[H.A.S.C. No. 118–29]

HEARING

ON

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024

AND

OVERSIGHT OF PREVIOUSLY AUTHORIZED PROGRAMS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS HEARING

ON

FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET REQUEST FOR MILITARY READINESS

HEARING HELD
APRIL 19, 2023

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE
53–874 WASHINGTON : 2024

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

MICHAEL WALTZ, Florida, *Chairman*

JOE WILSON, South Carolina
AUSTIN SCOTT, Georgia
MIKE JOHNSON, Louisiana
CARLOS A. GIMENEZ, Florida
BRAD FINSTAD, Minnesota
DALE W. STRONG, Alabama
JENNIFER A. KIGGANS, Virginia
JAMES C. MOYLAN, Guam

JOHN GARAMENDI, California
MIKIE SHERRILL, New Jersey
VERONICA ESCOBAR, Texas
MARILYN STRICKLAND, Washington
GABE VASQUEZ, New Mexico
JILL N. TOKUDA, Hawaii
DONALD G. DAVIS, North Carolina
MARC VEASEY, Texas

PATRICK NEVINS, *Professional Staff Member*
JEANINE WOMBLE, *Professional Staff Member*
ETHAN PELISSIER, *Research Assistant*

CONTENTS

FISCAL YEAR 2024 BUDGET REQUEST FOR MILITARY READINESS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS,
Washington, DC, Wednesday, April 19, 2023.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at 3:44 p.m., in room 2212, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Michael Waltz (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MICHAEL WALTZ, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM FLORIDA, CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

Mr. WALTZ. Call to order this hearing of the Readiness Subcommittee of the fiscal year 2024 budget request for military readiness.

I ask unanimous consent that the Chair be authorized to declare a recess at any time. Without objection, so ordered.

We obviously have a lot to discuss today and you all have—everyone has my apologies for running a few minutes behind. That is what happens when my team lets me disappear into a SCIF [secure compartmentalized information facility] with HPSCI [House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence].

We have a lot to, obviously we have a lot to discuss as it pertains to readiness. I want to thank all of your for time in having our one-on-one meetings in the run-up to this hearing.

Lots to talk about: pilot shortages, recruiting/retention, weapon system sustainment, infrastructure management and restoration, just to name a few. I would like to highlight the detriments of operating under a continuing resolution. I want to highlight that as much for my colleagues here, as all of our Vices well know.

That without an on-time budget, the Department is unable—and I think this is lost a lot of times in the conversation here—that the Department is unable to begin any new projects. I am convinced that there is an underlying belief here that the Department gets a lot money. And if it gets the same amount of money as last year, then everybody will be okay.

But not having those new starts is just critical and devastating. I ask the witnesses to elaborate these, as you make your—on these effects as you make your comments.

I do remain concerned with this administration's continuing priority on climate change. I want to be clear that we have to deal with climate change, that resiliency is absolutely an important issue.

But as we had today with the Secretary of the Army, when we are outfitting our bases and our fleet with things that come from the—our greatest adversary, with panels, with turbines, with technology, with software that it literally comes from China, I have real concerns with our control of that supply chain as we move towards transitioning our fleet.

In fact, you know, in addition to that, the Secretary of the Navy recently stated that climate change is a top priority of his. Yet we stand to have those same supply chain issues. I am supportive of efforts to increase resiliency, I want to be clear there. But these policies can't be an end to themselves.

I am also concerned, just to be candid here, and we have had these conversations of what we are seeing within the Department of the Navy with regards to amphibs [amphibious assault ships]. And we want to talk about that today.

And in fact, the Marine Corps' number one unfunded requirement is a ship for the Navy. And that is something that we have to resolve. We will help you resolve it here.

But I think that is endemic of an ongoing issue. And years of delayed maintenance due to high OPTEMPO [operations tempo] frankly has gutted the readiness of our amphibs. This has led to delayed deployments for ARG-MEUs [amphibious ready group-Marine expeditionary units], and decreased capacity with our ships at sea.

These are obviously critical capabilities to INDOPACOM [U.S. Indo-Pacific Command] and that combatant commander, and I remain somewhat baffled as to why these problems persist. I applaud force modernization taking place across the services. We support the Army's REARMM [Regionally Aligned Readiness and Modernization Model] and the Marine Corps' Force Design 2030.

I am concerned, however, about the timeliness of these efforts, and you will continue, Ranking Member Garamendi and I think agree on this, that the timelines for the threats don't match the timelines to get our readiness in shape and to get our modernization in shape. And I am eager to hear how the services have revised and accelerated these timelines to counter China's ambitions.

And finally, taking care of our soldiers, taking care of our service members across the board is the utmost responsibility of everybody here in this room. Service leadership continuously touts the rhetoric of people first. But when we look at some of our facilities, when we look at some of the living conditions for our service members, I still remain skeptical of this actually being put into practice.

And so the condition of some of this housing truly is outstanding. It no doubt affects retention. We must provide safe barracks and housing to our service members and put their welfare first to match, have our budget match the priority.

So I just look forward to hearing from everybody here today. And I hand over to you, Mr. Garamendi, for your opening comments.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Waltz can be found in the Appendix on page 27.]

STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN GARAMENDI, A REPRESENTATIVE FROM CALIFORNIA, RANKING MEMBER, SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

Mr. GARAMENDI. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am delighted to work with you. I am pleased to hear your interest and support for climate change issues. And you are quite right about addressing that issue using Chinese materials.

That is why we wrote into almost—well, in all of the infrastructure and the energy issues of the future very strong buy-America requirements. And so we need to push the American industry into the manufacturing of these systems, from solar panels to turbines and the like.

And we can do that, and that is also an issue for the military. Are they buying American-made equipment for their ships and planes, or are they buying others. And complex issue, but a very, very important one.

So each year as we prepare for this hearing, I am struck by the vast jurisdiction of the Readiness Subcommittee. As I often say, other subcommittees get to buy the new, bright, shiny stuff, and it is left to us to maintain it and keep it operating.

And so in this subcommittee, we need to pay particular attention to the facilities that support this equipment, that sustain the modernization of the weapon systems themselves, and in which the men and women of the military are trained.

So we have an enormous task here. And over the years, both the minority and the majority as it has changed over time have paid attention to this issue, as you are Mr. Chairman, and I thank you for that.

Now, we have also learned from Putin's immoral invasion of Ukraine that many of the issues that we have dealt with over the years here trying to make sure that the—that our military is ready in every way has brought to the attention and to the forefront many of our concerns.

We have been forced to think about the organic industrial base, which was heretofore not with this committee, but with the—even the larger committee often ignored.

And so in this budget request, I am finally seeing evidence that we are getting serious about the modernization of the depots, the shipyards, the infrastructure, the bases, the housing, and all of the rest. And we need to continue to push that.

I know that you intend to do that, Mr. Chairman, and I hope that the members of this subcommittee will continue also with that effort.

Through the media, we have also watched the cost of Russia's other readiness failures for the Russians. We have watched its equipment fail because it was poorly sustained and maintained. And we have witnessed the cost of poorly trained troops, Russian troops. We cannot let that happen, and it falls to this subcommittee to make sure that as we go forward, that we are fully prepared.

There is another piece of this puzzle that falls within the jurisdiction beyond the training of the troops. And that is that we have to make sure that the access to sustain the fight is available. And so we will be working on that also.

Now, the Comptroller General has analyzed that the readiness of our weapon systems over the course of years has not been good enough. When we analyze the aircraft type, the majority of the systems in our inventory fail to—by more than 10 percent below the Department's own mission capability rate goals.

So we have to continue to work on this issue. Cannibalization seems to be the way in which we keep most of the fleet, whether that is an aircraft or it is a truck or a plane or a tank, or a ship, cannibalization seems to be the way in which we keep these things operating. That doesn't work for long.

And so we need to pay attention to that as we have in the past, and we must continue to make sure that all of the equipment has the necessary parts and pieces on time when necessary.

So I am looking forward to the hearing today, our witnesses as they discuss these issues, what they have learned or the lessons they have learned. And it will be displayed in this year's budget.

And we are certainly seeing the lessons in Ukraine. More importantly, what we are doing to operationalize those lessons that have been learned from Ukraine and beyond.

So, look forward to working with you, Mr. Chairman. Look forward to working with the members of the committee, the subcommittee, and we will push along. Thank you very much. Yield back.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Garamendi can be found in the Appendix on page 28.]

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, Mr. Garamendi. I'd like to again welcome our witnesses and thank them for their participation today.

We are joined by General Randy George, the Vice Chief of the Army; Admiral Lisa Franchetti, the Vice Chief of Naval Operations; General Eric Smith, Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps; and General David Allvin, Vice Chief Staff of the Air Force; General DT Thompson, Vice Chief of Space Operations.

General George, over to you for your opening remarks.

STATEMENT OF GEN RANDY A. GEORGE, USA, VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

General GEORGE. Okay, thanks, Chairman.

Chairman Waltz, Ranking Member Garamendi, distinguished members of this subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the readiness posture of our Army.

Eighty years ago, American troops were fully engaged in the allied war effort in Europe, in Africa, and in the Indo-Pacific. Among them was a company of soldiers holding a roadblock near a village at Sanananda in northern New Guinea. They were enduring malarial fevers, venomous snakes, torrential rains, and holding off a perpetual onslaught of competent enemy fighters.

I reflect on this because it reminds me that our Army must be ready for anything. We must be ready to deter war, and if deterrence fails, to take the fight to the enemy anywhere around the globe, even in the most hostile environments, just as we have always done.

It also reminds me that warfighting is a team effort. It takes teams on the ground, like at Sanananda, and teams at every ech-

elon above providing a menu of lethal options to our combatant commanders.

Our Army is focused on warfighting and training for battle in which all domains are contested. And we are focused on supporting our combatant commands with ready formations around the world. And right now we have 137,000 soldiers in over 140 countries.

We are strengthening our partnership with defense industry and rapidly modernizing our organic industrial base to increase productivity and ensure that we have the stocks to fight when called upon.

We are deterring the pacing challenge China by exercising and campaigning across the Indo-Pacific theater and holding the line in the European theater along our NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization]—alongside our NATO partners. All the while, adapting in real time to lessons learned from the war in Ukraine and rapidly incorporating new tactics into our doctrine and our training.

But readiness for today is not enough. Our Army is also transforming, because honestly we don't have an option. Warfare is changing, and we must change because of it to ensure we stay ahead of our potential adversaries.

So among many things, we are modernizing long-range precision fires, air and missile defense, ground combat capabilities, and developing counter-UAS [unmanned aerial systems] capabilities and doctrine.

Finally, we are building the team. And like I said, warfighting is a team effort. This includes providing commanders with the resources they need to support soldiers' mental and physical well-being, to maintain a healthy command climate, and to built cohesive teams.

And it means investing in the quality of life of our soldiers and our families, ensuring that they have safe housing in barracks, adequate childcare, and spouse employment opportunities.

I will end with recruitment, a critical readiness priority for us right now. We are challenged by the fact that a small number of young Americans, 23 percent, are qualified to serve. Fewer still, we are finding, are interested in serving. And that is something that we are working very hard to change.

Our Army remains a great place to be, and I think our high retention rates speak to that. The trouble is, many Americans don't realize it or believe it.

Military service to many people seems like a life setback. In reality, it is a life accelerator. That has certainly been my experience since I enlisted as a private right out of high school.

It is a great team with an important mission and ample opportunity to learn, grow, and make an impact. And we have to get that story out, and we are pouring all of our energy into that effort. And we appreciate Congress' assistance in amplifying our call-to-service message.

And Chairman, the last on—to answer your question on a continuing resolution, I will just give you an example from last year. Over 3 months, we had about 25 new starts that we were looking to get going and we couldn't because of the continuing resolution impacted about 1.9 billion.

And you can imagine some of that in there, for example, was OIB [organic industrial base] modernization that we were trying to get started. So as you mentioned up front, it is the new starts that a continuing resolution would be a problem for us.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of General George can be found in the Appendix on page 30.]

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, General.

Admiral Franchetti, your opening statement.

STATEMENT OF ADM LISA M. FRANCHETTI, USN, VICE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, UNITED STATES NAVY

Admiral FRANCHETTI. Chairman Waltz, Ranking Member Garamendi, and distinguished members of the committee, good afternoon. On behalf of the Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations, thank you for the opportunity to discuss Navy readiness with you today.

The United States is a maritime nation. Our security and prosperity depend on the seas. For the past 247 years, your Navy has stood the watch.

We are America's away team, operating forward to deter war, protect our economic interests, uphold international law, ensure freedom of and access to the seas, and respond to crises and natural disasters. We provide our Nation's leaders with decision space and options and stand ready to fight and win when called to do so.

Over the past year, we have safely executed 22,000 steaming days, almost 1 million flight hours, and participated in nearly 100 exercises. With operations spanning the globe, we have supported the allied response to Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, conducted freedom of navigation operations, interdicted illegal narcotics traffickers, and provided humanitarian assistance.

As I speak, our sailors and Marine Corps counterparts are deployed on more than 100 ships and submarines around the world, ready to meet the security needs of our Nation. Our fiscal year 2024 budget request is consistent with CNO's [Chief of Naval Operations'] priorities of readiness in sailors, then capability, then capacity, with the *Columbia* SSBN [nuclear ballistic missile submarine] program as our number one procurement priority.

We continue to prioritize readiness to sustain our forces through better maintenance performance, more training, improved parts availability, and increased weapons inventories.

Navy readiness begins with our people, the sailors, civilians, and families who are the foundation of our true warfighting advantage. We are committed to improving their quality of service and personal resilience, investing in initiatives such as quality housing and childcare, access to the full continuum of mental healthcare, improved education, and an environment free of sexual harassment and sexual assault.

In this 50th anniversary of the All-Volunteer Force, we continue to focus on recruiting, retention, and reducing gaps in our billets at sea.

Navy readiness is also centered on the readiness of our platforms. Using data analytics, improving our planning processes, and procuring long lead time materials, we have decreased mainte-

nance delays in public and private shipyards. But there is more work to be done.

Our budget request fully funds public and private ship maintenance, aviation depot maintenance, increases parts and spares, and continues to grow our highly skilled public shipyard workforce.

Finally, Navy readiness is also driven by the readiness of our bases. Shore infrastructure is critical, and we continue to fully fund the once-in-a-century recapitalization of our four public shipyards through the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program.

Our budget request supports increased sustainment of our shore infrastructure while prioritizing restoration and modernization for water, electrical, and safety systems.

As our strategic competitors continue to improve and enhance their capabilities, maintaining a responsive, combat-ready, worldwide deployable Navy is our first line of defense and deterrence. Sustained readiness investments in today's Navy are a down payment on American's future security.

I thank the committee for your leadership and partnership in keeping the world's greatest maritime force ready to fight and win at sea, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Franchetti can be found in the Appendix on page 42.]

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you.

General Smith, your opening statement.

STATEMENT OF GEN ERIC M. SMITH, USMC, ASSISTANT COMMANDANT, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

General SMITH. Chairman Waltz, Ranking Member Garamendi, and distinguished members of this subcommittee, I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss Marine Corps readiness and the fiscal year 2024 budget.

Your Marine Corps remains the Nation's force in readiness. We are ready to deter adversaries, and when that deterrence fails, we are ready to strike and enable others to strike.

We also provide the crisis response forces that American citizens abroad and our allies have come to expect from their Marines. We provide this expeditionary combined arms force utilizing the minimum 31 amphibious warships that Congress has directed.

Those ships provide the organic mobility required to bring all of our assets to bear at the critical time and place for our combatant commanders. The most important asset we bring to bear remains the individual Marine.

Our modernization efforts, known as Force Design, ensure that we are manned, trained, and equipped to deter a peer adversary and to campaign to a position of advantage should deterrence fail and lethal force be needed.

Our modernization efforts are required to fight and win on future battlefields. About that, we can make no mistake. Our aviation readiness has increased more than 10 percent in the past few years, thanks to the work of this subcommittee to provide us with the operations and maintenance funding we need, and due to our aviation modernization and reorganization efforts.

