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SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRATEGIC FORCES
UNITES STATES SENATE

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

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

SUBJECT: Status of Air Force Nuclear and Strategic Systems

STATEMENT OF: Lieutenant General James M. Kowalski, Commander
Air Force Global Strike Command

April 6, 2011

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Introduction

Chairman Nelson, Ranking Member Sessions, and distinguished Members of the Committee; I am honored to appear before you today for the first time as the Commander of Air Force Global Strike Command, representing nearly 24,000 dedicated Airmen and civilians.

I would like to update you on the **current status** of the Command, some of our **progress** since my predecessor, Lt Gen Klotz, last testified in March of 2010, and what I see as our **central challenges**.

Current Status

On 30 September 2010, Air Force Global Strike Command declared full operational capability. As we built this command, the first completely new Air Force major command (MAJCOM) in 27 years, the rest of the world did not pause. Some of the events that have shaped our development over the last year include the Nuclear Posture Review, the New START, and as a reminder of our conventional responsibilities, ongoing operations in support of US Africa Command.

Our efforts during the last year to strengthen the nuclear enterprise involved three parallel efforts: the methodical stand-up of a new major command and headquarters, the disciplined execution of current operations in support of US Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) and the geographic Combatant Commanders, and the enduring effort to establish a culture that embraces the special trust and responsibility of nuclear weapons.

As we approach our planned manpower levels and have the initial tasks associated with standing up the Headquarters behind us, we must now focus on building the relationships and processes both internal and external to the command. We are pleased by the progress the headquarters has

made in assuming responsibilities for guidance and oversight of our forces. We continue to mature our processes in developing fiscal guidance and plans within the Air Force corporate structure. The connective tissue between organizations within the command is getting stronger as the units align to our priorities, metrics, and battle rhythm. In declaring full operational capability, we closed out 696 specific action items under Programming Plan 09-01 that ranged from the broad task of establishing the initial AFGSC structure to specific tasks such as the identification of formal training quotas.

On any given day we have 1100 Airmen deployed or on standby to support US Strategic Command in the missile complexes and about another 1100 deployed in support of our regional Combatant Commanders. In addition, we stand ready to deploy up to 16 B-2s and 44 B-52s along with a range of combat support capabilities to support national taskings.

Air Force Global Strike Command Progress

With the completion of initial stand-up activities, we were able to fully focus on our strategic master plan and make headway on our goals, objectives and tasks. Although much work remains, I would like to share some of the progress we have made in our core areas of organize, train and equip.

Air Force Global Strike Command - Organize

Our ongoing efforts to organize the Air Force's newest MAJCOM have included standing up the Headquarters, defining our role within the nuclear command, control, and communications system (NC3), establishing the 69th Bomb Squadron at Minot AFB, the stand-up of General Officer Steering Groups in support of each of our weapons systems, providing Air Force Office

of Special Investigations support to our missile convoys, and re-establishing the presence of Intelligence Officers in our Missile Wings.

Standing up the Headquarters presented a unique challenge the Air Force had not faced in 27 years. We are now operating at 81% of our authorized strength and we have established the Headquarters organizational structure, battle rhythms, metrics, and reviews necessary to execute the mission.

"Air Force Global Strike Command serves as the lead MAJCOM for 14 major NC3 systems. In that capacity we provide a clear and strong voice for NC3 sustainment and modernization. Additionally, our staff has successfully integrated 14 previously dispersed NC3 programs into a unified and cohesive Global Strike Command NC3 portfolio. This translates into greater command situational awareness and management of these vital programs."

On 30 June of this year, the 69th Bomb Squadron will declare Full Operational Capability under the 5th Bomb Wing at Minot Air Force Base. The Air Force activated the 69th in September 2009 to better balance operational taskings with the addition of a fourth B-52 squadron, with two at Minot and two at Barksdale.

