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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 THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

AIR AND LAND FORCES SUBCOMMITTEE

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Subject: Air Mobility Programs

COMBINED STATEMENT OF:

Mr. David M. Van Buren, Air Force Service Acquisition Executive (SAF/AQ)

Lieutenant General Phillip M. Breedlove, Air Force Deputy Chief Of Staff for Air, Space and Information Operations, Plans and Requirements (AF/A3/5)

Brigadier General Richard C. Johnston, Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Plans and Programs, Director of Strategic Planning (AF/A8X)

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## **I. Introduction**

Chairman Smith, Ranking Member Bartlett, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to address this committee regarding the Air Force's mobility programs. The Secretary of Defense, in the recent 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), set four objectives to guide our current actions and future Planning: prevail in today's wars, prevent and deter conflict, prepare to defeat adversaries and succeed in a wide range of contingencies, and preserve and enhance the all-volunteer force. The Air Force is vectoring to meet these objectives, balancing risk appropriately, and preparing to prevail, prevent, and preserve well into our Nation's future.

## **II. Contributions of the Air Force**

Today, the Air Force reliably provides global vigilance, global reach and global power as an integral member of our Joint and coalition teams. More than 38,000 Airmen are deployed, with nearly 30,000 in and around Afghanistan and Iraq, as we unwaveringly do whatever it takes to prevail in today's wars. Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, and Marines who cross outside the wire do so with the asymmetric advantage of armed overwatch, globally integrated intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, combat search and rescue, and aero-medical evacuation.

The Air Mobility team provides airlift, air refueling, aeromedical evacuation, and airdrop, guaranteeing the world that the U.S. can rapidly project combat power or humanitarian relief anywhere, anytime. Air mobility often provides the only means to intervene quickly in a crisis, but also runs constantly and reliably in the background during persistent operations. Our joint force in the Central Command (CENTCOM) area of responsibility (AOR) is sustained by around-the-clock rapid global mobility operations that included, in 2009, 52,905 airlift sorties delivering 264,839 short tons of cargo, over 32 million pounds of airdropped cargo, and 1.3 million passengers. Since 2001, we have transported nearly 70,000 patients out of the CENTCOM AOR and achieved a nearly 98 percent success rate in meeting to "golden hour"

goal of transporting seriously wounded warriors to medical treatment facilities, achieving a 95 percent injury survival rate.

The Air Force's response for Operation UNIFIED RESPONSE highlighted airpower's speed and access to assist the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. Our first C-17 Globemaster arrived one day after the tragic event with an urban search and rescue team and 82,000 pounds of equipment. Within four days of the earthquake the Air Force flew nearly 100 sorties, transported almost 1,200 passengers and delivered more than 600 short tons to our devastated neighbors in Haiti. In addition, your Air Force evacuated over 19,000 U.S. citizens and medically evacuated over 230 Haitian citizens via our aircraft. We helped set up flightline operations to provide a lifeline of supplies and relief to the Haitians and ensured a safe and orderly worldwide response.

In response to the earthquake in Chile, the Air Force deployed 82 Airmen to provide expeditionary medical support units to the community in Angol. Upon arrival, our medical professionals demonstrated the flexibility and determination to turn a bare polo field into a fully-operational field hospital in only three and a half days. The Air Force partnered with USAID and the Chilean Army to accomplish this herculean task. As a result, our medical professionals tended to over 300 patients and performed over 40 surgeries in those facilities within the first two weeks of that field hospital's operation. The devastated region surrounding Angol recovered 60 percent of the hospital beds lost in the earthquake. In addition to our support to the warfighter and humanitarian efforts, 43 percent of our total force is engaged daily in out-of-theater support to combatant commander operations; a remarkable contribution enabled by past investments in technology and infrastructure that allow the Air Force to impact operations anywhere on the planet, from bases both at home and abroad, and to do it efficiently and effectively.

### **III. Strategic Airlift Force Structure**

#### **C-17**

The C-17 Globemaster III is the newest, most flexible cargo aircraft to enter the airlift force. The C-17 is capable of rapid strategic delivery of troops and all types of cargo to main operating bases or directly to forward bases in the deployment area. The aircraft can perform tactical airlift and airdrop missions and can also transport litters and ambulatory patients during aeromedical evacuations when required. The inherent flexibility and performance of the C-17

force improve the ability of the total airlift system to fulfill the worldwide air mobility of the United States.

The Air Force is executing Congressional direction to procure 223 C-17s. As of 20 April, 196 of those 223 aircraft have been delivered, including the U.S. contribution to the Strategic Airlift Capability C-17 Program with 11 European partner nations. Final delivery is planned in February 2012.