When a Marine expeditionary unit deploys on a big-deck L-class amphibious warship today, they provide the combatant commander

with 66 percent more fifth-generation aircraft than before we made Force Design changes.

Our efforts to modernize our training and education are bearing fruit as we produce an even more lethal Marine. From our basic rifleman training to our service-level training exercises, we are becoming more lethal.

Our new training integrates our joint and organic fires, improved communications, and updated ISR [intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance] to sense, make sense, track, and destroy targets at ranges and complexities never before seen by our Marine Corps.

Our individual Marine remains the most lethal weapon on the battlefield. Our efforts to improve the quality of life for those warriors, to retain them once we train them, are vital and important. Your continued support matters to them and their families, so thank you.

Finally, to your point, Mr. Chairman, I would note that of the past 10 years, approximately 4 have been spent in a continuing resolution status. During any CR, we are unable to improve as rapidly as we might have otherwise done. Our adversaries don't have that problem.

Your help to deliver on-time and predictable funding to the 18- and 19-year-old lance corporals who do the fighting for our Nation is sincerely appreciated.

As an example, in the past we had the opportunity to procure our Amphibious Combat Vehicle faster, but were unable to do so because of a CR. That leaves older equipment in the hands of the 18- and 19-year-olds who will fight for us. So the continuing resolution is absolutely detrimental.

I look forward to answering your questions, and I am grateful to appear before you.

[The prepared statement of General Smith can be found in the Appendix on page 63.]

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, General Smith. General Allvin for your opening statement.

STATEMENT OF GEN DAVID. W. ALLVIN, USAF, VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

General ALLVIN. Chairman Waltz, Ranking Member Garamendi, and distinguished committee members, on behalf of our Air Force Secretary and Chief of Staff, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the critically important topic of readiness.

We greatly appreciate this body's continued partnership and support in delivering the resources necessary for the Air Force to respond to today's threats while preparing for tomorrow.

The events of the past year remind us that global actors have the capability and intent to challenge peace and stability. In the case of the pacing challenge, the People's Republic of China, the speed at which they are developing advanced capability and capacity should serve as a warning for us to act with a greater sense of urgency.

We must maintain the necessary advantage to deter them from violent pursuit of objectives at odds with our national interests. Your Air Force is laser-focused on this task.

Readiness starts with our airmen, both uniformed and civilian, who consistently prove to be our greatest strength and competitive advantage. Since the beginning of the All-Volunteer Force 50 years ago, we have been fortunate enough to attract the best of America's youth in sufficient numbers. But recent realities have put this under pressure.

As a result, we will likely not meet our recruiting goals this year. We are aggressively exploring multiple options while streamlining processes to attract a broader pool of those talented Americans into our formation.

We also know that a ready airman is a focused and resilient airman. And we must demonstrate that we continue to value our service members and their families. We will continue to explore opportunities to expand or initiate programs that better support quality of life, and we greatly appreciate this committee's support for these efforts.

The aircrew deficit persists due to several factors, but this shortage has not extended into the operational units or the pilot training bases. We are continuing on the path to transform our approach to pilot training to increase production while leveraging numerous monetary and non-monetary programs to retain the experience of those trained aviators.

We look forward to working with the committee on these programs, as well as our pursuit of targeted relief from current legislation to enable the hiring of contract simulator instructors to maximize training and optimize our manpower to produce those pilots.

While the proposed budget increase—increases weapon system sustainment funding by $1.1 billion over last year, this will only still resource 87 percent of the estimated requirement due to sustainment challenges of our ever-aging fleet, inflation, supply chain issues, and labor costs.

We are pursuing improvements in reliability and maintainability, supporting initiatives that advance data-driven decisions. This drives efficiency in what we do today, and it enables responsiveness in dynamic wartime environments.

Significant challenges and tough decisions still lie ahead. We must be thoughtful in adequately funding our readiness accounts while pursuing the right investments to develop advanced capabilities to meet future threats. This year we feel we have struck the right balance.

In closing, I would offer this Congress can make the most positive impact on our readiness through a timely budget appropriation. An extended continuing resolution would result in the inability to start critical new programs and continue the momentum that we are building to meet the pacing challenge.

It also creates instability in support to our airmen and families at a time when this has never been more important. A CR will essentially rob us of something both critical and irreversible as we face growing threats to our Nation, and that is time.

So Mr. Garamendi, to your point as well, specifics, and Chairman Waltz, on a CR. We estimate that the CR will decrease our buying power for the United States Air Force by $5.4 billion, an extended CR.

The key things that we are looking at that will directly be impacted by a continuing resolution are the initiation of a research and development in collaborative combat aircraft. This is integral to our design to have affordable mass against the People's Republic of China to be able to gain and maintain air superiority in a highly contested environment.

These collaborative combat aircraft, we are working not only the platforms, but developing the autonomy to ensure we can leverage them with our crewed aircraft, as well as experimental operational units that we have funded in 2024 to be able to better integrate into our formations.

And as I mentioned, with the uncertainty, we see this in every CR. Families that are getting ready to PCS [permanent change of station] and prepare their families for the schools they are going to go into, if we don't have the certainty of being able to do that on time, that just puts more tension into the families, and it doesn't show that we support them the way that we should.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Allvin can be found in the Appendix on page 80.]

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, General Allvin. And those specifics, General Smith, yours as well, are incredibly important for us as we go out to our respective caucuses as we try to get the—as we try to get this done.

General Thompson.

STATEMENT OF GEN DAVID D. THOMPSON, USSF, VICE CHIEF OF SPACE OPERATIONS, UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE

General THOMPSON. Chairman Waltz, Ranking Member Garamendi, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, on behalf of the Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Space Operations, thank you for the opportunity to testify today regarding the readiness of the Space Force.

In examining the readiness of the Space Force to accomplish its missions, the overriding consideration remains the dramatic shift to the space domain from a comparatively benign military environment to one that is undeniably contested.

Given that the capabilities and benefits provided from space are essential to our way of life and crucial to effective military operations in every other domain, this shift was the compelling reason for the creation of the Space Force 3½ years ago.

Since then, with the tremendous support of Congress, the Space Force, Department of the Air Force, and broader Department of Defense have moved out aggressively to address the challenges the Nation faces in space. We have begun to pivot to more resilient and defendable space architectures that ensure soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines can count on space forces across the spectrum of conflict.

We have begun designing and developing satellite constellations that address the migration of missions to space, including moving target indication, domain awareness on the land, at sea, and in the air. Key elements of command and control and the movement of the data and information enables the joint force in the way it expects to fight in the future.

Finally, the Space Force has begun to shift to a new training and readiness approach that I described last year as the Space Force Generation Model. We achieved initial capability for this approach on October 1 of last year. Once complete, it will ensure space forces are combat-ready against the pacing challenge.

While much remains to be done in each of these areas, the main challenges of Space Force readiness today are twofold. The first is creating a combat-ready force that—the first to creating a combat-ready Space Force is an advanced full-spectrum test and training infrastructure.

This infrastructure will be a system of systems that provides test and training opportunities with high-fidelity mission simulators and threats, a professional aggressor force, and a suitable range. It will allow us to validate tactics, test system limitations, and train operators in a live and synthetic environment against a thinking adversary.

Without this infrastructure, Guardians would not have defendable systems, proven tactics, or the confidence and competence they need should it come to conflict in space. The operational test and training infrastructure will be a force multiplier, allowing Guardians to maintain and improve our strategic advantage in space.

The second primary challenge of Space Force readiness lies in whether budgetary resources will be available in a timely manner to execute all we are planning to do. As I stated previously, Congress has been a tremendous partner in defining and building the Space Force.

In each year since its existence, the Space Force has seen 12–15 percent increases in its budget year over year. The 2024 request is nearly $4 billion more than it was in 2023, a 15 percent increase. In the event of a continuing resolution, that increased budget authority would not be available to meet our needs.

This budget request includes at least 17 new initiatives, many of which are focused on this operational test and training infrastructure.

Beyond that, new initiatives that were begun in 2023, already delayed because of the continuing resolution this year, are programmed for increases in 2024. As a specific example, the missile warning system that will track advanced hypersonic threats was begun in 2023. The budget for this vital capability doubles in 2024, allowing us to deliver real global capability by 2027.

None of that additional authority and none of the new starts required for the test and training infrastructure can be begun during a CR.

The President's fiscal year 2024 budget request affirms the DOD and Space Force's commitment to a bold, threat-informed shift. It acknowledges the need for a more robust proliferated architecture, intelligence-driven space domain awareness, aggressive cybersecurity, measured investment in space superiority, and combat-credible forces anchored in a full-spectrum training enterprise.

The most important thing Congress can do to help us in this endeavor is pass an on-time budget. Thank you all for your steadfast partnership and support. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Thompson can be found in the Appendix on page 94.]

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, General. I'm just going to dive right in. I just have one question, I want to get to other members that we—since we have votes looming.

Can we just go down the line. I'll start with you, General George. What are your current projections for your recruiting shortfalls this year?

General GEORGE. Chairman, right now we are doing better than we were doing. I would say right now we are probably projecting to be about 55,000. We had set our goal up to be 65,000 this year, which is higher than what we did last year. So that is where I expect we will——

Mr. WALTZ. About 10,000 short.

General GEORGE. Yes, sir.

Mr. WALTZ. Admiral.

Admiral FRANCHETTI. Chairman, we expect to be about 6,000 short. Also doing better than we started, but about 6,000 short is our projection.

Mr. WALTZ. General.

General SMITH. Chairman, the Marine Corps will meet its recruiting mission this year, as we did last year.

Mr. WALTZ. Roger that. Semper fi.

General ALLVIN. The total force Air Force will be coming in approximately on this path 10,000 short. That is about 3,400 in the Active Duty, 3,100 in the Guard, and a little over 4—in the Reserves, and a little over 4,000 in the Guard.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you. General.

General THOMPSON. Chairman, we have a little different challenge than the other services. We need about 700 new recruits off the street, but we still need and will for the next several years need about 700 interservice transfers from the other services.

And while we are doing very well in recruiting off the street, as the other services have challenges in their recruiting, it becomes more difficult for them to release folks for interservice transfer.

Mr. WALTZ. So will you fall—are you projecting to fall short in those transfers?

General THOMPSON. Don't know yet. We will meet our off-the-street needs. The question will be working with services, how much can they afford to give us. And we just don't know that yet. We will need to wait and negotiate later this year.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you. And minus the Army, because you are already doing it, in terms of polling and collecting data on why we are in this crisis that we are in, will all of you commit to the committee to begin collecting data, look at programs, initiate programs to start understanding why this shortfall is happening?

So I am looking at Navy, Air Force.

Admiral FRANCHETTI. Yes.

General ALLVIN. Absolutely, Chairman. That is underway and will continue.

Mr. WALTZ. Great, thank you.

Mr. Garamendi.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have had the privilege of meeting with each of the presenters today ahead of this meeting, and I am going to turn over my time to Ms. Sherrill.

Ms. SHERRILL. Thank you. And thank you all for your service and for your support to our troops across the globe.

It is important that we build and procure clean energy sources appropriately without influence and ties to our strategic competitors, who use forced labor, conduct intellectual property theft, and forced technology transfers.

It can be done. GAF, a national roofing company headquartered in my district, has been able to successfully transition from Chinese suppliers to manufacturing and producing solar panels in domestic facilities in Texas and California, as well as in Southeast Asian nations including Vietnam, Cambodia, and Taiwan.

As we work on increasing our energy resiliency, we need to ensure our Armed Forces are looking at all energy options available.

And General Smith, we had a discussion yesterday about how this impacts logistics. Can you talk a little bit about that discussion and how energy options can improve your logistics challenges?

General SMITH. Yes, ma'am. Logistics is the pacing function against the pacing threat in the expanse of the Pacific. As a warfighter, I don't want to move 1 pound that I don't have to move. I want to reserve every poundage of movement for lethality.

So if I am, for example, if I don't need to bring diesel to operate a reverse osmosis water purification unit to produce water in the middle of the South China Sea, which doesn't seem to make sense to me to ship water, I want to produce it there, and I can do that via some other means?

It is about, for me it is about lethality. Because that 8 pounds give or take per gallon, that is 8 pounds of a warhead that I can bring.

This is about lethality for us. And anything we can do to move less, and polymer ammo means I could bring more bullets instead of more casings, that is what we want to do because it is about warfighting and lethality.

Ms. SHERRILL. Thank you for that plug for polymer ammo. We are working on that in my district.

And with that, I will turn it back in the interest of time. Thank you.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, Ms. Sherrill. Mr. Wilson

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank each of you. I particularly appreciate your service as a 31-year veteran myself.

And, but I am really grateful to be a Army dad of three sons who served in Iraq, Egypt, and Afghanistan. I also can claim the Navy, a son that served in Baghdad. And so I am really grateful as a doctor. And then I have a nephew in the Air Force. And one day I will have somebody in the family smart enough to be in Space Force.

So, but I thank you all for what you do.

And General George, I am so grateful to represent Fort Jackson. It trains over 50 percent of all soldiers in the basic combat training facility.

And I am also grateful that what you are doing is providing, all of you—are providing opportunity for young people to achieve to their highest level and to be so meaningful. And that is why I appreciate what you are doing.

And General, there is the Future Soldier prep course. And can you explain what that is, and how successful it has been?

General GEORGE. Yes, sir. It has been very successful for us. We have come into this, we did not want to lower our standards. And so the idea of the Future Soldier prep course is actually to get people to meet our standards.

So they basically come there on average, I would say they are there 4 or 5 weeks. We have some that need help with the ASVAB [Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery] testing. Some that need help with the body fat. And we have seen about a 97 percent success rate, 96, 97 percent on both of those accounts getting to basic training. So we are really proud of that program down there at Fort Jackson.

Mr. WILSON. And in lieu of a question because of time, I just want to commend all of you for the placement of troops in Eastern Europe to provide for peace through strength with deterrence. I have met with the military personnel in Poland. President Donald Trump was ahead of the curve to put troops there.

I have met with our American troops working at Novo Selo in Bulgaria with young Bulgarians to be at MK Air Base in Romania to see success there. And Larissa and Greece. And so over and over again, to me it is just so important that we have sufficient military effectiveness backing up our NATO allies to back up the very courageous people of Ukraine.

So thank you for what you have done. And any other enterprising maneuvers you can do to back up the people of Ukraine, I know the chairman and I would appreciate it. Thank you.

I yield back.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, Mr. Wilson.

Ms. Tokuda.

Ms. TOKUDA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

In the interest of time, I am just going to go over a few questions. Admiral Franchetti, in February the Navy closed three dry docks at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, and another at the Trident Refit Facility in Bangor due to seismic concerns, I believe.

This means that at least right now, of 18 dry docks in our 4 public shipyards, almost a quarter of them are offline at a time when over one-third of the Navy's attack submarine fleet desperately needs maintenance and repair.

Admiral Franchetti, given our already limited shipyard capacity and the growing demand for ship maintenance, what is the Navy doing to address the challenges posed by these closures and continue to meet our shipyard needs?

Admiral FRANCHETTI. We are very focused on our shipyards in general, the focus through SIOP [Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program], but specifically to the shipyards in Puget Sound. So there are three dry docks that are being repaired right now.

One of them is already complete and in testing. The other one should be complete by the beginning of June, and the other one by late June. So right now we don't see any impact to the closures of those dry docks.

Separately from that, we are continuing to work through all of our public shipyards to improve their performance through project management, fundamentals, workforce development, and taking a big effort to buy long lead time supply materials in advance that will help us get our shipyards out—our submarines out on time.

Ms. TOKUDA. Thank you, that is very good to hear. Related to the SIOP and shipbuilding industry industrial base, recently you may have heard the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources issued a letter to Navy Region Hawaii about the discovery of an invasive octocoral, or soft coral species, in Pearl Harbor.

What was initially 10 acres when discovered back in August 2020 has now grown to be at least 20 acres and is estimated to be potentially impacting 90 acres.

Unmitigated, the spread of this invasive species has potential risks to operations at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, including the new Dry Dock 5 at Pearl Harbor Navy Shipyard. And obviously poses serious threat to our native corals, but more importantly just the operation of this area.