We have also organized new General Officer Steering Groups (GOSGs) dedicated to sustaining each of our assigned weapon systems. These GOSGs focus on warfighter concerns, prioritize sustainment initiatives, and remove obstacles in order to keep Air Force Global Strike Command's assigned weapons systems capable and available. GOSG participation includes members of the Headquarters staff, senior representatives from Air Force Material Command and the Defense Logistics Agency, leadership from each of Air Force Global Strike Command's wings, and the National Nuclear Security Administration. Through this steering group process,

funds and focus have been reprioritized to address issues with aging support equipment, diminishing manufacturing resources, supply parts support, and parts availability.

We are now organized to provide the sole Response Task Force for any Air Force nuclear incident in the continental United States and stand ready to assist the Department of Energy and United States Air Forces in Europe (USAFE). An aggressive training schedule will culminate with participation in our first full scale national response exercise in May 2012.

Another organizational initiative is the revitalization of the Nuclear Weapons Stakeholder Partnership Meeting. This semi-annual meeting is the framework for discussion on specific nuclear weapon issues and is a forum for building relationships and trust between organizations from the Air Force, Navy, USSTRATCOM, USAFE, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Department of Energy, and the National Labs. We look forward to our next meeting at Barksdale Air Force Base later this month.

Over the course of the past year Air Force Global Strike Command and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations (OSI) has teamed up to close a four year gap in federal law enforcement support to off-base nuclear convoys. Air Force OSI agents have joined our Security Forces in the convoy, and provide an important link to local, state, and federal law enforcement.

Conducting inspections is a critical MAJCOM function, and we have made significant progress in this area as well. Over the course of the last year, our Inspector General, starting from scratch, built an 86-person inspection team fully capable of inspecting our bomber and missile wings. This team has been able to combine the inspection philosophies and instructions from Air Combat Command and Air Force Space Command to produce specific Air Force Global Strike Command direction for inspections throughout the nuclear enterprise.

Finally, I am pleased to report that for the first time in nearly a decade, we have taken the steps necessary to send Intelligence Officers back into Missile Wings. Improving intelligence support to our nuclear forces was a key recommendation of the Schlesinger report and will enhance missile crew situational awareness, their understanding of strategic threats, and the vital role they play in the defense of our nation.

Air Force Global Strike Command - Train

In December 2008, the Report of the Secretary of Defense Task Force on DOD Nuclear Weapons Management identified the need for more nuclear-qualified and experienced personnel. Filling positions designated for personnel with nuclear experience is a command priority, and tailored training plays a major role in consolidating the gains we have made across the nuclear enterprise. Therefore, we established a number of programs to build upon the excellent basic military training and initial skills training that other Air Force organizations provide.

On 30 March 2009, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force approved the creation of an ICBM Weapons Instructor Course (WIC) at the United States Air Force Weapons School (USAFWS), Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada. The mission of the ICBM WIC is to produce weapons officers to lead weapons and tactics development and provide in-depth expertise throughout the ICBM community and the nuclear enterprise. On 19 December 2010, the USAFWS graduated the first four students from the ICBM WIC. Three of these graduates have returned to our ICBM units to stand up the first weapons and tactics flights. These weapons officers, well versed in the nuclear enterprise, can serve as the lead integrator on issues related to operations, maintenance, and security forces at the missile units. The ICBM WIC is on track to produce eight graduates per year.

One of our newest programs is an Intelligence Formal Training Unit designed to help our unit intelligence teams support the nuclear and global strike mission. We will host five courses in fiscal year (FY) 11 and will train approximately 100 nuclear intelligence professionals to fully understand the daily deterrence mission.

For our security forces, helicopter crews, and convoy drivers, we conduct graduate level training at Camp Guernsey in Wyoming and expect to expand our investment there over the next few years. We have significantly increased our nuclear security training program with emphasis on tactical expertise, marksmanship, and small unit leadership. This training allows integration of security forces, helicopter crews, and maintenance personnel into a cohesive and effective security team. Training together as a team, these warfighters maximize the capabilities necessary to protect our Nation's most vital resources and most powerful weapons.