## **C-5**

The C-5 Galaxy provides the Air Mobility Command airlift in support of United States national defense. The C-5 can carry fully equipped combat-ready military units to any point in the world on short notice and then provide field support to help sustain the fighting force. The C-5 Reliability Enhancement Re-engining Program (RERP) improves the C-5 fleet availability and performance by replacing the engines and over 70 unreliable components on 52 active duty aircraft. The Low Rate Initial Production is underway and the Air Force will seek a Full Rate Production decision in September 2010. The C-5 RERP Operational Test & Evaluation (OT&E) was completed in January 2010, and the program is meeting expectations to date. The C-5 RERP is effective, suitable and mission capable. The C-5M significantly increases the strategic capability of the entire Galaxy fleet. The Office of Secretary of Defense will provide the C-5 RERP OT&E report to Congressional Committees in mid to late summer 2010.

The Mobility and Capabilities Requirements Study (MCRS) confirms the Air Force has excess strategic airlift capability. The Air Force plans to reduce the 316 strategic airlift aircraft requirement of the National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2010 by retiring 22 C-5As. The Secretary of the Air Force will submit a report on the retirement of aircraft required by section 137 of the NDAA and a report on strategic airlift aircraft required by section 138 of the NDAA in early summer 2010. These reports will provide the justification for retirement of C-5A aircraft and anticipated impact of the retirements on force structure and basing.

All C-5As reside in the Air Reserve Component (Stewart, NY; Memphis, TN; Martinsburg, WV; Wright-Patterson AFB, OH & Lackland AFB, TX). Wright-Patterson has been announced to receive C-17s and will lose all 10 C-5As. In addition, the remaining Air National Guard (ANG) C-5A units are being considered for C-17 conversion as part of the AF Strategic Basing Process. AMC, Air Force Reserve Command and the ANG are working

together to determine the specific tail numbers that will be retired.

#### **IV. Tactical Airlift Force Structure**

##### **C-130**

The C-130 Hercules primarily performs the tactical portion of the airlift mission. The aircraft is capable of operating from unimproved dirt strips and is the prime transport for air dropping troops and equipment into hostile areas. The C-130 fulfills a wide range of operational missions in both peace and war situations. The MCRS indicates an excess C-130 airlift capability with the most demanding scenario of 335 C-130 aircraft. The new fleet must meet expected intra-theater and direct support (DS) airlift requirements. Therefore, the FY11 force structure maintains a floor of 375 C-130s which incorporates the MCRS study plus 40 additional aircraft, which reflect our current judgment for the number of C-130s required to augment the DS mission. The Air Force will conduct further analysis to determine the force structure impact of the DS mission on the C-130 fleet.

"In the FY11 budget request we recommended retiring 34 C-130s, 28 from Little Rock AFB and 6 from the Puerto Rico Air National Guard in FY11. We are currently in discussions between the PRANG, ANG, AF and OSD to delay the retirements from Puerto Rico to allow time to determine a suitable follow-on mission for the unit."

#### **V. Proposed C-130 Force Structure (FY11)**

We are formulating a plan to backfill the retiring C-130E aircraft at Little Rock AFB and will bring together a Total Force Integrated team of active duty, Reserves and Guard to ensure projected student production levels are met. We are also working with ANG on the future of the Puerto Rico ANG unit.

#### **VI. Planned C-130 Force Structure (FYDP)**

In FY12 the remaining nine C-130Es are scheduled to retire from Little Rock AFB. Also, three C-130H1s will retire from Dyess AFB as C-130Js deliver. FY13 plans include retiring eight C-130H1s from Little Rock AFB and Dyess AFB as the C-130Js deliver. In FY14, eight additional C-130H1s are slated to retire as J models deliver. Finally, a few C-130J deliveries are planned for FY15.

## **VII. KC-X Selection Timeline**

The KC-X remains the Air Force's highest procurement and recapitalization priority. Air refueling is critical to the entire joint and coalition military team's ability to project combat power around the world. The current fleet of Eisenhower-era KC-135Rs averages 49 years old.

KC-X tankers will provide increased aircraft availability, more flexible employment options, and greater overall capability than the KC-135R tanker. The KC-X will be able to refuel receptacle and probe-equipped aircraft on every mission and to receive fuel in-flight as well. The KC-X will also be equipped with defensive systems to enhance its utility to the warfighter.

The KC-X program is based on a planned purchase of 179 aircraft and is the first of three recapitalization programs to replace the entire legacy tanker fleet. The Air Force has budgeted approximately \$3.5 billion per year for an annual production rate of 12-18 aircraft. Even with this level of investment, it will take several decades to replace the fleet of more than 400 KC-135s. Given the age of the fleet and the time required to recapitalize, it is critical for the Air Force to move forward on this program.

With the release of the RFP for a KC-X tanker on February 24, 2010, the Air Force and the Office of the Secretary of Defense moved forward in the procurement of a new tanker. We remain committed to ensuring that the process is fair, open, and transparent. The RFP originally called for proposals to be due on May 10, 2010. With this proposal submission date in May, the Air Force planned to award a contract in the fourth quarter of FY10. On March 8, 2010, Northrop Grumman notified the department that they were not going to submit a proposal. Subsequent to Northrop Grumman's withdrawal, EADS North America notified the Department of its potential interest in bidding. On March 31, 2010, the Defense Department announced that if we received a formal notification from EADS-NA of their intention to make an offer, we would extend the deadline for bids from May 10 to July 9, 2010. On April 20, 2010, EADS-NA

announced that they will submit a bid in response to the KC-X RFP. With the entry of EADS-NA into the competition, the Defense Department will grant offerors an additional 60 days to submit their proposals. It is not uncommon to grant reasonable extensions in competitions of this sort, and the Defense Department considers 60 days to be reasonable. As the Defense Department does not want the delivery date to slip any later than it already has, we will continue working to award the contract this fall.