Can I get your commitment that the Navy is going to work quickly with us to address and mitigate this invasive soft-tissue coral so that we can continue operation, and of course the new dry dock at Pearl Harbor?

Admiral FRANCHETTI. Yes, as part of the SIOP program, the Navy has been working with the National Marine Fisheries, all of the interagency, to better understand the problem and develop that mitigation plan originally for the 9 acres of this invasive coral. And the cost for that removal effort was included in the MILCON [military construction].

We are also looking at how do we adopt biosecurity protocols to mitigate any risk of spreading of the coral for any work we do there. Right now, we don't anticipate that there will be impacts to Dry Dock No. 5, but we are continuing again to work, and you have my commitment, to work with your team and with everyone to make sure that that does not spread any further.

Ms. TOKUDA. Thank you very much. As you can see, it is exponentially increasing, and we want to get this addressed before it impacts. Thank you.

I yield back, Chair.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you. Mr. Scott.

Mr. SCOTT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for being here. I want to piggyback a little bit on what Ms. Sherrill said just a second ago. Less than 15 days after China flew a spy balloon across the United States of America, Ford Motor Company announced a partnership with Communist China and CATL battery technology.

I want to just make sure that none of our DOD funds are going to purchase Chinese battery technology or any other technology that is coming from China. I think that you will see language to that effect coming in the NDAA [National Defense Authorization Act]. We are not going to spend U.S. tax dollars to support Communist China or CATL battery technology.

I don't need you to comment on it, I just need you to be prepared for it. And if Ford Motor Company decides that is who is going to develop their batteries, this is America, they have got the right to decide who is going to develop their batteries. But we are not going to buy them.

General Allvin, I am going to focus on the Air Force if I could. Seven months ago, General Kelly, commander of Air Combat Command, said that he has 48 fighter squadrons, 9 attack squadrons

doing the work of 60 squadrons, 3 squadrons short of what he needs.

He said he needs 28 fighter squadrons to project power in the Indo-Pacific region, Europe, and the Middle East; 8 squadrons to respond to an unfolding crisis; 16 squadrons for homeland defense; 8 squadrons for modernization and training.

We are in pretty much peacetime right now as we speak. Do you agree with his assessment?

General ALLVIN. I do, Congressman. And I think the point that General Kelly was trying to point out is not only that we can't just count the numbers, but the missions that those were—are tasked to do. So those 9 attack squadrons are primarily the A–10 squadrons that aren't as survivable and they aren't multi-role.

So that is why we are aggressively, in the fiscal year 2024 budget, we are asking for 72 fighters, front-line fighters, to include 48 F–35s and 24 F–15 EXs, which will enable us to be able to do those missions and be able to compete and succeed in the Indo-Pacific theater.

Mr. SCOTT. But the A–10s are deployed right now, correct?

General ALLVIN. I'm sorry, sir?

Mr. SCOTT. A–10s are deployed right now, correct?

General ALLVIN. They are right now on their—I don't think they are in CENTCOM [U.S. Central Command], but they are set to go to CENTCOM in a single-role mission, and they are adapting to that as we speak.

Mr. SCOTT. Quantity to me is a quality in and of itself in some cases, and I do worry about standing down fighter squadrons when we have an acknowledged need for more squadrons. But I understand the A–10 is an old platform and it is not going to be the platform of the future.

You did say over the past two decades that we have offered forces to the joint force in an unsustainable manner, and the readiness impact is becoming more apparent in the face of our pacing challenge.

I assume that means it is safe to say the Air Force needs more resources to maintain current levels of readiness, and that our current levels of readiness are not what they have been in the past?

General ALLVIN. Congressman, I would say for sure to the latter, that our readiness is not what it has been in the past. That is a reference to my written statement.

Primarily the point we are making is in addition to additional capacity and more modernized capacity, what we do need is also to reimagine ourselves and understand to be ready for what? To optimize our training, to make sure we are generating and presenting the forces in the best way.

In the past, we had just been all in without really looking at how to focus on the high-end readiness. And so our new Air Force Generation Model is enabling us to see that and really hone in on our new mission-essential tasks and get the very best readiness out of every flying hour that we can get.

Mr. SCOTT. So when we talk about the best readiness, one of the concerns I have is when I look at the readiness rate, it is significantly below where any of us in this room want it to be. And yet there are two different definitions of readiness.

One of them is able to perform one of the primary missions. And the other one is able to perform all of the primary missions.

My understanding is that we are using the definition when we talk about readiness that they are able to perform one of the primary missions, not all of the primary missions. Is that correct?

General ALLVIN. That is correct in some cases. The readiness is really talking about the mission-essential tasks, which as I mentioned, we are rewriting specifically to go against the China threat. So there is both a shortage of being able to do the full spectrum of missions——

Mr. SCOTT. So if I could, again, it is written specifically for the China threat.

General ALLVIN. We are adapting it to make the primary mission the China threat.

Mr. SCOTT. Okay. And I, again, Mr. Chairman, if I may, in the—the primary mission being the China threat, and yet less than 15 days after China flies a spy balloon across the United States of America, we have one of America's most iconic brands announcing a multibillion dollar partnership to buy Chinese battery technology, which they intend and think that they are actually going to sell to the DOD in some cases.

And I would just encourage you to make sure that you are not preparing to buy any CATL batteries. Thank you.

Mr. WALTZ. I think your sentiment is shared across multiple supply chains.

Mrs. Kiggans.

Mrs. KIGGANS. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And briefly, I know that votes are happening, but just to echo Mr. Scott about having the corporate buy-in for, I mean, you guys are doing a great job on the ground and with people and weapons and lethality. But getting that corporate buy-in.

We are not, this is not a, just a military fight with China. We have got to get the corporate buy-in as well. So I fully support everything he just mentioned.

And also to echo the previous comments about ship repair and shipyards. In my district, I am Hampton Road, so Virginia Beach, Norfolk. And I hear from those guys all the time about challenges.

And I know it is, that is multifaceted too, from workforce to supply chain. But scheduling, gosh, and it is like this, they want to blame the Navy and the Navy wants to blame them.

So if we could get it together on that front. And I don't know if that is doing a better job at repairs out at sea internally what we are doing. But then when they come to port, making sure that we are staying on schedule.

Because we can't keep this old fleet of ships that is already fewer numbers that I wish we had at sea if we don't get our ship repair industry behind. It is not just the shiny new ships and toys, but we have got to keep those old ones out there too. So that is important in my district, whatever you can do to help that.

I just specifically and real quick want to ask about pilot training. I have asked about this before, but we know that all of those new toys and wonderful things that we can purchase go nowhere without the people behind, specifically the pilots, which I know Army, Navy, and Air Force and Marine Corps, you know, all of us.

So how long does it take, and if you guys could answer just in order, how long does it take to train a pilot from commissioning time 'til the time they touch a gray, combat-ready aircraft?

General GEORGE. Ma'am, that does depend a little bit on the aircraft. But I would say on average a year to 15 months, you know, for helicopter pilots that are down at Fort Rucker after they do their other initial training.

Mrs. KIGGANS. And do those commissioned pilots start right away, or is there a lag time before they actually start flight training?

General GEORGE. No, they go down to, like for us, they go down to Fort Rucker and go to their basic course for aviation, and then get started, you know, soon thereafter.

Mrs. KIGGANS. How about the Navy?

Admiral FRANCHETTI. I will get back to you with the exact number. It is roughly 2 years. And of course, we have a pilot delay right now in training, backlog, which we are working through as rapidly as possible.

Mrs. KIGGANS. So actually closer to four. We were in Kingsville about 2 weeks ago, and they will tell me 4 years from the time that they get commissioned from the Naval Academy or ROTC [Reserve Officers' Training Corps] 'til the time that they are actually flying a fleet-ready F–18.

That is 4 years—that is too long. We are not going to be able to, God forbid, replace or have the pilots that we need if we continue to have a 4-year lag time. I think the Army is a little bit better.

How about the Marine Corps? Well, you guys run with the Navy, so.

General SMITH. What is different for us is every Marine lieutenant goes to The Basic School for 6 months——

Mrs. KIGGANS. Right.

General SMITH [continuing]. To learn to be an infantry platoon commander. Then we begin flight school or any other MOS [military occupational specialty]. So it is in excess of 2 years, depending on the airframe.

Mrs. KIGGANS. Right.

General SMITH. And those delays from everything from weather to aircraft availability all contribute to that. Which is why those 6- and 8-year commitments post-wings are so vital to us. And we are not having any problems with those who wish, we just need the additional bonuses and help because the airline industries can hire them faster than I can.

Mrs. KIGGANS. Yes, yes. Air Force.

General ALLVIN. Ma'am, to your point, from when they enter pilot training to when they are flying a gray tail, if it is mobility, it is about 18 months. If it is a fighter/bomber, it is closer to beyond 24 months.

But to your point about from the time they are commissioned, because of the challenges we are having with T–6 and T–38, we have a little bit of a backup. And it can be as many as 4 years.

So almost an 18-month to 24-month wait just to get into pilot training. So that is why we are trying to accelerate, and our budget asks for more help with the T–38 engines and the T–6, to move those through.

Mrs. KIGGANS. Yes, you guys have had kind of comparable challenges with the Navy, and I am a little bit more familiar with the Navy side, but with the T–45 and some of those OBOGS [On-Board Oxygen Generating System] issues, the blade issues. I mean, we are—and COVID [coronavirus disease] issues.

But we are seeing those challenges now become where instructor pilot shortage, you know, we are short instructor pilots. So now we can't train the naval aviators and all the other aviators that we do need because we don't have the teachers. So now we are robbing the fleet to get those teachers.

And you talk about retention and competing with airlines and whatnot, we have got to do a better job at this. And I think part of it is the onus is on us. And I echo and agree with everything you said about continuing resolutions and how detrimental that would be.

But having the right training equipment in place, and you guys tweaking the syllabuses too. But so that we can tighten it up. I just, I want to do it faster. We need more, we need faster. So I think every service branch has its challenges. I am mindful of it, but it is something that I just want to prioritize.

So thank you very much.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you. Mr. Gimenez.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you to everybody here.

If you really want to scratch your head, it has come under—somebody gave me information that the VA [U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs] just bought $430 million worth of computers from Lenovo. Lenovo is a Chinese computer company.

So I will ask an overhead question. Are any of the services looking at buying large purchases of computers in the near future? And if you are or if you have bought some, have anybody—has anybody bought Lenovos, Chinese computers?

General GEORGE. I am going to have to take that one. I don't know right off. I mean, we do buy tech and computers, but I can't answer that one, sir. I will take that for——

[The information referred to can be found in the Appendix on page 107.]

Mr. GIMENEZ. I would certainly hope that whatever technology you buy, any computers you buy, any printers you buy, etc., are American-made and not made in China. Every taxpayer dollar that goes to China is just funding more equipment, more military capability against ourselves, which is ludicrous.

So I will be looking into this VA thing. And I hope that I am wrong, but that is the information I am getting.

On the question of pilots, is it fair to say we have more airframes than pilots, or do we have more pilots than airframes?

General ALLVIN. By broad numbers, we have many more pilots than airplanes.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Okay, so but you do have a pilot shortage, is yes or no?

General ALLVIN. Well, we have a pilot shortage in the pilots that we want throughout our entire Air Force. We do not have empty cockpits. So in order to have a healthy pilot—a professional force, you need first and foremost the combat cockpits filled, then you

need the trainer cockpits filled, then you need the test cockpits filled.

And after you fill all the cockpits, then you go to those that our next priority is the leadership, you want the leadership positions filled. And then after you have all those filled, then you go to the staff positions. That is where we are currently absorbing our shortage, is in the staffs.

So where you would traditionally want pilot experience, rated experience, we are manning those are somewhat less than 70 percent. So we are not sacrificing our front-line units.

But if this sustains over time, then we will have a sort of misshapen force where you won't be able to have professionally developed enough of the rated membership to provide that expertise in the leadership at the higher level.

But for right now, we have not had any of our combat training or test cockpits go empty.

Mr. GIMENEZ. What about Reserve units? Have you looked at the expanding Reserve units or adding Reserve pilots to the force?

General ALLVIN. Frankly, the Reserves are having about the same issue that we are having with respect to shortage overall. Now, I believe as—we are, in the Active Duty, we are advantaged by retention.

But in our total force we are disadvantaged because as the retention in the Active Duty goes, a large part of their sort of business model in the Guard and Reserves is those who want to continue to affiliate with the military will go from the Active Duty to the Guard and Reserves.

And so oftentimes when the retention becomes poor, people still want to stay affiliated with the Air Force, the Guard and Reserves will get a little bit healthier. But as of right now, they are feeling about the same pain as we are.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Your Reserve bases, are they based in large urban areas where you would have a good, I guess a pool of folks that may be wanting to be, are interested in serving in the Reserves? I mean, if you have a Reserve base somewhere in the middle of nowhere, it is hard to find I guess reservists that actually live around the area.

So how do you make your bases on Reserve bases versus Active bases?

General ALLVIN. For the most part, we take advantage of being able to leverage both historical old fields which used to be Active Duty. So some of them are just, they are sort of godfathered from—or grandfathered from being existing old Active Duty air bases and take advantage of infrastructure there. Those are the ones that have been around 30, 40 years.

Oftentimes what we have now is the associations that the—we have Reserve members flying on what are sort of owned and maintained, these classic associations, by the Active Duty. So it really is a mix of those that are just on Active Duty bases.

I am trying to go through my head and see if there are any remote, very remote and isolated Reserve-only bases, and none come to mind, frankly.

Mr. GIMENEZ. Fair enough. Okay, I guess most of my time is up. I yield back.

Mr. WALTZ. Thank you, Mr. Gimenez.

Thank you again to our witnesses. Obviously the vote schedule is getting in the way of a more fulsome conversation here. But I think if you hear a theme, obviously it is a real concern about the recruiting crisis that we are in. And I know you share those concerns, are getting after it.

And secondly, though, I am just not sure the Department as an institution and all the way down through the services and through our contracting officers are really looking at the supply chain issue.

And I think you are hearing bipartisan concern across the board in having that supply chain surety. One, having visibility on it, but then two, driving our practices along those lines in a systematic way. I know I think the committee, and I share Mr.—I think I can speak for Mr. Garamendi here, looks forward to working with you on that.

I hope that is something that the services and the Department can get ahead of, rather than really it being driven by this side of the foxhole. Because I certainly look forward to hearing what you are doing in that regard as we move forward through the defense bill.

With that, the hearing is adjourned. And thank you, genuinely, thank you again.

[Whereupon, at 4:43 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

APRIL 19, 2023

PREPARED STATEMENTS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

APRIL 19, 2023

Opening Statement of Hon. Michael Waltz
Chairman, Subcommittee on Readiness
Hearing on
Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Request for Military Readiness
April 19, 2023

There is a lot to discuss today and a whole host of issues to be addressed as it pertains to each Service's military readiness. Pilot shortages, recruiting and retention challenges, weapons system sustainment, and infrastructure restoration are just a handful of important topics.

I would also like to highlight the detriments of operating under a continuing resolution. Without an on-time budget, the Department is unable to begin any new projects and must operate under the previous fiscal year's budget numbers. I would ask the witnesses to elaborate on these effects during their comments as well.

I remain concerned with this Administration's focus on climate change as a national security priority. In fact, the Secretary of the Navy recently stated that climate change is a top priority of his. I'm supportive of efforts to increase resiliency, but climate change policies cannot be an end to itself that ignore operational realities.

The family feud within the Department of the Navy with regards to amphibious ships is very evident in this year's budget request. In fact, the Marine Corps' #1 unfunded requirement is a ship for the Navy. Years of delayed maintenance due to high operational tempo has gutted the readiness of amphibious ships. This has led to delayed deployments for ARG-MEUs and decreased capacity when the ships are at sea. ARG-MEUs provide a persistent presence that is critical to regions like INDOPACOM. I remain baffled as to why these problems persist.

I applaud force modernization efforts taking place across the services, like the Army's ReARMM and the Marine Corps' Force Design 2030. I am, however, concerned about the timelines associated with these efforts. The China threat is blinking red and the intelligence community warns of threat timelines in 2027. I'm eager to hear how the services have revised and accelerated these modernization plans to appropriately counter China's ambitions.

