

STATEMENT BY

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BEFORE THE

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ON

ASSESSING MOBILITY AIRLIFT CAPABILITIES AND

OPERATIONAL RISKS UNDER THE REVISED 2012 DEFENSE

STRATEGY

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THE HOUSE ARMEDS SERVICES COMMITTEE

Opening Remarks

Chairman Akin, Ranking Member McIntyre, and distinguished members of the subcommittee; I am honored to appear before you today on behalf of the 106,700 outstanding men and women serving in our nation's Air National Guard (ANG). I would like to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to the Committee for its tremendous support to the Air National Guard. Your work ensures America continues to have a ready, reliable, and accessible Air National Guard, responsive to our domestic needs as well as providing operational capabilities critical to the success of our Total Force. As we face more constrained resources and a declining defense budget, we must accentuate the strength of the Air National Guard—our cost effectiveness.

Air National Guard in National Defense

For more than two decades the United States Air Force has provided the “proof of concept” for how our military can operate as a Total Force. Our Air Guardsmen have demonstrated their commitment to this concept and are indispensable to the Air Force's Total Force effort. The world is a very different place today than when Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird established the Total Force in August 1970, but the underlying principle of the Total Force remains true: the nation can maintain defense capabilities at less total cost through a careful and thoughtful balancing of Active and Reserve Component forces.

As the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review concluded, effective use of the Guard and Reserves “will lower overall personnel and operating costs, better ensure the right mix and availability of equipment, provide more efficient and

effective use of defense assets, and contribute to the sustainability of both the Active and Reserve components.” It is time for us to settle and move past the cost comparison debate and begin making decisions based on this new environment of austerity we find ourselves navigating.

Last fiscal year Air Guardsmen, 89.5% of those whom volunteered to serve, filled almost 56,000 manpower requests. On March 17, 2011, as the United Nations Security Council debated the Libyan no-fly zone resolution, ANG aircraft and air crews were already en route to Forward Operating Bases to await orders.

Air Guardsmen have deployed to support contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, provide air logistics support to the National Science Foundation in Antarctica, and help to defend U.S. interests on every continent around the globe. As demands upon the U.S. Air Force expanded beyond flight operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, Air Guard men and women were there, providing medical assistance, explosive ordnance disposal experts, security forces, and other combat and support capabilities.

The ANG’s contribution encompasses more than just overseas contingencies; our Air Guardsmen provide critical support to homeland defense and civil authorities. On October 1, 2011, Air Guard men and women were actively engaged in homeland defense and support to civil authorities.

These missions included protecting American skies through the Aerospace Control Alert mission, assisting with critical infrastructure protection and assisting their local communities with disaster recovery in North and South

Dakota, Missouri, and Nebraska. Almost 600 Air Guardsmen supported local and national counterdrug programs, and 121 Airmen assisted the U.S. Border Patrol on our southwest border. ANG C-130 crews, equipped with Modular Airborne Fire Fighting Systems, dropped 20,000 gallons of fire retardant on Southwest fires in support of the National Forestry Service, part of more than 360,000 gallons dropped during the entire wildfire season.

Air Guard members want to continue their service to their country, state, and local community. These men and women are very proud of the National Guard's 375 years of service, but they also understand that the nation's needs are changing. They are dedicated to ensuring the ANG remains an essential and cost effective element of the Total Force.

For the ANG to be effective, it must have equipment capable of performing the mission and the ability to integrate seamlessly into joint operations. Investment in the ANG is as good a business decision today as it was at the dawn of the Total Force in 1970. There is no better value for fielding air power to both our nation and its governors.

Domestic Operations

Using community-based facilities, the ANG provides America with immediate regional support at less cost than large military installations, costing taxpayers less than two cents of every dollar spent on defense. The ANG has particular core capabilities for which we are uniquely trained and equipped, including:

- Air Defense
- Air Traffic Control
- Airlift (transportation, supply, & evacuation)
- Civil engineering
- Specialized medical care & evacuation
- Incident awareness & assessment
- Aerial firefighting
- Search and rescue (air & ground)
- Explosive Ordinance Disposal
- Hazard Material (HAZMAT) detection, identification, & removal
- Communications

The ANG's support to civil authorities is based upon the concept of "dual-use," *i.e.*, equipment purchased by the Air Force for the ANG's federal, combat mission, can be adapted and used domestically when not needed overseas. For example, an ANG F-16 wing contains not only F-16 fighter aircraft but fire trucks, forklifts, portable light carts, emergency medical equipment including ambulances, air traffic control equipment, explosives ordinance equipment, etc., as well as well trained experts – all extremely valuable in response to civil emergencies. As the Air Force proceeds with its recapitalization and modernization plans, we need to consider domestic disaster response capabilities requirements in these plans.

