the future joint force. The Air Force is committed to advancing strategic capabilities to fully support the joint team. In order to maintain our strategic dominance, the Air Force must recapitalize and also be allowed to divest itself of outdated, excess platforms. Divesting excess platforms will provide the means to shift vital funds to recapitalization and modernization of the Air Force and to maintain a strategic deterrent second to none. Your Air Force appreciates your continued support in turning our vision into an operational reality. Above all, our nation must invest today to ensure tomorrow's air, space and cyberspace dominance.