Taking care of our Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Airmen, and Guardians is the utmost responsibility of all of us here in this room. Service leadership continuously touts "people first", but I remain skeptical of this being put into practice when I look at the status of our barracks and housing. The condition of some of this housing is astounding. It no doubt effects retention. We must provide safe barracks and housing that puts our servicemembers' welfare first.

Thank you to our witnesses for being here today and I look forward to your testimony.

Statement of Hon. John Garamendi
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Readiness
Hearing on
Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Request for Military Readiness
April 19, 2023

I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am delighted to work with you. I am pleased to hear your interest and support for climate change issues. And you are quite right about addressing that issue using Chinese materials.

That is why we wrote into almost -- well, in all of the infrastructure and the energy issues of the future very strong buy-America requirements. And so we need to push the American industry into the manufacturing of these systems, from solar panels to turbines and the like.

And we can do that, and that is also an issue for the military. Are they buying American-made equipment for their ships and planes, or are they buying others. And complex issue, but a very, very important one.

So each year as we prepare for this hearing, I am struck by the vast jurisdiction of the Readiness Subcommittee. As I often say, other subcommittees get to buy the new, bright, shiny stuff, and it is left to us to maintain it and keep it operating.

And so in the Subcommittee, we need to pay particular attention to the facilities that support this equipment, that sustain the modernization of the weapons systems themselves, and in which the men and women of the military are trained.

So we have an enormous task here. And over the years, both the minority and the majority as it has changed over time have paid attention to this issue, as you are Mr. Chairman, and I thank you for that.

Now, we have also learned from Putin's immoral invasion of Ukraine that many of the issues that we have dealt with over the years here trying to make sure that the -- that our military is ready in every way has brought to the attention and to the forefront many of our concerns.

We have been forced to think about the organic industrial base, which was heretofore not with this committee, but with the -- even the larger committee often ignored.

And so in this budget request, I am finally seeing evidence that we are getting serious about the modernization of the depots, the shipyards, the infrastructure, the bases, the housing, and all of the rest. And we need to continue to push that.

I know that you intend to do that, Mr. Chairman, and I hope that the members of this subcommittee will continue also with that effort.

Through the media, we have also watched the cost of Russia's other readiness failures for the Russians. We have watched its equipment fail because it was poorly sustained and maintained. And we have witnessed the cost of poorly

trained troops, Russian troops. We cannot let that happen, and it falls to this subcommittee to make sure that as we go forward, that we are fully prepared.

There is another piece of this puzzle that falls within the jurisdiction beyond the training of the troops. And that is that we have to make sure that the access to sustain the fight is available. And so we will be working on that also.

Now, the Comptroller General has analyzed that the readiness of our weapons systems over the course of years has not been good enough. When we analyze the aircraft type, the majority of the systems in our inventory fail to -- by more than ten percent below the Department's own mission capability rate goals.

So we have to continue to work on this issue. Cannibalization seems to be the way in which we keep most of the fleet, whether that is an aircraft or it is a truck or a plane or a tank, or a ship, cannibalization seems to be the way in which we keep these things operating. That doesn't work for long.

And so we need to pay attention to that as we have in the past, and we must continue to make sure that all of the equipment has the necessary parts and pieces on time when necessary.

So I am looking forward to the hearing today, our witnesses as they discuss these issues, what they have learned or the lessons they have learned. And it will be displayed in this year's budget.

And we are certainly seeing the lessons in Ukraine. More importantly, what we are doing to operationalize those lessons that have been learned from Ukraine and beyond.

So, look forward to working with you, Mr. Chairman. Look forward to working with the members of the Committee, the Subcommittee, and we will push along. Thank you very much. Yield back.

RECORD VERSION

STATEMENT BY

GENERAL RANDY A. GEORGE
VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FIRST SESSION, 118TH CONGRESS

ON MILITARY READINESS

APRIL 19, 2023

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

Introduction

Chairman Waltz, Ranking Member Garamendi, and distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the readiness posture of the United States Army. On behalf of the Secretary of the Army, the Honorable Christine Wormuth, the Chief of Staff of the Army, General James McConville, and our soldiers and their families serving around the world, we appreciate your continued partnership in ensuring that our Army remains ready to deter adversaries and, when called upon, fight, and win our Nation's wars.

Just over a year ago Russia further invaded Ukraine, unjustly and without provocation. The Ukrainian people unified in self-defense and continue, almost 15 months later, to inspire the world with their intrepidity and unflappable sense of duty. But their impressive successes against Putin's forces and the strong and strengthening posture of NATO today are also rooted in American strength and investments. Since 2015 the Army has trained Ukrainian troops, and we've seen the impacts of that training and partnership on the battlefield. Within days of the full-scale invasion, American soldiers were deployed to NATO's eastern flank, drawing from pre-positioned stocks, and standing ready to meet and deter any threat to our Allies. And today, 42,000 soldiers are serving in Europe—17,000 of which are part of rotational formations. They are working to support the transit of materiel to Ukraine, to train Ukrainian Armed Forces, and to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Allies.

And of course, the Army is not just serving or investing in Europe. Our formations in the Indo-Pacific are focused on deterring America's pacing challenge—China. Through multinational exercises, exchanges and engagements, as well as actions to set the Theater, the Army campaigns and competes in the Indo-Pacific and plays a critical role in integrated deterrence. Land power is Joint power and we aim to have Army forces in the region 7 to 8 months out of the year, in addition to Army forces stationed in Hawaii, Japan and South Korea. In sum, this past year has demonstrated returns on our earlier investments and planning, America's commitment to her allies and partners, and the strength and responsiveness of our Army.

From Europe to the Middle East and Africa, Latin America to the Indo-Pacific, our Army is focused on meeting the many challenges of today while simultaneously investing and transforming rapidly to confront the challenges of tomorrow. In essence, despite well-known difficulties with recruiting, which I will address, our Army continues to work to maintain the trust and confidence of the American people and serve its interests across the globe.

Current State of Army Readiness

Warfighting is the Army's business, and our Army is focused on just that. We remain the premier ground force in the world, and our soldiers remain ready to respond when the Nation calls. Leaders and soldiers in our formations, alongside Allies and Partners, continue to train for large scale contingency operations and maintain the competencies required to combat terrorism and win in asymmetric conflict. They are also honing their ability to fight and win in any climate—from the jungle to the arctic.

Our Army is demonstrating readiness around the globe daily through exercises and training informed by observing operations in Ukraine. In Warfighter exercises and at training center rotations, soldiers are preparing for multidomain conflicts in which all domains—land, air, sea, space and cyberspace—are contested. And the new Joint Pacific Multinational Readiness Center (JPMRC), with locations in Alaska and Hawaii, affords our troops the opportunity to navigate both jungle and cold weather climates, likely environments for future conflict.

Additionally, our formations are experimenting with new systems and tactics to confront emerging battlefield dynamics to ensure we maintain our competitive advantage over potential adversaries. Over the course of the last year, we have witnessed rapidly evolving capabilities such as air and maritime unmanned systems and modern missile technologies. Most recently, we have witnessed Russians and Ukrainians employ a combination of one-way-attack unmanned systems and cruise missiles to destroy critical infrastructure and disrupt Ukrainian command and control. Joint and multinational experiments like Project Convergence allow the Army to identify

trends and changing dynamics, and rapidly incorporate promising technology into the force. Meanwhile, our Army continues to lead the Joint Force in developing and deploying counter-unmanned aerial systems (c-UAS) and doctrine.

On the support side, the Army is incorporating lessons learned in Ukraine to develop and rehearse concepts for conducting effective logistics in contested environments. From prepositioning equipment, coordinating supply distribution with host nations, conducting telemaintenance, and additive manufacturing, the Army is optimizing logistics processes and incorporating contested logistics concepts into exercise and contingency planning, particularly in the Indo-Pacific Theater.

Finally, our Army continues to synchronize with its sister services and build relationships with Allies and Partners across the globe, so that we can provide credible, interoperable and forward forces to Component Commanders. As an example, this past March the Army and Joint Force team, along with servicemembers from 29 other Nations, convened in Thailand to participate in the largest Cobra Gold exercise in a decade. After years of diminished activities due to the pandemic, we have resumed and expanded our multinational exercise programs.

In sum, our Army continues to maintain a high state of readiness, despite facing dispersed and significant threats. This reflects a close and committed partnership with Congress, and is enhanced by consistent, reliable, and timely funding.

Building Readiness for Tomorrow

Even as we engage emerging challenges, our Army is keeping its eye on the horizon. While the nature of war doesn't change, the character of war does, and if we don't adapt to that changing character, then we will lose our edge. Warfare today is evolving rapidly. America faces formidable adversaries with the capability to compete with us in all domains. The battlefield is constantly expanding with advances in long range precision fires that can challenge our most capable air defense systems. Unmanned systems and artificial intelligence combine to form 'swarm-like' capabilities

that will change the calculus on the battlefield, and our adversaries' highly capable sensing and targeting systems require us to exercise deception and camouflage, manage signatures, and plan for periods of degraded networks.

In answer to this, and with Congress' trust and partnership, the Army is undergoing the most significant transformation of the last 40 years. For starters, we are modernizing our capability to support the long-range Joint fight. By 2028 the Army will expand its three existing Multi-Domain Task Force (MDTF) formations, grow two additional MDTFs, and procure three long-range hypersonic batteries and five mid-range capable batteries. These formations will provide critical fire support, as well as space, electronic warfare and cyber support, to the Joint team across the globe.

At the same time, while many think that the future fight will be brief and entirely over-the-horizon, history admonishes that war almost always lasts longer than we expect and ultimately comes down to a close fight. So, our Army trains and campaigns for conflict on the ground as well, and will be ready to take the battle to the enemy in competition, crisis or protracted conflict when required.

We are modernizing the network to achieve data centricity and interoperability with the Joint team and our allies and partners. For decades, we have enjoyed an information advantage in battle—our network was ubiquitous, always on, and secure. Today, this can no longer be taken for granted. In competition and in conflict we must be prepared to continue our mission even through periods of degraded communications. The data, more than the network platforms, must be secure, accessible, and interoperable, and our Army must stay flexible to deliver the right information to the right leaders at the pace of battle on the smallest platform possible. We are transforming to embrace that framework and coordinating closely with the Office of the Secretary of Defense and sister services as we continue to develop Joint All-Domain Command & Control (JADC2).

And we are modernizing across other functional areas as well, and plan to deliver a variety of new systems into the hands of soldiers this fiscal year. These will include fielding the new Integrated Air and Missile Defense, which will integrate current and future sensors and weapons, improve target identification, provide greater flexibility to the Joint Force, and enhance the survivability of our force; fielding improved unmanned aerial systems, which provides greater reconnaissance and targeting capabilities to commanders; and issuing prototypes of the Next Generation Squad Weapon to enhance soldier lethality.

But the Army of 2030 can't just be technologically lethal, it must also be resilient—across both systems and installations. We are improving onsite energy generation and storage on installations to keep critical systems online even when local utilities are compromised. This winter I visited Installation of the Future initiatives at Ft. Carson, Colorado, including the site of a new flow battery system, which will reduce energy requirements during peak hours, leverage photovoltaic power generation systems, and provide a feasible means for long-duration energy storage to support critical assets. On the tactical side, we are working to reduce energy usage in existing vehicles and electrify future fleet vehicles. Hybrid-electric vehicles will reduce logistics tails, help us manage signatures, and improve survivability in heavily contested environments. Enhanced resiliency is enhanced readiness, and we look forward to continuing our partnership with Congress on these goals.

Sustaining Readiness as we Build the Army of 2030

Our Army must balance the requirements to be ready now with the need to prepare for tomorrow's fight. It is a challenge, but through deliberate evolution and by capitalizing on natural momentum, we *can* effectively do both. Over the last 15 months and with significant support from Congress, the Army has provided critical support—equipment, munitions, and personnel—to Europe. We have taken advantage of that effort to learn and transform, replace legacy systems and munitions with the latest technology, and launch ourselves into the future. And in the meantime, we have mapped a progression path for other modernization efforts.

First, we are leveraging supplemental replenishment appropriations from Congress for support provided to Ukraine to replace legacy systems with more modern ones. For example, the Army is sending our existing M113 Armored Personnel Carriers to Ukraine to support the ground fight today, but also backfilling our force this year with the new Armored Multipurpose Vehicle—a more survivable general-purpose vehicle. Meanwhile, while we have invested significant munitions in the Ukrainian war effort, our plants and depots—like the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant, which I visited in January—are ramping up capacity, and are poised to modernize existing lines, build new more automated lines, and increase production with the supplemental funding provided by Congress.

And as we continue to move towards the future, we are not canceling or slowing training, but scheduling modernization activities to synchronize with training, mission, and refit requirements. Our combat readiness centers continue to support twenty-two unit rotations each year, with our mission command training center leading four major exercises a year for our divisions and corps. As our regionally-aligned modernization model reaches full operating capacity in fiscal year (FY) 2024, we are able to forecast and plan delivery of new systems to ensure that we deconflict with training and mission requirements and remain ready while still building capability.

Finally, though there is a lot going on in the Army, we continue to emphasize safety. If measured in total soldier losses, FY 2022 was the safest year in Army history, even as we ramped up training and exercises post-pandemic. In particular, we are improving our safety data collection and analysis processes to keep leaders better informed and ensure that commanders can effectively assess risk at every echelon.

Our Army *is* People.

Any army is people. *Our* Army is comprised entirely of Americans who, for 50 years, have all freely volunteered to serve. That is part of what makes us great—we are the most professional, best trained, and most lethal Army in the world because of the

quality and commitment of our soldiers and leaders. They chose to join a team of teams.

Today our Army faces significant recruiting challenges. Yet, it remains a great place to serve. We continue to achieve over 100% of our retention goals, which positively reflects the teammates, sense of community and mission that the Army offers our soldiers and their families. And Army senior leaders are committed to maintaining and improving quality of life for our Army; our soldiers and families deserve safe and comfortable barracks and housing, available and quality childcare, and opportunity to thrive within the military community. We appreciate Congress' support in this area, demonstrated by the FY 2023 Appropriations Bill, which committed $1.55 billion in Army Military Construction funding to military housing, barracks and Child Development Centers.

Yet despite positive retention trends, we are in a war for talent when it comes to recruiting. Young men and women are, in large numbers, either unqualified or not interested in serving. Today, only 23% of Americans aged 17-24 are qualified to serve without a waiver. Meanwhile, our Army is committed to maintaining its standards because we require and rely on high quality teammates. Recognizing that a great number of Americans want to serve but need help meeting our standards, we established a Future Soldier Prep Course (FSPC) in July 2022, designed to prepare young people who are willing and eager to serve their Nation for the rigors of Army training. The program has been a great success. As of March 31, 2023, 5,614 FSPC recruits have moved on to Basic Combat Training—a 97% rate.

However, the problem is not just finding qualified recruits. *Propensity* to serve among young men and women is also the lowest in recent history at 9%. Unfortunately, many young people—along with their parents, counselors, coaches, and teachers—do not know their Army and hold misconceptions about Army culture. Only 21% of youth from Generation Z believe that Army culture is consistent with their values and beliefs,

and 56% report that their impressions of the Army (mostly negative) are driven by non-Army media.

But we are an Army of the people. Along with other service professions in our Nation, we rely on the willingness of young people to fill our ranks. We ask for Congress' help amplifying the call to service and de-sensationalizing the negative narratives that abound in the media surrounding military service. Our Army is the greatest ground force in the world—strong, professional, and ready to defend its fellow citizens.

In the meantime, Army leaders continue to work on building strong command climates at scale, particularly through talent management. On that front, the Army's Battalion Command and Colonel's Command Assessment Programs have significantly improved how we select leaders by providing a holistic assessment of officers identified as having potential for command and key assignments. We have recently added Brigade-level Command Sergeants Major, medical commanders, and acquisition leaders as part of this assessment program. Additionally, in the fall of 2022, we released an update to Field Manual 6-22 *Developing Leaders*, to provide our commanders with up-to-date guidance on cultivating the rising generation of leaders.