Additionally, we expanded our training capacity to include Eighth Air Force's nuclear bomber security forces alongside the Twentieth Air Force intercontinental ballistic missile security forces in our tactical security training classes.

Air Force Global Strike Command – Equip

Air Force Global Strike Command assumed lead command responsibilities for the Minuteman III and UH-1N helicopter weapon systems from Air Force Space Command on 1 December 2009, and for the B-2 and B-52 dual capable bombers from Air Combat Command on 1 February 2010. Our four major weapons systems are on average, over 40 years old, and this includes our “new” 22-year-old B-2 bombers.

Equip: B-52s

We have been successful in investing in multiple B-52 platform improvements to address both modernization and sustainment. The Combat Network Communications Technology (CONNECT) program is the most significant B-52 modernization program since 1980 and will add 21st century capability to the aircraft. CONNECT ground testing is on-going at Edwards Air Force Base. We have also recently tested a bomber flight control software block upgrade that will significantly improve Advanced Targeting Pod capabilities and provide the interface to employ Miniature Air-Launched Decoys (MALD), and have started the Military Standard - 1760 Internal Weapons upgrade program which will enable the carriage of eight modernized smart weapons in the bomb bay, such as the Global Positioning System–guided Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM), increasing the total aircraft load-out from 12 to 20 Precision Guided Munitions.

In the near-term, the B-52 needs upgrades to its anti-skid system, it needs airspace access upgrades such as the Mode S/5 transponder for real-time aircraft identification, data, and position, and it needs a new radar as the current radar is based on 1950s technology and may be unsupported by 2016. We also need to resolve a safety of flight issue with the installation of the MultiMode Receiver 2020 Instrument Landing System Receiver that brings the aircraft in compliance for frequency modulation immunity, a requirement that previously restricted B-52 aircraft transiting European airspace and using European airfields.

Equip: B-2s

We made significant progress with the B-2 Radar Modernization Program during the past year, completing four aircraft and bringing the fleet total to twelve upgraded aircraft. Air Force Global Strike Command increased maintainability of the upgraded radar system by accelerating

technical data deliveries and by maximizing antenna diagnostic and prognostic capabilities through software enhancements. We have also completed integration of the Massive Ordnance Penetrator with the B-2 aircraft, giving the warfighter increased capability against hardened and deeply buried targets.

We made progress in addressing B-2 aircraft parts obsolescence issues through weekly teleconferences across the B-2 enterprise to track current problem parts and project future parts issues. Improved communication, proactive planning, and procurement, as well as new logistics models for small fleet management, have decreased the B-2 monthly non-mission capable supply rate by one third since February 2010.

For the B-2, we also must meet national requirements for nuclear command and control—the program of record is the Extremely High Frequency (EHF) satellite communications. This upgrade not only meets nuclear requirements, it provides wideband “net-ready” beyond-line-of-site connectivity for full spectrum operations.

Equip: UH-1Ns and CVLSP

Bombers are not the only aviation weapons systems vital to our mission in Air Force Global Strike Command. The UH-1N (Huey) Helicopter has served the Air Force well since 1970, primarily in providing missile field support, convoy security, and ferrying missile crews and maintenance teams to and from the missile complexes and providing aerial security surveillance of remote ICBM facilities. However, mission requirements changed in the late 1990’s, and again after the terrorist attacks on 9/11.