Fighting Fires from Above

In 2011, Air Guard crews flying C-130s equipped with Modular Airborne Firefighting Systems (MAFFS), dropped more than 677,188 gallons of water and more than 6 million pounds of fire retardant on wildfires.

Each C-130 aircraft fitted with MAFFS is capable of dropping up to 3,000 gallons of retardant or water in five seconds. Today, three of the four MAFFS units are operated by the ANG: the 145th Airlift Wing (AW), 146th AW and the 153th AW. The ANG provides the National Interagency Fire Center six C-130 aircraft and crews trained to fly the U.S. Forest Service-owned MAFFS units.

Overseas Defense Mission

The National Guard is battle ready. Since 9/11, National Guard Citizen Soldiers and Airmen have been mobilized more than 660,000 times in support of the overseas and domestic-missions, some multiple times. Within the ANG, 179,700 Airmen have been mobilized since 9/11.

In FY11, more than 19,500 Air Guardsmen deployed to more than 60 countries, and every continent, filling over 56,000 Air Force manpower requests. Nearly 90 percent of those manpower requests were filled with volunteers. This includes 2,380 Airmen mobilized in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan), 10,470 deployed in support of the Balkans, Sinai, and additional locations.¹

When the United Nations Security Council declared a no-fly zone resolution over Libya, Air National Guard aerial refueling aircraft and crews were the first to respond, providing 14 of the 24 tankers.

¹ The Air Guard numbers include Airmen who have mobilized multiple times.

Smartly Equipped

Using National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA) funding, the ANG spent \$15 million for urban search and rescue and \$20 million for command and control equipment to improve domestic response coordination.

Modernization of critical dual-use equipment ensures the National Guard has the right tools for both homeland and wartime missions. Efficient and cost-effective modernization will become even more important as budgets decline and legacy systems remain in the Air National Guard inventory well past their original design lives.

The ANG pursues “good enough” 80% solutions to modernization shortfalls using readily available, off-the-shelf technology to provide capabilities at much lower cost than comparable DoD programs. This approach uses NGREA funding more efficiently and increases capability across more weapon systems and mission areas.

To save money, the ANG is pursuing a \$125,000 helmet-mounted cueing system for its A-10 and F-16s that allows the pilot to quickly acquire high value, fleeting targets in seconds versus minutes by simply looking at the cueing system. Comparable systems on other fighters cost \$650,000 per aircraft.

Positioned for Cyber

The Department of Defense is currently refining its framework to thwart cyber attacks in the future while defending our critical military networks today. The National Guard has access to a wealth of information technology talent within its ranks, including Guardsmen working at world-class companies. These

Airmen have a unique blend of civilian and military skills across the information technology spectrum, making the National Guard a ready defense asset in the national cyber security mission.

Distributed Common Ground System (DCGS)

The DCGS weapons system serves as the “virtual back end” of the U-2 Dragon Lady, RQ-4 Global Hawk, MQ-1 Predator, and MQ-9 Reaper. Air Force DCGS locations around the globe receive raw data feeds from these secure platforms and provide finished analysis to coalition forces and combatant commanders.

Currently, the ANG has six stand-alone DCGS nodes in Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, and Nevada, and two classic associate units co-located with the active AF nodes in Virginia and California.

Air Guard Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPAs)

RPAs provide combat intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, close air support, force protection and escort, base security, and precision strike capability to joint force commanders. Airmen from across the U.S. conduct RPA operations 24/7.

The ANG flies 11 Predator and Reaper Combat Air Patrols (CAPS), providing more than 220 hours of full motion video every day to joint force commanders and warfighters on the ground.

The ANG has MQ-1 Predator units in Arizona, California, North Dakota, Texas, and Ohio. Each Air Guard MQ-1 unit flies Overseas Contingency

Operations CAPs. This effort equates to nearly 73,000 combat hours (3,650 combat sorties) per year.

The ANG has one MQ-9 Reaper Squadron, the 174th Fighter Wing in Syracuse, NY. The 174th is forecast to fly approximately 7,300 combat hours (365 combat sorties) per year. Five additional Air Guard MQ-9 RPA units will be added by FY14

Closing Remarks

Our National Guard Airmen have proven themselves to be ready, reliable, and accessible in recent actions here at home and overseas. Every dollar spent on the Air National Guard provides our nation an unmatched return on investment. Given adequate equipment and training, the Air National Guard will continue to fulfill its Total Force obligations and seamlessly integrate into the Joint theater operations and respond to domestic emergencies.

We need your help to ensure that the Air National Guard of tomorrow is as a ready, reliable, accessible, and cost effective as it is today.

Thank you for the opportunity to be here today, I look forward to your questions.