Finally, there is abundant research demonstrating that cohesive teams are lethal teams. Soldiers who trust and respect each other are more likely to succeed on the battlefield and collaborate on solutions to the wicked problems posed by peer and near-peer conflict. We are working at every echelon to build cohesive teams and support a safe, respectful and effective warfighting culture. The Sergeant Major of the Army has dedicated countless hours on this front and hosted Monthly Solutions Summits to evaluate ways to prevent harmful behaviors—like sexual harassment and assault, racism and extremism, and domestic violence—in our formations. This year I began hosting Building Cohesive Team Forums in order to approve and resource the working group's initiatives. We are a strong team, but imperfect, and we must strive to improve

our culture. There is no place for disrespect and harmful behaviors in a formation of warfighters.

Industry – Our Lifeblood

If people are our backbone, industry is our lifeblood. Our Army sustains its cutting edge because of the ingenuity, energy, and expertise of our industry. We must cultivate that support.

So, we are moving out on a 15-year plan to modernize our Organic Industrial Base to increase capacity, capability, and throughput, and improve safety and resiliency. Using biannual wargames we assess and validate all of the scheduled plans to ensure that we are effectively and efficiently moving forward. Congress has been highly supportive on this front; the supplemental funding provided over the last year has helped move projects ahead of schedule.

Additionally, we appreciate Congress' effort to provide a material exclusion for carryover; this has helped us execute long-term programs and maintain critical workforces through FY transition. For example, artillery tubes take about 14 months to make and require the input of artisans and engineers across the country. With the material exclusion, we can continue executing funding for the tubes beyond the FY and keep producing essential warfighting equipment without interruption. Moreover, we can offer stability to the workforce required for the tubes. The men and women in our OIB plants and depots often come from generations of expertise and allegiance. Unfortunately, other carryover limitations—for instance on foreign military sales and support to other services—often require the Army to walk away from designated modernization dollars because the timeline to execute them is too brief. We continue to work through this challenge, but always appreciate Congressional funding that is dedicated early on in the FY, as it provides us maximum time to execute it.

In addition to the OIB, the Army seeks to maintain and grow our relationship with private industry. This partnership is essential as we problem solve emerging threats and

find ways to maintain the Army as a formidable fighting force. Again, Congress has provided indispensable support to this relationship. For instance, multi-year procurement has enabled us to make long-term commitments to industry. This year, we utilized multi-year procurement contracts for artillery round production, and we plan to explore their potential use in FY 2024 for Guided Multiple Launch Rocket System production. Meanwhile, we will continue to maintain transparency with both Congress and industry to ensure that we stay sharp and state-of-the-art.

Conclusion

Our Army remains the best in the world—ready for the fight today and transforming rapidly for the fight tomorrow. We appreciate Congress' continued guidance and partnership as we meet these demands. Your support has helped us maintain readiness while supporting Allies and Partners in Europe, improve quality of life for our soldiers and their families, and enhance industrial strength.

We also acknowledge the challenges on the horizon—especially with recruiting talented and qualified young men and women to our ranks. We ask that Congress help us amplify the call for service with America's youth. Joining the Army team means opening doors, finding community and being all you can be.

Thank you and I look forward to engaging with you further.

General Randy A. George
Vice Chief of Staff of the Army

Gen. Randy George commissioned from the U.S. Military Academy in 1988 as an infantry officer. He served as a lieutenant in the 101st Airborne Division and deployed in support of Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Following Armor Officer Advanced Course in 1993, George was stationed at Fort Carson where he was the assistant operations officer for 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division and then commanded C Company and later Headquarters Company in 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry Regiment.

George received his Master of Science in Economics in 1999 from Colorado School of Mines and then served at the National Simulation Center in Fort Leavenworth before attending Command and General Staff College.

In 2001 George went to Italy and served as the executive officer to 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade. He was later executive officer and then deputy commander of the brigade, during which time he deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Returning to the 101st Airborne Division in 2004, George commanded 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment and deployed a second time to Iraq. He then went to United States Naval War College as an instructor and then student, and deployed again as part of the initiatives group to the commanding general, Multi- National Corps-Iraq in 2007.

In 2008 George returned to the 4th Infantry Division, where he commanded 4th Brigade Combat Team and deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Following command, he was a fellow on the Council of Foreign Relations, chief of the strategic policy division for the Pakistan-Afghanistan coordination cell on the Joint Staff, executive officer to the 33rd Vice Chief of Staff of the Army and then executive assistant to the commander of U.S. Central Command. He then returned to Fort Carson as the deputy commanding general (maneuver) of 4th Infantry Division.

After two staff assignments as the director of force management for the Army G-3/5/7 and deputy director for regional operations and force management in the J-3, George took command of the 4th Infantry Division in June 2017. In this role he deployed again to Afghanistan.

George's most recent command was of I Corps at Joint Base Lewis McChord, after which he served as the senior military assistant to the Secretary of Defense. He assumed duties as the Vice Chief of Staff of the Army on August 5, 2022.

He is married to his West Point classmate, Patty. They have two children, Grant and Andrea.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

STATEMENT OF

ADMIRAL LISA M. FRANCHETTI

VICE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

BEFORE THE

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

PB-24 JOINT READINESS POSTURE HEARING

APRIL 19, 2023

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
UNTIL RELEASED BY THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

Introduction

Chairman Waltz, Ranking Member Garamendi, and distinguished members of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you to discuss the state of Navy readiness. On behalf of the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, and our Sailors, civilians, and families deployed and stationed around the world, we appreciate your continued support and partnership in assuring that our Navy remains ready for prompt and sustained combat, as well as supporting the peacetime promotion of the national security interests and prosperity of the United States.

Navy's Contribution to National Security

The U.S. Navy, the premier maritime force in the world, remains deployed forward, supporting our national interests while being ready to respond in crisis and conflict. The current and future security environment demands ready ships, aircraft, submarines, expeditionary forces, information forces, and special operations forces that are combat-credible. These forces deter our potential adversaries and are prepared to fight and win in any domain.

The Navy delivers significant warfighting advantage to the Joint Force at the front lines of Strategic Competition, through our survivable strategic deterrent and combat-credible forces deployed forward across all domains. Our adversaries seek to challenge this warfighting advantage through military buildup and coercive behavior, undermining the existing international rules-based order. This is the case with America's pacing challenge – the People's Republic of China (PRC) – over the past year. The Navy's consistent presence in the Indo-Pacific, which comprises of 60% of our surface force and 58% of our subsurface force, deters and complicates the PRC's decision-calculus and regional plans while reassuring our Allies and

partners. In 2022, the Navy deployed 95 ships, 28 submarines, and 75 aviation squadrons to the Western Pacific, maintained continuous strategic deterrence patrols by our SSBN fleet, and conducted numerous Freedom of Navigation Operations that uphold the rights, freedom, and lawful uses of the sea recognized in international law by challenging restrictions on transit or innocent passage through the Taiwan Strait and in the South China Sea. In response to Russia's illegal, unprovoked, and irresponsible invasion of Ukraine over the past year, we deployed 27 ships, 14 submarines, and 31 aviation squadrons to the European theater to send a strong deterrence message to Russia and to reassure to our NATO Allies and partners that we are committed to their security. When our adversaries act, your Navy is ready, and provides options to our decision-makers.

In 2022, the Navy-Marine Corps team generated combat power with global impact – unmatched by any other naval force – flying nearly 1 million hours, sailing over 22,000 days, and participating in almost 100 exercises. These efforts deter strategic attack, support and assure our Allies, protect freedom of the seas, and project naval power across all domains. The President's Budget request for FY24 (PB-24) reflects the reality that readiness is the key enabler for naval superiority and that ship operations are the Navy's core capability and the foundation of maritime dominance. The budget supports a target deployment length of seven months for rotational surface forces as defined in the Optimized Fleet Response Plan, allowing for 58 days underway per quarter while deployed and 24 days underway per quarter while non-deployed to sustain proficiency. It also funds the flying hour program to operate and maintain Navy aircraft and train the pilots needed to enable carrier strike group power projection. The Navy's active and reserve FY24 flying hour program budget of $7.4 billion for the Navy provides flying hours for global operations, greater operational availability, and recovery of strike fighter pilot production.

Along with sustained funding for ship and air depot maintenance, these core readiness investments ensure Sailors are trained, and ships, submarines, and aircraft are maintained.

The Navy's Navigation Plan highlights the importance of generating effects that strengthen our Nation's deterrence, campaign through forward presence, and build enduring warfighting advantages. Generating these effects is not just about flying hours and steaming days, but also ensuring our ships and aircraft are capable of sustained operations. The Navy recognizes the importance and impact of maritime, aviation, and weapon spares on readiness and has made funding for spares a top priority in this budget. Consistent and executable spares funding is required to maintain adequate levels of aviation, shipboard, and weapons spare parts to support Fleet training and deployed operations. With the help of Congress, we are systematically recovering from years of underfunding these critical accounts and increasing spares funding, ensuring it is executable based on what the industrial base can produce. We are working closely with our critical supply and industry partners to optimize the flow of spares and repair parts. Relative to last year's budget request, this year's request for aviation and maritime spares has increased by $330M, totaling $2.3B in 2024. This is a clear indication of the importance the Navy places on spares and will ensure our Fleet is self-sufficient and ready for sustained operations.

A safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent undergirds and is foundational to every priority in the National Defense Strategy and is central to integrated deterrence. Our Navy operates and maintains the most survivable leg of the Nation's nuclear triad, representing approximately 70% of America's treaty-accountable, nuclear arsenal. Navy's FY24 budget requests the resources to replace the 14 Ohio-class submarines with the more capable Columbia-class and continue development of the second life extension of the TRIDENT II D5 missile, as

well as refresh supporting infrastructure and modernize our nuclear command, control, and communications systems. Our Ohio-class submarines have been patrolling the oceans on deterrent missions for 42 years. This once-in-a-generation overhaul of our ballistic missile submarine force comes with a massive price tag, but it is a must-pay bill for the Nation so that we maintain America's assured second-strike capability.

The budget request reflects CNO's priorities of *Columbia*, Readiness, Capabilities, and Capacity, all underpinned by our great Sailors.

State of Readiness

One of the keys to generating available forces is to ensure our ships and aircraft get in and out of maintenance on time, and on budget. We are pursuing a data-driven approach to improve the effectiveness of surface ship and submarine maintenance. In both the private and the public shipyards, we are seeing trends in a positive direction, because data and advanced analytics now inform the plan for each maintenance period and yield improved processes for better-scoped work. Since FY19, days of maintenance delay on major CNO surface ship availabilities in private shipyards have been reduced by 39 percent, and on-time completion steadily increased from 34 percent in FY19 to 41 percent in FY22 for all availabilities, despite the additional impacts associated with the COVID pandemic. Public shipyards also have seen improvements over the last several years, with maintenance delays on submarine and aircraft carrier availabilities reduced by 40 percent since FY19, and on-time completion steadily increasing from 29 percent in FY19 to 33 percent in FY22 for all availabilities.

Throughout this effort, our focal point is to ensure ships and aircraft are ready to support the training and certification of our crews for their deployments and operations. We remain

committed to only deploying fully trained and certified crews. Our commitment is reflected in our policy to stringently review and control unit certifications at the 4-star fleet commander level prior to employment of our forces. We also are reviewing organizational changes to make us more effective in the generation of ready ships. In December 2021, the Navy reconstituted a submarine squadron to oversee submarines while they were being repaired and overhauled at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. Submarine Squadron 2 provides administrative, manning, logistical, operational planning, and readiness support for attack submarines and crews during their time in Portsmouth. The Navy also is re-establishing surface ship readiness squadrons that are focused on providing oversight and expertise for ships in the maintenance phase and the basic level training phase. Surface ship readiness squadrons provide a dedicated command, directly aligned to the type commander and systems commander, to manage, execute, and support ships in complex maintenance periods. This initiative provides focused oversight during this critical period, and allows our operational commanders to concentrate on warfighting. We anticipate the first pilot of the surface ship readiness squadron will stand up this year, with fleet-wide introduction completed within the next three years.

Surface Ship Maintenance

The Navy is committed to working closely with private shipyard partners to improve maintenance and modernization outcomes. In particular, Performance to Plan (P2P)-driven improvements—such as the goal of awarding contracts 120 days before the start of a maintenance availability (A-120), level loading ports through better prediction of workload, better availability planning, and improved long-lead-time material acquisition—have provided effective solutions for readiness and reduced maintenance delays. A-120 has allowed the Navy to

have long lead time material on time, develop integrated production schedules, and contract for services that improve on-time completion of ship availabilities. Additionally, the Navy continues to see positive performance improvements from the Other Procurement, Navy (OPN) pilot across both Fleets for private-sector maintenance. The OPN pilot has helped significantly in this area, providing the Navy cross-fiscal year flexibility for contract awards and material procurements, enabling the Navy to maintain positive momentum and ensure ships deliver back to the Fleet on time, with work completed in full, and without the need for additional funding in successive fiscal years. PB-24 includes the Navy's request to continue to utilize the OPN pilot and its authorities to allow continued progress and performance improvements in surface ship availability outcomes. In FY24, 28 of 57 surface ship availabilities are funded in the OPN.

Another way we aim to reduce shipyard delays is to ensure our ships are receiving the required level of maintenance and modernization at regular intervals throughout their lives. As a result of decisions decades ago to keep ships at sea and on mission, our Navy accepted risk in ship maintenance. As these ships come to the end of their service lives, we know that their material condition is poor and have seen direct impacts in their ability to support mission requirements. This small number of ships is also having an outsized impact on the days of maintenance delay. About half of all maintenance delays over the last several years are due to a few ships that recently completed or are currently going through major modernization periods. When these ships were inducted, we discovered 'worse-than-planned' conditions that created a large amount of unplanned new and growth work. These ships are years behind schedule, well over-budget, and without a clear path to completion, and their crews are missing critical at-sea experiences. Continuing to fund costly modernizations for ships with limited remaining service life and low warfighting utility risks pulling resources away from higher priority readiness needs.

In addition, this growth work presents real cost progression and further reduces shipyard capacity that detracts from maintaining more capable ships.

The Navy is committed to conducting a hull-by-hull assessment of each and every ship, regardless of service life, to determine what warfighting value each ship can contribute based on what the National Defense Strategy requires of the Navy. We owe it to our Sailors to ensure their ships are materially ready to support the mission requirements we place upon them. Older ships with poor material condition not only increase risk to mission success, but also may increase risk to the Sailors that serve in them. Thanks to congressional support, we were able to divest some of our older ships that were in poor material condition. One of these ships was the *USS Vella Gulf*. During the ship's planned 7-month deployment with the *Eisenhower* Strike Group in 2021, the ship experienced a material failure of an internal fuel tank that caused a significant fuel leak in the main machinery space. This casualty ultimately reduced the availability of this ship to three of seven months on mission due to emergent repairs. Not only did this failure impact mission readiness, the presence of fuel leaking into a main machinery space also increased the risk to the Sailors on the ship. This recent example is why we ask for your continued support to allow us to remove ships that have an unrealistic and cost-prohibitive path to returning to the level of operational standards that are required for our combat forces.

Although there may be concern with a reduction of available work for the ship repair industrial base if older ships are removed from inventory, the PB-24 budget funds a total of 75 availabilities for conventional and nuclear forces. The Navy is committed to providing a steady and stable demand signal to enable our industrial base partners to secure a workforce and invest and modernize facilities to meet fleet demand. To achieve this, Navy publicly posts workload forecasts for each port quarterly that include three-year workload projections, allowing industry

to understand current and future planned work. We know that there is more than enough work to be done and, with our industry partners, will continue to leverage all of our capacity to ensure ships enter and exit their maintenance periods on time.