To give the Committee a sense of timing, the Engineering and Manufacturing Development (EMD) portion of the KC-X contract includes four development tankers that will be delivered in the production configuration after EMD. We estimate that the first flight test will occur no earlier than 18 months from contract award. Based on a proposal submission date of July 9, 2010, and a planned award in the fall, flight testing and delivery of the first EMD tanker is still projected to occur in FY12. The planned production schedule will then start in Fiscal Year 2013 with a planned buy of seven aircraft as part of lot one production. Given the projected build time per aircraft is approximately two years, we project the first production aircraft deliveries will be in FY15, and ramping up to an annual production of approximately 15 per year through completion of the 179 aircraft.

### **VIII. AF Preparations for Army's Direct Support Mission**

The Air Force conducted a DS Concept of Employment (CONEMP) Proof of Concept trial in Iraq from October to December 2009. This was accomplished by approximately 100 deployed personnel mostly from the 179th Airlift Wing in Ohio to form the 164th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron (EAS) in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. The CONEMP specified that Air Force units would collocate with and be under the tactical control of an Army Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) Commander to provide DS. All participants were extremely satisfied with the results to include feedback from the 25th CAB Commander, "The 164th EAS exceeded my expectations with this Proof of Concept and the support we have received in such a short period of time; it is a leap ahead in joint capability." AMC will lead the effort to incorporate lessons learned from this assessment into the final CONEMP. This CONEMP represents one way to provide DS to the Army, and we continue to work with the Army to determine the best way to support the Combatant Commander in this new and important role. Ultimately it is the

prerogative of the theater commander to employ his/her forces as required for mission accomplishment, and the Air Force stand ready to support that commander as necessary.

In addition to CONEMP efforts, the Air Force is considering C-27J installation locations. The initial six bases to receive four C-27J aircraft at each location are Mansfield, OH; Baltimore, MD; Meridian, MS; Battle Creek, MI; Fargo, ND and Bradley, CT. The final basing plan for the remaining 14 aircraft will be vetted through the Air Force Basing Executive Steering Group which is scheduled for late CY10. Currently, three C-27J aircraft have been delivered and the transition of program management from the Army to the Air Force is in progress, and will be finalized by the end of FY10.

## **IX. Light Mobility Requirements & Acquisition**

The Air Force plans to acquire 15 Light Mobility Aircraft (LiMA) in FY11 to fill gaps in the light mobility mission. The requirement for LiMA comes from the Quadrennial Defense Review and the Irregular Warfare Tiger Team. The LiMA aircraft will be smaller in size and capacity than the Air Force's C-27J twin-engine turboprop and will allow operation from austere or unimproved airfields. This capability will foster Building Partnership Capacity with our lesser developed Partner Nations by providing a proper solution which is easily maintained and employed. The Initial Capability Document was validated in January 2010, and the Capability Production Document is expected to be validated in August 2010. The current acquisition strategy is to leverage results from a full and open competition from an Afghan Foreign Military Sales program. With this strategy, Milestone C is expected in April 2011 and contract award in May 2011. Initial Operational Capability is expected in 4QFY12.

## **X. Aviation Safety**

The Air Force experienced the safest year in Air Force history in FY09 with a .80 rate per 100,000 hours, and only 17 Class A Mishaps (accidents involving more than \$1 million dollars, destroyed aircraft, loss of life or permanent total disability). So far in FY10, we have a rate of .71 Class A Flight Mishaps per 100,000 flying hours as of 16 April 2010. This is slightly better than last year's record safety rates with a .73 at this same point in time. There are no mishap trends or

other "significant aviation-related safety issues" from those fleets impacting their ability to execute the National Military Strategy. The Air Force continues to pursue lessons learned and conducts thorough investigations making sure any and all critical safety information is delivered across the Air Force and to sister services, to ensure we continue to have a safe and effective fighting force.

## **XI. Conclusion**

The Air Force and its outstanding Airmen remain focused on the mission--the continued security of our great Nation. We are convinced that a balanced force structure will enable us to extend our Nation's supremacy in the air domain, and--along with our joint partners--prevail today and tomorrow. USD/AT&L, Ash Carter, recently testified that: "I support, as does the secretary, the initiatives the Congress directed when it unanimously passed the Weapon Systems Acquisition Reform Act (WSARA) of 2009. Acquisition reform is one of DoD's high priority performance goals presented in the analytic perspectives volume of the president's FY 2011 budget. The department is moving out to implement these initiatives. "The Air Force actions described above are part of and consistent with WSARA implementation and DoD's Acquisition Reform goal. We thank the Subcommittee for your shared commitment and for this opportunity to meet with you today.