The Air Force currently operates 62 UH-1N aircraft which do not meet all of the vertical lift requirements in our missile fields, nor in the AF District of Washington. Post 9/11, DOD

determined an urgent need for vertical lift improvements over the current UH-1N. For AF Global Strike Command, the Huey's primary role is to provide a robust and agile missile field security capability. Presently, the UH-1N fleet does not meet missile complex security requirements for endurance, speed, and payload. In addition to the UH-1N's clearly defined capability gaps, there are not enough UH-1N aircraft to meet the security needs for our nuclear enterprise and the missions in the Military District of Washington. Finally, the UH-1N's advanced age is manifesting itself in the form of airframe cracks. Cracks in the UH-1N's lift beam area and tail boom assembly present the challenge of keeping a forty-year-old aircraft combat mission ready while working through the issue of parts availability and obsolescence. The risk we assume with the current helicopter is unacceptable and the need for a replacement helicopter is both urgent and compelling. As lead MAJCOM, we will continue to advocate for the Common Vertical Lift Support Platform (CVLSP) to ensure the safety and security of missile field operations and to meet the requirement posed by Air Force District of Washington continuity of operations and government missions for the National Capital Region.

Equip: ICBMs

Turning now to ICBMs, the Minuteman III is congressionally mandated to be in service until 2030. We're in a modernization program to reach 2020, and Air Force Materiel Command is exploring what will be required to reach 2030. Since 1962, the Minuteman "family" has been updated from the MMI, to the MMII, to the MMIII, and there have been upgrades and modifications to each of those respective models. We made significant strides in the past year toward completing the Propulsion Replacement Program, which marks the full deployment of new solid fuel stage motors and refurbished flight controls across the entire force to extend

booster service life through the end of this decade. We will reach completion on this major effort when the last two boosters are in place this month.

While the Minuteman missiles have been upgraded and modified, the infrastructure supporting these missiles is still early 1960s era equipment and we will ensure our reviews include this element of the weapon system. Along those lines, we began, with the support of Air Force Materiel Command, a depot overhaul program for the fleet of 23 year-old Transporter Erector Vehicles and silo emplacement vehicles. We have established requirements for a Transporter Erector Vehicle replacement and have begun development of the new Payload Transporter vehicle. The new ICBM Payload Transporter will introduce physical security technologies into the reentry system transport vehicle, to include advanced security delay features with stand-off command and control activation capability. I want to thank the Congress for funding this program at \$117.8 million across the Future Years Defense Program, and we should see the first Payload Transporter deliveries in FY15.

These handling equipment sustainment efforts will significantly enhance the safety and security of daily operations across our three ICBM bases and supports modernization and upgrade necessary to extend Minuteman III through 2030. Additionally, these efforts will enable the Air Force to execute activities required for implementation of New START.

Equip: ICBM Security Improvements

We have taken a number of steps to provide our Security Forces with the equipment and technology they need to protect and defend our nation's nuclear deterrent.

Air Force Global Strike Command has purchased 152 armored vehicles to better protect our security forces and meet Department of Defense requirements. Some of these new armored vehicles have been delivered to our wings, and delivery will be complete no later than calendar year 2013.

We are in the process of fully deploying new Remote Visual Assessment (RVA) equipment to assist Security Forces monitoring of the ICBM missile complexes. RVA enhances situational awareness, and helps security forces tailor the responding forces in accordance with the assessed threat. We are transitioning from a satellite dependent RVA system to a terrestrial system that increases both performance and responsiveness at a lower long term operating cost. In addition, we are modernizing our security sensor systems used to protect our above-ground weapons storage areas, with completion of the upgrade at Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota this year.

Equip: Long Range Strike Family of Systems

We are strong advocates and partners in the development of a Long Range Strike (LRS) Family of Systems that will provide a visible deterrent and global strike capability well into the future. The Air Force LRS strategy uses a Family of Systems construct consisting of three precision-strike pillars: a Long-Range Strike Platform (LRSP), a Long Range Standoff Missile (LRSO), and a Conventional Prompt Global Strike (CPGS) capability. Both Secretary Gates and Secretary Donley have made a commitment to a new nuclear capable, long range penetrating bomber.

Challenges

Air Force Global Strike Command faces three central challenges. First, we must **consolidate the gains** we have made across the nuclear enterprise. Second, we must achieve enduring cultural

change in our nuclear enterprise while also aggressively **supporting the current conventional fight**. Finally, we must sustain and enhance our current force while preparing to **meet the challenges of the future** with innovative solutions. I am proud of the progress our Airmen have made, and as I address these challenges through this testimony, I will share my perspective on Air Force Global Strike Command's significant accomplishments.