Submarine Maintenance

Since assuming the role of VCNO, I have made it one of my top priorities to improve submarine maintenance, with a weather eye on Navy's stated need for up to 66 fast attack submarines. I have personally visited the Navy's public shipyards in Portsmouth, Pearl Harbor, and Bremerton. Improving our public shipyard performance and getting submarines in and out of maintenance on time is critical to this goal. Today, we are projecting about 700 days of maintenance delays in the public yards for both submarines and aircraft carriers, which is an improvement from over 1500 days of delay in 2019. We aim to drive this number down to the only acceptable number--zero. In this effort, we have identified that one of the key drivers of these delays is late or unavailable material. PB-24 includes $541 million to establish and support a rotatable pool of submarine parts aimed to reduced maintenance delays while waiting for parts refurbishment or overhaul. In addition, PB-24 commits to sustaining a public shipyard workforce of 37,234, a 40-percent increase over the last decade, to develop a strong, sustainable experience base in our tradesmen and shipyard artisans. They are as important in this "decisive decade" as the submarines we are building and maintaining.

Aviation Maintenance

The Navy remains committed to continuing improvements in aviation maintenance. PB-24 increases funding for aviation depot maintenance and increases funding for spare parts. In

FY22, Navy executed 100% of allocated funds, which resulted in zero unfunded backlog of airframes, engines, and modules. The increased funding meets 91% of the requirement and allows for the induction of an additional 200 aircraft. Through our strategy of using data analytics to remove barriers to performance, the Navy continues to track Mission Capable Aircraft Required (MCAR) delta which measures the difference between the respective aircraft MCAR Standard (varies by aircraft) and the actual Mission Capable aircraft available. Currently, the MCAR deltas were all within a range of -8 to +18 aircraft for F/A-18 E/F, F-35C, EA-18G, E-2D, MH-60R/S, P-8A, and MH-53 aircraft.

These analytics inform all Navy investments sparing, improved accountability, and readiness process changes. As a result, we are making good progress on getting airplanes in and out of maintenance on time, ready for the "flight-line." In addition, we are working with our industrial base partner to improve the performance of our Service Life Extension/Modification (SLM) Program for F/A-18s, which both increases the service life and aircraft capabilities in high-end warfighting. Recently, we stood-up capabilities to conduct this SLM at Fleet Readiness Center Southwest to increase throughput of SLMs. There are currently 136 planned SLM inductions across the FYDP, with a ramp-up to 35 inductions per year by FY28, and a target turnaround time of 12 months. SLM will cost less than one-third the price of new aircraft with comparable capabilities, a cost savings that outweighs the tradeoff in remaining flight hours.

The Naval Aviation Enterprise Future Readiness Team (FRT) continues into its twelfth year. Charged with finding, vetting, and funding innovative maintenance and reliability improvement processes, it continues to increase readiness at reduced cost. In FY22, the FRT tracked 59 initiatives that contributed $248.4 million in savings.

Safety

The Navy remains committed to preventing future mishaps that result in the loss of ships, submarines, aircraft and the lives of Sailors and Marines. We established Naval Safety Command on February 4, 2022, charged with continuous organizational learning across the enterprise to understand actions and behaviors that directly contribute to mishaps and prevent their future occurrence. The Fleet Safety Management System, which was released in December 2022, aims to increase awareness and refocus the importance of safety protocols used to identify, control, and mitigate risk. The Safety Management System reinforces risk-management, problem-solving, and critical thinking at all levels of the Navy; ensures that accountability for risk is held at the appropriate level; and verifies that assurance and regulatory requirements are met. Naval Safety Command's assessment process will determine whether a command has effectively instilled behaviors of self-awareness, self-assessment, self-correction, and continual learning to enable a defense-in-depth that ensures the command is Safe-to-Operate and Operating Safely through proper risk identification, communication, and accountability at the appropriate level. As part of their efforts, Naval Safety Command's mandate includes unannounced visits to 18 major fleet concentration areas annually to assess risk management behavior and compliance with established policy. The end goal is to ensure unit-level commands have proper risk identification measures, good communication, and appropriate risk accountability at the appropriate level within the chain of command. Between FY22 and FY23, we are on pace to reduce Class A mishaps across the aviation and afloat enterprises.

Learning to Action Board (L2AB)

The Learning to Action Board (L2AB) addresses Navy-wide systemic problems, risk of organizational drift, and failures to learn which have led to catastrophic incidents and negative trends in performance. The primary lines of effort for the L2AB include continued focus on correctional efforts related to the *USS Bonhomme Richard* fire, the Red Hill fuel spill, and a review of the actions taken after the *USS McCain* and *USS Fitzgerald* at-sea collisions in 2017. L2AB efforts have led to the establishment of Naval Safety Command, the re-prioritization of $260M for fire prevention and response related funding, identification and assignment of 104 action items to improve shore-based fueling operations, and improving Navy Command and Control structure to better align the force and remove unnecessary and previously unidentified risk. Future efforts for L2AB include assessing the investigations into the recent cluster of suicides, examining fleet infrastructure, and streamlining the Navy's assessment process. These efforts are undertaken with the goal of addressing unmitigated risk, driving accountability, bringing tangible solutions to long-standing deckplate issues, and increasing fleet readiness.

Maintenance Infrastructure Optimization

The Navy remains committed to the long-term strategic goals in our Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Program (SIOP), and we are grateful for the Committee's strong support for SIOP. Today, the average age of U.S. naval shipyard facilities and related infrastructure is 62 years. Our four public shipyards are each more than a century old and rapidly degrading, requiring major upgrades and reconfiguration. SIOP provides a strategic roadmap for necessary investments, and when fully executed, will enable three overarching achievements: (1) deliver required dry dock repairs and upgrades to support current and planned future classes of nuclear-powered aircraft carriers and submarines, namely the *Ford*-class and *Virginia*-class with

the *Virginia*-class Payload Module (VPM); (2) optimize workflow within the shipyards through significant changes to their physical layout; and (3) recapitalize industrial plant equipment at all four public shipyards with modern technology that will substantially increase productivity and safety. The Navy remains committed to working with the Congress, Department of Defense leadership, shipyard workforce, impacted communities, regulators, and industry leaders to determine the best path forward for modernization efforts at each shipyard. PB-24 requests $2.7 billion for SIOP efforts, while we intend to program approximately $10 billion across the next five years of SIOP activities. In line with maintenance initiatives, planning for placement of facilities and work process is informed by process analysis through Area Development Plans (ADP).

The Navy has made good progress in SIOP execution. At Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, we have completed construction of the super flood basin and commenced construction on two new dry docks. At Norfolk Naval Shipyard, we have completed construction of the Production Training Facility and awarded the contract for repair to berths 40 and 41. At Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard, we have just recently awarded the contract for the Dry Dock 3 replacement.

Closely related, the Fleet Readiness Center (FRC) Infrastructure Optimization Plan (FIOP) aims to reduce risk associated with aging FRC infrastructure. The Navy is transforming WWII-era organic aviation depots into modernized Maintenance, Repair, and Overhaul repair centers. We are achieving this by streamlining production workflows, upgrading aged equipment and facilities, and implementing digital technologies to increase readiness at a reduced cost. Enterprise master planning is expected to be complete in FY25 and will result in a detailed strategic investment plan that optimizes work flow, increases productivity, and balances investment decisions.

The Navy has made good headway in Fleet Readiness Center Infrastructure Optimization Plan execution as well. At FRC Southeast, we completed renovation of an aircraft hangar in support of 5th generation weapon systems and funded the F-135 engine test cell modification. At FRC Southwest, we funded the CMV-22 aircraft maintenance hangar. Across the enterprise, we completed digital modeling of current production workflows at three aviation depots, and we began optimizing capability and capacity throughout the aviation depots by establishing initial centers of excellence and implementing site-specific workloads.

Shore Infrastructure

PB-24 supports continued sustainment of our shore facilities and prioritizes restoration and modernization of key infrastructure. Shore facilities are critical enablers supporting our operational forces and their families, and many of these facilities are beyond their expected service lives and require recapitalization. We commissioned a Navy utilities system assessment at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam (JBPHH) and received preliminary results. We also commissioned a 5-year recapitalization plan for JBPHH to be completed by November 2023. More broadly, the Navy is developing a 30-year, multi-FYDP, Navy-wide infrastructure plan that anticipates and plans for the needs, requirements, sustainment, and future for shore infrastructure.

Cyber Readiness

Although the readiness of the force has historically been viewed through the lens of the readiness of our people and equipment, the nature of warfare is changing, and we must recognize the importance of cyber readiness in our forces. The Navy's cyberspace superiority vision

identified three main pillars that guide the service: secure, survive, and strike. The "secure" pillar is foundational to the vision and requires constant investment in cybersecurity defenses as adversaries develop new vulnerability exploits. The Navy envisions that it consistently fields best-in-class cybersecurity safeguards, retains its excellent cyber talent and cultivates a professional cybersecurity and cyber-warfighting culture. The "survive" pillar requires training the Navy workforce to respond to cyber-attacks that will inevitably occur. Not only must our people be ready to respond to cyber-attacks, our infrastructure and platforms must be resilient and survivable. Lastly, the "strike" pillar requires the Navy to develop and field capabilities that allow us to operate in cyberspace with lethal effects when authorized. The Navy's PB-24 budget request increases investments in cyber security, cyber resiliency, and cyberspace operations capabilities while adding funds to improve and standardize Cyber Mission Force readiness. We also are creating dedicated cyber-designators and ratings for our officer and enlisted personnel that work in this critical warfare field. Just like the Sailors that man our ships and operate our aircraft, we must cultivate, train, and retain a world-class cyber workforce, both military and civilians, to help us navigate the three pillars of our cybersecurity vision.

Munitions

Our focus on holistic readiness also drives the need to increase our investments in munitions, particularly since this area has historically been a bill payer for other priorities. We continue to work with industry to identify manufacturing challenges and provide investment opportunities to streamline testing and increase production. The Wartime Acquisition and Sustainment Support Plan has helped organize and focus the efforts to overcome this long-term underinvestment, including conducting tabletop exercises with industry to understand barriers to

increased munitions production. We are using multi-year procurement authorities for Standard Missile-6 Block 1A/1B (SM-6), Naval Strike Missile (NSM), Long Range Anti-Ship Missile (LRASM), and Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM), and accelerating production and increasing resiliency across multiple weapon systems, including the Trident II life extension supporting nuclear deterrence, Land Attack Tomahawk, Maritime Strike Tomahawk, AMRAAM, and MK 48 Heavyweight Torpedo (HWT), while maximizing the industrial base by making investments to increase future production capacity on Tomahawk, Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile-Extended Range (AARGM-ER), and SM-6.

Manning

Faced with historic recruiting challenges, Navy has sharpened our enduring attention to retention efforts. We are implementing a range of mitigations to maximize retention, including: Special Duty Assignment Pay, Special Duty Incentive Pay, Assignment Incentive Pay, and Selective Reenlistment Bonuses. Overall, Navy retention remains healthy.

Similar to the other services, the Navy is experiencing a particularly arduous recruiting environment in FY23 for both Active Duty and Reserve recruiting. We entered this fiscal year with a record low Delayed Entry Pool after exhausting all means to meet the recruiting goal in FY22. In FY23, we expect to miss our active duty recruiting goal 8,000 Sailors short of our 37,700 goal. Additionally, we expect to finish 3,000 Sailors short of our 10,330 recruiting goal for the Navy Reserve. We are using all available levers in FY23 to increase recruiting, while maintaining our standards, including: raising the age ceiling on enlistments to 41 years old for new accessions; allowing up to 20% of new enlisted recruits to be CAT IV recruits by pairing CAT IV individuals with appropriate opportunities in certain ratings; standing up Navy

Recruiting Reserve Command to have a dedicated recruiting force for the reserve component mission along with a Permanent Professional Recruiter designation; increasing the maximum Enlistment Bonus to $50,000; and implementing a Future Sailor Preparatory Course, modeled after the Army's Future Soldier Preparatory Course, to raise the readiness standards of potential recruits.

The Navy is committed to fully manning sea billets in support of the National Defense Strategy. This goal requires significant recruiting and retention efforts that will take time. The Navy has more than 143,000 Sailors at sea; with a peak of 146,373 in April 2022. The number of Sailors on operational sea duty is significantly higher than in 2017—an increase of 7,000 for all sea duty units. Yet while the overall number of Sailors on operational sea duty continues to increase compared to previous years, thousands of sea billets remain unmanned. To mitigate these gaps at sea and maintain combat lethality, we continue to prioritize manning for deployed and next-to-deploy forces. This tiered approach is being further matured with the implementation of the Surface Manning Experience (SURFMEX) program to better understand each Sailor's training, qualifications, and ship-class history. This program, based on the success of the Aviation Manning Experience (AMEX) program, enables us to fill billets with people who are the best fit for the job.

Sailor and Family Readiness

We remain committed to improving Sailors' quality of service, which includes both quality of life and quality of work. The Navy is significantly increasing investments for Unaccompanied Housing (UH) Restoration and Modernization. To focus our efforts, we initiated

a QR Code program to simplify reporting of maintenance issues, resulting in a 24% improvement in reporting that facilitated more timely resolution of issues.

We are keenly aware of the unique challenges of those Sailors working in the shipyards. PB-24 includes $258 million of investments in shipyard quality of service. This includes $11 million for CVN-79 off-ship housing, three parking garages for Sailors and Marines, two multi-use facilities supporting recreation, and building and modernizing berthing barges. We are also pursuing quality of service pilots, such as wider access to Wi-Fi during availabilities.

We remain committed to Navy families and the need to provide affordable, high-quality child-care options. PB-24 adds two new Child Development Centers (CDC) in the Norfolk area and funds continued planning for 12 additional CDCs across the FYDP. We are also increasing capacity within our existing childcare programs through increased fee assistance, increased entry-level salaries for direct-care workers with automatic pay raises at the 18-month mark, Child and Youth Program employee discounts for child care, and inclusion of retention bonuses. Additionally, by including it in our FY24 budget, the implementation of the $15 per hour minimum pay rate requirements for Federal employees, including Appropriated and Non-Appropriated Fund employees, continues to support and anticipate improvement in recruitment and retention.

We are increasing education opportunities for Sailors across the Fleet. The US Naval Community College provided educational opportunities for over 1,000 Sailors enrolled in Associate Degree programs, with over 60 earning certificates to date. The US Naval Community College is increasing student enrollment to 3,500 by the end of 2023. These are core elements of developing and educating our future warfighters and leaders.

The Navy is dedicated to creating a culture intolerant of sexual assault and sexual harassment. We are actively implementing the Department of Defense's Prevention Plan of Action 2.0. We continue to focus on: increasing reporting and decreasing prevalence of sexual assault through integrated primary prevention; refining response capabilities; treating victims with compassion; providing quality care; and addressing the emerging challenges associated with male reporting of sexual assault. Incorporating recommendations from the Independent Review Commission (IRC) on Sexual Assault in the Military, as approved by the Secretary of Defense, the Navy has implemented meaningful policy changes, including: (1) in sexual harassment cases, requiring the investigating officer to come from outside the command of the complainant and the subject; (2) ensuring that a victim who contacts a helping professional either must receive services from that office or get a "warm hand-off" to the appropriate service provider, known as the "No Wrong Door Policy"; and (3) hiring more than 225 full-time prevention personnel (FY22-FY25). We also implemented "Safe to Report," ensuring a victim who has reported sexual assault cannot be disciplined for minor collateral misconduct. Finally, the Navy has stood up the Office of Special Trial Counsel in preparation for changes to the military justice system enacted in NDAA 2022 that will transfer jurisdiction for sexual assault, domestic violence, and other covered offenses in 2023 and sexual harassment in 2025 to independent specialized prosecutors.

We continue to prioritize access to the full continuum of mental health resources for our Sailors, aiming to utilize the right care, at the right level, at the right time. Our Sailors receive mental health services in primary care, specialty clinics, and via virtual health platforms, and we continue to expand our virtual options. Valuing the importance of giving Sailors access to mental health resources, over 36 percent of our active duty mental health providers are now assigned to

sea-going commands. We are investing in efforts that will help Sailors earlier, before there is a crisis when able, and certainly after they report an issue. To this end, we are providing training to improve resiliency and prevent suicide, while expanding Operational Virtual Mental Health, assigning more Chaplains to fleet units, enhancing mental health interventions, and embedding mental health experts where able. We also continue to improve coordination to ensure Sailors are directed to the most appropriate service to meet their mental health needs. In February 2023, we published a comprehensive Mental Health Playbook designed to assist Navy leaders in preventing, mitigating, and addressing mental health issues across the Fleet.

Conclusion

The Navy's warfighting advantage is built on the readiness of our platforms, our places, our partners, and, most importantly, our people – the Sailors and civilians who stand ready to fight and win. In the face of adversaries that work every day to out-build and out-gun us, our Sailors and civilians are able to out-think, out-work, and out-fight any adversary. The talent standing the watch is unmatched, by any metric. This all-volunteer force, the loyal Americans who raised their hands to support and defend our Constitution, reflects the Navy's core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment, and the fighting spirit of our Nation.

Your Navy is tackling complex and multifaceted challenges, focusing on both the present and the future. It is essential that the positive momentum of the FY23 budget continues, so that we can support the peacetime promotion our national security interests and remain ready for prompt and sustained combat.

I thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and look forward to working closely with you in the future.

Admiral Lisa Franchetti
Vice Chief of Naval Operations

Adm. Lisa Franchetti is a native of Rochester, New York. She received her commission in 1985 through the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps Program at Northwestern University, where she received a Bachelor of Science in Journalism. She also attended the Naval War College and holds a master degree in organizational management from the University of Phoenix.

Her operational tours include auxiliaries officer and first division officer on USS Shenandoah (AD 44); navigator and jumboization coordinator onboard USS Monongahela (AO 178); operations officer on USS Moosbrugger (DD 980); combat systems officer and chief staff officer for Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 2; executive officer of USS Stout (DDG 55); and assistant surface operations officer on USS George Washington Strike Group. She commanded USS Ross (DDG 71) and DESRON-21, embarked on USS John C. Stennis (CVN 74). She also served as commander of Pacific Partnership 2010, embarked on USNS Mercy (T-AH 19).

Ashore, Franchetti's assignments include commander, Naval Reserve Center Central Point, Oregon; aide to the Vice Chief of Naval Operations; protocol officer for the commander, U.S. Atlantic Fleet; 4th Battalion officer at the U.S. Naval Academy; division chief, Joint Concept Development and Experimentation, on the Joint Staff, J7; deputy director of International Engagement and executive assistant to N3/N5 on the Navy staff; and military assistant to the Secretary of the Navy.

Her flag assignments include commander, U.S. Naval Forces Korea; commander, Carrier Strike Group 9; commander, Carrier Strike Group 15; chief of staff, Strategy, Plans and Policy (J-5) Joint Staff; commander, U.S. 6th Fleet, Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO; deputy commander, U.S. Naval Forces Europe; deputy commander, U.S. Naval Forces Africa; Joint Force Maritime Component Commander; deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Warfighting Development, N7; and director for Strategy, Plans and Policy (J-5), Joint Staff. Franchetti assumed the duties as Vice Chief of Naval Operations Sept. 2, 2022.

Her personal awards include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal (two awards), Legion of Merit (five awards), Meritorious Service Medal (five awards), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (four awards), and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (two awards).

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED BY
THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

STATEMENT OF

GENERAL ERIC M. SMITH
ASSISTANT COMMANDANT OF THE U.S. MARINE CORPS

BEFORE THE

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

ON

MILITARY READINESS AND THE FY2024 BUDGET REQUEST

APRIL 19, 2023

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED BY
THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS

Chairman Waltz, Ranking Member Garamendi, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to address the readiness of your Marine Corps.

The Marine Corps remains the Nation's expeditionary force-in-readiness—a forward postured naval force ready to deter adversaries, respond to crisis and conflict, and contribute to Naval and Joint Force operations. Our identity as Marines centers on being ready to deter, fight, and win. As individual Marines, as units, and as a Corps, *everything we do is in support of warfighting advantage and being most ready when the Nation is least ready.* This is our obligation to the American people.

Readiness requires a combination of people, equipment, and training—all of which leaders must resource and sequence to meet both current and future challenges. In alignment with the 2018 and 2022 National Defense Strategies (NDS), we have identified the People's Republic of China (PRC) as our pacing challenge. The PRC is the competitor against which we must measure our ability to deter, fight, and win. Furthermore, Russia's unprovoked and illegal invasion of a sovereign nation has demonstrated their willingness to break the international rules-based order. We must consider our military readiness to deter Russian aggression in collaboration with our North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies and partners. We must also remain ready to respond to persistent threats from North Korea, Iran, and violent extremist organizations.

Our Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) budget request will sustain key modernization investments from the preceding four budgetary cycles. We will focus on maintaining the tempo and capabilities brought to bear through our Force Design initiatives and investments. Through this deliberate effort we will ensure Marines operating forward can respond to crisis, contribute to Joint and Naval campaigns, enable integrated deterrence, and conduct the day-to-day forward campaigning necessary to build advantages with our allies and partners. We are also enhancing our talent management and training and education efforts to make, train, and retain the Marines that create our warfighting advantage.

While the focus of this modernization is to sustain a warfighting advantage against our pacing challenge, these changes are theater-agnostic and applicable against a range of competitors and adversaries around the globe. We are building a force capable of executing our emerging concepts, not a force exclusively tailored to them. In every possible future environment, Marines will be prepared for the harsh, violent realities that war brings. Force Design training and

manpower enhancements will ensure we remain ready to fight in the most austere conditions imaginable, because at the core, our single greatest asset is the individual Marine. These changes will ensure the Marine Corps maintains its legacy of being ready to fight in every clime and place.

Inseparable from our ability to respond to emergent crises is the readiness and availability of the amphibious warship fleet. The 2023 National Defense Authorization Act codified the requirement for no less than 31 L-Class Amphibious Warfare Ships and made the Commandant of the Marine Corps responsible for developing the amphibious warfare ship requirements for the Department of the Navy. The amphibious warfare ship inventory must consist of no less than 10 LHA/LHDs, 21 LPDs, and an additional 35 Medium Landing Ships (LSM) to provide our Fleet Marine Force with the organic maritime mobility and maneuver platforms required to execute active campaigning as a function of integrated deterrence and the ability to maneuver forces in times of conflict.

We continue to develop, experiment with, and quickly implement concepts and capabilities that best prepare our Marines for the challenges ahead. We will continue to remain good stewards of the taxpayer's dollars, prioritizing investments that provide the Joint Force with a warfighting advantage. Maintaining readiness is central to our efforts and we will continue to devote the funding necessary to ensure our forces remain capable and ready to respond to any crisis, anywhere on the globe, at any time. Every day or dollar lost means your Marines shoulder more risk. The on-time budget passed by this Congress mitigates risk and funds the equipment, training, and personnel required to execute our mission. The work of this committee ensures that we can continue to achieve the readiness our Nation requires and that our Marines and their families deserve. We thank you for your continued support and oversight of our modernization efforts, which ensures the lethality of the Marine Corps and allows us to remain "First to Fight."

Enhancing Warfighting Readiness

Our competitors and adversaries are making advances in areas where the U.S. has historically maintained dominance. Weapons wielded by tactical units now have ranges of hundreds of nautical miles, coupled with tremendous precision. The ability to communicate, once uncontested on the battlefield, is now challenged from our home stations to our objective areas. Even our air and naval superiority is challenged by peers and near-peers using readily available technology. Additionally, China, Russia, and other actors are using maritime gray zone activities

below the threshold of armed conflict that subvert international law, pressure our allies and partners, and jeopardize U.S. national interests. The Marine Corps recognizes these challenges and is taking action to ensure we provide ready and credible forces to deter foes, respond to crisis, fight, and win against any adversary.

Crisis Response

The Marine Corps continues to be the Nation's crisis response force of choice. Over the past year alone, Marines have supported humanitarian assistance operations for the people of the Pacific island of Kiribati, the people of the Caribbean island of Haiti, and the people of Turkiye.

The Marine Corps' ability to project and sustain Marine Expeditionary Units (MEUs) from Amphibious Ready Groups (ARGs) provides the Nation and Combatant Commanders with combat credible forces, capable of being launched from international waters on forward deployed amphibious warships without any need for access, basing, or overflight. The demand signal from Combatant Commanders for the MEU to maintain a forward maritime presence cannot be overstated. The MEU provides Combatant Commanders with the ability to campaign, fight, and build critical relationships with allies and partners through security cooperation and interoperability exercises. They also ensure American citizens and our allies can be safely evacuated from anywhere on the planet. The 31 amphibious warship fleet supports the forward presence of the MEUs for crisis response and enables Marine forces to rapidly seize and defend key maritime terrain and sea lines of communication to preclude horizontal escalation in both crisis and conflict. Our MEUs, embarked on an absolute requirement of a 3-ship ARG, ensure that Americans and allies in distress are protected.

The recent deployment of the 22nd MEU with the KEARSARGE ARG highlights the utility and importance of this capability. In May of 2022, the 22nd MEU, in concert with Task Force 61/2, participated in the NATO Exercise NEPTUNE SHIELD 22. This exercise integrated high-end maritime expeditionary strike capabilities and demonstrated the responsive employment of maritime ballistic missile defense capabilities in support of NATO priorities and objectives. The following month, the KEARSARGE ARG and the 22nd MEU supported Exercise BALTOPS 22. This exercise provided a unique opportunity to strengthen the combined response capabilities critical to preserving freedom of navigation and security in the Baltic Sea. It also fostered critical relationships as Marines from the 22nd MEU conducted ground and air insertions and amphibious

landings alongside Swedish and Finnish counterparts. The actions of this MEU while forward deployed contributed to integrated deterrence and strengthened vital relationships with allies and partners.

Key investments within our FY24 budget request, such as the Amphibious Combat Vehicle (ACV), will enhance the readiness of our crisis response forces. This budget request continues procurement of the ACV, which provides significant improvements over the legacy Assault Amphibious Vehicle (AAV) in mobility, lethality, protection, and safety. ACVs enable crisis response forces ship-to-shore mobility from amphibious warfare ships, providing flexible response options for the Joint Force to maneuver to key locations without port facilities. Additionally, ACVs, combined with amphibious warfare ships and organic aircraft, provide the forcible entry capability required when the Marine Corps must seize or defend advanced naval bases in support of our statutory responsibilities. As with any new system, our ACV's have experienced some initial fielding challenges. We are working with our industry partners to address identified mechanical issues as we continue fielding and testing the new platform. We have also experienced training mishaps with four vehicles in the surf zone. After several months of dedicated efforts, and the institution of a Transition Training Unit in our Amphibious Assault School, we have a phased plan that will allow our ACV operators to employ the vehicle safely and effectively.

Stand-in Forces

Another significant Marine Corps contribution to the Naval and Joint fight is stand-in forces. Stand-in forces are units that are task-organized, trained, and equipped to disrupt an adversary's plans at every point on the competition continuum. These forces operate inside an adversary's weapons engagement zone, strategically placed in areas where they can expose malign behavior, gain and maintain custody of maritime targets, execute sea denial and support sea control operations with precision long-range fires, or canalize adversaries into areas where our Naval and Joint Forces can bring even more weapons to bear. They are the leading edge of the Joint Force. Adversaries are not able to simply ignore stand-in forces and accomplish their military goals. Stand-in forces impose costs on competitors and adversaries by causing them to expend their limited assets to attempt to locate them. This capability further enables Naval and Joint Force maneuver. Stand-in forces are survivable, in that they can independently persist for short periods and can reposition using organic maritime mobility to avoid targeting. Their physical and

electromagnetic signatures are not easily detected, and they possess the lethality to fight in cases when detected. Stand-in forces place as little sustainment burden as possible on a logistics system already in need of improvement. They require less support in austere environments than previous formations because they can produce some of their own water and power; use local food and fuel sources; and be resupplied by air, surface, and subsurface means. Finally, stand-in forces operate forward in partnership with other nations to support an integrated approach to competition. This includes conducting security cooperation, security force assistance, and exercises to strengthen relationships and develop maritime domain awareness. These capabilities enable stand-in forces to provide the credible deterrence and credible combat power that supports the NDS in both competition and conflict.

Our FY24 budget request supports stand-in forces by investing in key Force Design programs, including ground-based anti-ship missile capability, sensors, and communication networks. The Marine Corps' anti-ship missile capability, Navy-Marine Expeditionary Ship Interdiction System (NMESIS), will provide stand-in forces a precise, lethal, and survivable ground-based anti-ship missile capability. We will field the first six operational launchers to the 3d Littoral Combat Team in the fourth quarter of FY23. We will continue to field NMESIS from FY24 through FY30 prioritizing our units supporting Marine Littoral Regiment (MLR) and MEU deployments. Our continued procurement and fielding of the F-35 provides 5th generation tactical air (TACAIR) capabilities both ashore and afloat to enhance situational awareness and afford commanders freedom of maneuver in a highly contested environment. Uncrewed systems, including the MQ-9A Extended Range uncrewed aerial system (UAS), provide our Joint and Naval Forces with the sensing capabilities necessary to detect targets and pass targeting data to the Joint kill web. These advanced systems increase a stand-in force's situational awareness and extend its area of influence. The Marine Corps is investing in resilient communication networks to transmit and receive information from the Joint Force at the satellite, aerial, and terrestrial levels. This ability will ensure the Marine Corps can provide necessary sensor and reconnaissance capabilities to the Joint Force while simultaneously being supported by the Joint Force when we conduct our own strikes.

In March of 2022, we activated the 3d MLR, which now has an established littoral combat team, combat logistics battalion, and littoral anti-air battalion. The MLR recently deployed to execute the first Service-level MLR training exercise. This exercise focused on sensing and

making sense of the battlefield enabling the MLR's ability to rapidly close kill webs. The Marine Corps will activate the 12th MLR in Japan in FY25. This MLR, operating inside of the first island chain, will be equipped with advanced intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) as well as long range strike and anti-ship capabilities to maintain continuous maritime domain awareness and provide decision space for the Joint Force Commander. These units will enhance our ability to deter our peer competitors, reassure our allies and partners, and contribute a unique capability to the maritime fight.

Organic Naval Mobility

One of the most valuable characteristics of our naval expeditionary forces is their ability to use organic Naval mobility. The ability to position and reposition throughout a battlespace without relying on strategic lift, host nation permission, or deep-water ports is critical to our survivability, resiliency, and lethality and significantly reduces the stress on US TRANSPORTATION COMMAND. Amphibious warfare ships and the agility they provide the Joint Force are a national strategic capability. No other platform, when properly matched with the Navy and Marine Corps team, provides more flexibility and capability to the Combatant Commanders. To ensure our readiness in the future, we must ensure Marine crisis response and stand-in forces have the organic maritime and littoral mobility platforms they require. To sustain a forward presence of two ARG/MEUs, to have the capacity to surge up to five ARG/MEUs if directed, and to execute the missions the Nation requires, the Marine Corps requires no less than 31 L-Class amphibious warfare ships and 35 LSMs.

Amphibious warfare ships and LSMs are complementary, but not interchangeable. Amphibious warfare ships enable MEUs to conduct global crisis response, project and sustain forces in a contested environment, and aggregate combat power for forcible entry. The 35 LSMs will provide the organic littoral mobility required to transport and sustain Marine Littoral Regiments throughout an adversary's weapons engagement zone. These LSMs will be affordable, beachable, and distributable. They will be capable of operating in support of campaigning activities and as necessary, in a contested environment to support Naval Expeditionary Combat Forces. These 35 LSMs will provide task organized Marine units of up to 80 personnel the ability to quickly reposition throughout the littorals and land anywhere, causing adversaries to expend ISR to find them. Deterrence and the ability to rapidly respond to crisis or conflict requires the presence

of combat credible forces. Amphibious warfare ships, combined with LSMs, make that possible. The Navy and Marine Corps recognize the necessity for a littoral maneuver bridging capability until the LSM becomes available. A littoral maneuver bridging solutions evaluation team will explore a wide range of existing platforms to inform future investments.