Consolidating our Gains

Now that we have established the Command and declared full operational capability, we must consolidate our gains, sustain momentum, and provide stability to the enterprise while continuing to pursue improvements. One example is our recent initiative to capture and categorize recommendations or findings relating to our nuclear alert forces. In partnership with the Air Force Materiel Command, we are reviewing studies, assessments, reports, and other documents dating back to 1990 to audit the recommendations and follow through with the findings that have not been executed, funded, and/or mitigated. Any open recommendations will be worked to resolution or prioritized and tracked for later action according to fiscal constraints and level of risk.

Sustain Conventional Capabilities

Our second challenge is to achieve enduring cultural change in our nuclear enterprise while also aggressively supporting the current conventional fight. Our bomber forces are more than just dual-capable--they are full-spectrum. Having both a nuclear and conventional mission is not something new for our bomber units. Nuclear capable bombers participated in numerous conventional operations from Korea through DESERT STORM. During the Cold War, the conventional employment of bombers was seen as a distraction from the core mission of nuclear

deterrence. However, since the end of the Cold War, providing support to conventional operations has been a core mission enhanced by developments in stealth, precision, ISR, and joint connectivity. Our nuclear capable bombers, with enhanced conventional capabilities and training, have excelled in OPERATIONS SOUTHERN WATCH, ALLIED FORCE, ENDURING FREEDOM, IRAQI FREEDOM, and ODYSSEY DAWN.

To help our commanders strike this balance, we executed a year-long review of our Designed Operational Capability, or DOC statements, for every unit in the command. We ensured that the units' missions, resources, and readiness metrics are clearly linked to the combat power or the combat support required by the joint warfighter.

Today, our B-52s and B-2s rotate to Guam to provide continuous long range strike presence and proven combat capability to the commander of US Pacific Command. Furthermore, our recent B-2 missions into Libya show how quickly a crisis can develop, and how long range bombers can rapidly bring flexible combat power to a joint commander. As a command, we must continue to evolve long range strike as a core competency to ensure no adversary has complete freedom of action.

Preparing for the Future Challenges

Finally, we must sustain and enhance our current force while preparing to meet the challenges of the future. Sustaining our aging platforms and meeting current commitments competes for the resources we need to modernize our forces in advance of future threats.

Secretary Gates has directed a thorough and vigorous scrub of military bureaucratic structures, business practices, modernization programs, civilian and military personnel levels, and associated overhead costs. At Air Force Global Strike Command we recognize our responsibility to be efficient and effective stewards of resources. To achieve both efficiency and effectiveness requires a commitment to creating a climate where productivity improvements—faster, better, cheaper—thrive. As Secretary of Defense Gates has said, “We have not seen the productivity growth in the defense economy that we have seen and expect from the rest of the economy.”

This is an opportunity to achieve not just efficiency targets for the next few budget cycles, but to institutionalize the processes, education, and mindset to encourage, reward, and implement operational innovation. Our goal is to instill a culture that consistently encourages innovation and to foster Airmen for whom productivity improvements are second nature. We will ensure they have a command structure that allows their ideas to be raised, vetted, and implemented. We must be more productive in ways we have not been in the past while remaining focused on the daily execution of our missions.

Summary of Challenges, Special Trust, and Responsibility

In conclusion, we have made great strides in the last year, and Americans can be proud of what the Airmen assigned to Air Force Global Strike Command accomplished since we last testified before your committee in 2010. We must now consolidate those gains and continue to forge a culture that recognizes the special trust and responsibilities of the most powerful weapons in our

nation's arsenal; we must do this while aggressively supporting the current fight; and we must sustain and enhance our force while preparing for future challenges.

The existence of Air Force Global Strike command reflects the commitment of the Air Force to ensure the US maintains a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent, and the importance of the global strike mission.

Thank you.