Support for amphibious investments in FY24 and future years is crucial to our ability to provide the naval expeditionary force our Nation requires. It is also vital to our ability to effectively train for our missions. Without maintaining amphibious warfare ship readiness, Navy and Marine Corps proficiency standards are at risk. Over the past five years, the number of Marines serving aboard naval shipping has decreased by 20 percent; in 2018, 16,000 Marines performed sea-duty, but less than 13,000 did so in 2022. Lack of amphibious ship availability, not because of inventory but instead due to insufficient maintenance, caused this decline. The first time a Marine conducts wet-well operations, or a pilot conducts a night landing on a pitching and rolling deck, cannot be on the way to the fight. It must happen now, on ready and maintained warships, to ensure that the Joint Force is consistently prepared for combat. We cannot build trust and interoperability with our allies and partners from a distance, nor can we contest malign activities without being present. Without the necessary number of well-maintained amphibious warfare ships, we may find that China is the first to arrive at a disaster or crisis, just as they did last year in the Pacific Island of Tonga. This cannot happen again.

Aviation

Marine aviation provides the vital organic mobility, lethality, protection, sustainment, and connectivity critical to Marine Corps combat readiness and Naval expeditionary warfare. Readiness rates for Marine aviation continue to rise. The average mission capable rate in 2022 was 66 percent—an increase from 65 percent in FY21 and 57 percent in FY18. Notably, our deployed squadrons and MEUs are averaging a mission capable rate of more than 80 percent. This combined with our revised construct allows us to deploy 10 F-35Bs aboard our MEUs compared to the traditional six AV-8B contingent; offering the COCOMs a 66 percent increase in TACAIR – 5th Generation aircraft – with our MEUs time now. Maintenance planning and process improvements at the organizational level have reduced Non-Mission Capable Maintenance rates from an average of nearly 23 percent in FY18 to less than 16 percent in FY22. Enterprise-level initiatives at the intermediate and depot-level promise to increase aircraft on the flightline and

reduce the turn-around time for high-level maintenance and modernization evolutions. We owe these readiness gains to targeted funding for key readiness enabler accounts, success of various platform-specific readiness initiatives, and the day-in and day-out hard work of our Marine maintainers.

Several aviation accomplishments over the past year demonstrate our readiness for current and future missions and deserve specific attention. The F-35 continues to provide the Navy and Marine Corps team a lethal and survivable strike and sensor platform for operations in a highly contested environment. In 2022, two F-35C squadrons, VFA-147 aboard the USS CARL VINSON and VMFA-314 aboard the USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN, trained, deployed, and operated together throughout the INDOPACOM theater demonstrating the unique contributions of this platform to integrated deterrence. The Marine Corps' newest heavy-lift helicopter, the CH-53K, continues to demonstrate impressive performance in terms of distance, airspeed, and gross weight lift capacity that no other rotary platform can match. This aircraft will provide the heavy organic lift and operational reach necessary to support distributed maritime operations across vast distances in the Pacific and elsewhere. The CH-53K achieved initial operating capability in April 2022, and our first CH-53K squadron will soon reach full operational capability. With the approval of full rate production for this program in December of 2022, our budget request includes funding for 15 aircraft in FY24.

Our KC-130J and MV-22 squadrons continue to be the workhorses of our aviation fleet. Combatant Commander demand for what these platforms bring to the fight remains high; our Marines continue to fly and fix these aircraft at an impressive rate to support that demand. This past year, the Marine Corps activated Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 153 (VMGR-153) in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, and by 2026, VMGR-153 will bring 15 KC-130J aircraft to the Pacific, substantially increasing the reach and sustainment capabilities of Marines throughout the theater. While increasing our reach with our KC-130J squadrons, we are working to address our MV-22 readiness rates. This year, the Marine Corps identified the negative impacts of life limits on Input Quill Assemblies on our MV-22 fleet. We are prioritizing our squadrons forward deployed and afloat on MEUs for quill replacement to maintain a ready and capable crisis response force. The MV-22 remains one of our most capable platforms with more than 480,000 successful flight hours. Continued stable and predictable funding in support of Marine Aviation flight hour,

sustainment, and aviation spares accounts will be critical to our ability to continue this level of performance and readiness.

Contested Logistics

Logistics is our pacing warfighting function; our ability to position and sustain our combat power sets the limit on what is operationally possible. In the most demanding operating environments, every action—regardless of the domain—may be monitored, tested, or disrupted by a competitor or adversary. To succeed, we will have to be lighter, more mobile, and more expeditionary than ever before. Therefore, we must focus on the capabilities, relationships, formations, and equipment that will enable us to meet these logistical challenges at every level. If we fail to do this, we will have the very best capabilities that we cannot sustain.

To meet the logistics challenges of our operating environment, the Marine Corps is working to increase our global logistics awareness, diversify our distribution methods, improve our sustainment ability, and make our installations ready for a contested environment. These lines of effort and initiatives will give flexibility to our Marines by allowing them to produce their own support and reduce the need for support from outside units. In an effort to push repair parts availability as far forward as possible, we continue to increase our additive manufacturing capability. In the future, prestaging some of this equipment with our allies will increase our readiness and make us more lethal. We are also developing a family of uncrewed logistics systems tailored to littoral environments, which will increase our resupply flexibility and reduce risk to Marine forces. The Tactical Resupply UAS (TRUAS) will provide stand-in forces an autonomous and organic logistic capability to sustain distributed operations. These efforts, along with others, will provide the reliable and flexible logistics support our Marines will need in the most challenging conditions.

Continued work and investment are required to build a logistics network that is resilient against peer and near-peer competitors. The Joint Logistics Enterprise underpins all of our logistics initiatives, enabling a global, dynamic, and modernized supply chain. Continued investment in logistics information technology systems enabled with artificial intelligence/machine learning capabilities will help ensure a low-signature logistics ecosystem that protects the identity and location of stand-in forces. This work will create the sensor-based, data-driven, and networked

environment necessary for the sustainment of stand-in forces and crisis response forces in contested environments.

Infrastructure

Marine Corps installations are more than buildings, ranges, and airfields; they are warfighting platforms that provide vital support for every one of our missions, our Marines, Sailors, and their families. We must resource them as such and ensure they remain ready to support not only today's requirements but also future challenges.

The Marine Corps is focusing on a facilities investment optimization plan that will improve facilities' readiness over time, beginning with the highest-valued assets. More than 25,000 Marines are currently forward-postured west of the International Date Line and positioned inside China's weapons engagement zone. Modern and resilient infrastructure in the Pacific will enable our ability to stand-in or respond to crisis. With the activation of Marine Corps Base Camp Blaz on Guam, Pacific infrastructure projects such as the consolidated Marine Expeditionary Brigade Headquarters, Artillery battery facilities, and the 9th Engineer Support Battalion's Training Complex will support Marines being stationed on Guam. Additionally, FY24 projects such as the Child Development Center, Recreation Center, and the Religious Ministry Services Facility will greatly enhance the quality of life that Marines deployed to Guam need and deserve.

Information Environment Modernization

Information technology is a critical enabler for the command and control of Marine forces, management and protection of information assets, and collaboration with mission partners. Network modernization is the foundation from which we sense, make sense, and act. We are modernizing our end user devices, improving our enterprise and tactical communication transport infrastructure; migrating to cloud computing; and investing in artificial intelligence and machine learning. Additionally, the Marine Corps has invested extensively in Zero Trust efforts to combat against cyber exploits attempting to infiltrate our networks. Without the ability to secure, operate, and defend our networks in a degraded or denied communication environment, we will not capitalize on the capabilities of the Joint All Domain Command and Control framework. Our investments will provide seamless, agile, resilient, transparent, and secure infrastructure to support Joint Force information advantage.

Training and Education

We are also transforming our training and education (T&E) enterprise to produce the most skilled and ready Marines to meet the demands of the all-domain battlefield of the future operating environment. To achieve this end state, our T&E continuum must continue to evolve, guided by informed decisions through data driven analysis. We will focus on shaping Marines into more cognitively agile, intuitive problem solvers, capable of making bold and consequential decisions in an uncertain environment.

One way we are modernizing our T&E continuum is transforming our learning methodology to an outcomes-based learning (OBL) approach. OBL orients learners on "how" to think about challenges in multi-disciplinary contexts, vice merely "what" to think with respect to procedures or processes. It requires the learner to be more engaged and adaptive and grow as a problem-solver who can confidently and reliably process information and comprehend key variables within a specific contextual environment.

We have launched a new Infantry Marine Course at our enlisted Schools of Infantry, which is incorporating the OBL approach. This course is a four-phase program of instruction that takes Marines, as a unit, through increasingly complex practical application exercises, challenging their critical thinking and decision-making skills. The backbone of this course, the Sergeants of our instructor cadre, remain with their individual squads throughout the entire fourteen weeks of training. The benefits of this new system are multifold: from the earliest stages of their training, Marines build cohesion, learn how to fight as a team, and strengthen our Corps, as the instructors return to the Fleet Marine Force as more capable leaders.

We are also modernizing our training ranges with improved instrumentation, feedback, and safety tools. Additionally, we are developing a Live, Virtual, and Constructive (LVC) Training Environment across the entire training enterprise, which will provide the persistent and adaptive training needed to prepare Marines to project and sustain our stand-in forces and leverage organic aviation and naval mobility capabilities. With our enhanced synthetic training capabilities, we will prepare our Marines to operate within information degraded and contested logistics environments.

Since the beginning of 2021, we have been executing our integrated training model at both recruit depots, fulfilling the FY20 NDAA requirement at Parris Island, and are on track to meet the requirement at San Diego as directed. Our current efforts allow both male and female recruits to receive positive examples of leadership from both genders to produce environments that foster

respect and unit cohesion. Through these efforts, we will continue to shape the resilient, capable, and adaptive Marines required to fight and win in the future operating environment.

Taking Care of Our People

Our single greatest asset remains the individual Marine. By properly equipping the warfighter with the technology and armaments to be the most lethal on the battlefield, we ensure a physical advantage over our competitors. Modernizing our training and education programs will allow us to maximize the talents and skills of our Marines, enabling an even more important psychological and mental advantage over those same competitors. We must still, however, remain equally focused on taking care of our individual Marines. In line with these efforts, we have added $14 million to our childcare funding line in FY22 to hire more childcare employees at higher wages. We have additionally submitted two military construction projects to build two new Child Development Centers to increase on-base capacity at our installations reporting the largest waitlists. We must invest in our people, ensure their safety, and protect them from stressors on and off of the battlefield so that when crises emerge, our Marines remain resilient and ready to fight and win.

Talent Management

The changes the Marine Corps is making to its capabilities and concepts will only be fully realized if we have parallel advancements and investments in our people. We are executing Talent Management 2030 (TM2030), our strategic plan for modernizing the way we recruit, develop, and retain Marines. TM2030, and its subsequent annual update, describes a fundamental redesign of our personnel system, empowered by new statutory authorities provided by Congress. It details how the Marine Corps will implement new models for recruiting and retaining talent, modernize our assignments process consistent with our warfighting philosophy, introduce new measures to increase career flexibility, and optimize access to modern digital tools, processes, and analytics, consistent with industry standards. Our end state is to improve combat lethality and capability by better identifying and cultivating an individual Marine's talents through education, training, mentorship, and experience, and assigning them to positions where they can best contribute to the success of their unit and the Corps. Through these efforts and engaged leadership, the Marine Corps will be able to capitalize on the totality of America's talent.

The Marine Corps is already executing several initiatives to modernize and improve personnel management. To increase family stability while sustaining warfighting capability, we are increasing Permanent Change of Station (PCS) flexibility and efficiencies, such as reassigning Marines locally when a career-enhancing billet is available or using distributed learning rather than issuing permanent change of station orders for additional education. We are also working to extend individual Marine's tours, vice our legacy three-year model, to better maintain unit cohesion, while minimizing stress on our Marine families. We are in the process of implementing our 360-degree Leadership Review Program to improve leadership effectiveness by identifying blind spots and areas of improvement for personal growth. We have also implemented an opt-out option for promotion boards this year to increase career flexibility.

Our FY24 budget request also includes vital investments in manpower information technology (IT) systems modernization—the digital backbone for our talent management efforts. Our goal is to consolidate the more than 70 disparate manpower applications and systems into a small number of applications on a single IT system, bringing our human resource practices in line with best practices in the private sector. These actions, along with other policy changes and investments will help us more fully harness the breadth and depth of talent within our force and the American people.

We are succeeding in our overall retention goals. However, the Marine Corps is experiencing some of the same recruiting challenges impacting the entire Department. Our FY24 budget reflects these recruiting challenges by seeking an end strength of 172,300 active-duty Marines. For the Reserve Forces, our plan is to recruit and retain 33,600 Marines in FY24.

Suicide Prevention

As part of our larger human performance management efforts, we continue to examine our mental health programs and suicide prevention efforts. Every life lost to suicide is one too many. We continue to pursue all opportunities to reduce the incidence of suicide amongst our Marines, Sailors, and their family members. The Secretary of Defense recently released a report from the Suicide Prevention and Response Independent Review Committee (SPRIRC). We are reviewing the recommendations of this committee and implementing those tasks that have been approved. Internally, the Service recently gathered a senior leader advisory group from across the Marine Corps operational force, installations, Chaplain Corps, and medical teams to address suicide

prevention. In concert with recommendations from this advisory group, we are prioritizing integrated training and education, enhancing our prevention workforce, increasing access to information for our Marines, Sailors, and families, heightening our focus on spiritual fitness, and bolstering our new join process. We are committed to ensuring our Marines, Sailors, and their families are equipped and informed to navigate stressors both on and off duty in healthy and productive ways.

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

As a Service, we will remain steadfast in ensuring commanders and their senior enlisted counterparts are responsible for the climate of our units, assisting victims with care and support, and appropriately holding perpetrators of sexual assault accountable. To combat sexual assaults, the Service continually strives to improve education and training to our Marines. This past year, through updated Combined Commandership Course, First Sergeants' Course, and updated Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Annual Training for Non-Commissioned Officers, we have equipped commanders and leaders to address command climate and understand risk and protective factors from the individual to community levels. We are engaging in integrated prevention and leveraging trauma-informed leadership and staffs in prevention and response. We have also established the Office of Special Trial Counsel in line with the 2022 NDAA military justice reform. In the coming year with funding enacted in our FY23 request, the Marine Corps plans to hire 369 positions across the enterprise in support of the Secretary of Defense directed Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military. These new positions will include 121 Sexual Assault Response Coordinators, 194 Victim Advocates, 23 Primary Prevention Integrators, and 31 Equal Opportunity Advisors. The integration of these positions will enable communication and collaboration on policy, plans, and training to improve the efficacy of the Marine Corps SAPR program.

Safety

Over the past several years, we have lost the lives of too many Marines in preventable training incidents. Losses of life in training are not the "cost of doing business." It is a price no Marine or Sailor should have to pay. Safety remains a pillar of Marine Corps warfighting advantage and readiness. We have made significant progress in improving our safety performance

and culture; however, there is still much work to do. Mishap rates over the past year have returned to the historical norms observed prior to COVID (FY20 and FY21). This rise coincides with a return to normal operational tempo but is in no way seen as "acceptable". Our goal is to reduce mishap rates, not accept them.

This past year the Marine Corps has deliberately focused on making our ground forces safer. We are utilizing the aviation safety templates that maximize standardization, checklists, and instruction to reduce mishaps in our ground safety campaign. The Marine Corps Safety Division is also working in concert with the Inspector General of the Marine Corps to reinvigorate the Command Safety Assessment Program. This program will increase opportunities for oversight, share lessons learned, augment training, and communicate best practices across the Marine Corps.

This coming year, we will fund a new contract for the Aviation Safety Awareness Program, an anonymous hazard reporting system for all aviation units. This will leverage advanced data analytics and allow our unit commanders to review submissions to provide an immediate and timely response to safety issues. We will also continue briefs and presentations to our aviation community across the globe to discuss previous mishaps and their causal factors. These efforts, in conjunction with the dissemination of our safety resources and references, will allow Marines at all levels to learn from past mistakes. We cannot eliminate the risks of our profession, but we will do all we can to mitigate those risks and elevate them to senior leaders before high-risk events take place.

Conclusion

The United States is a maritime nation, and as such, it requires a Marine Corps ready to deter, fight, and win in the maritime domain. As America's premier global crisis response force, your Marine Corps is ready to accomplish these missions today, and with your continued support, will be even more ready tomorrow. On behalf of all of our Marines, Sailors, civilians, and families, we thank you for your support for our efforts to remain the most ready when the Nation is least ready.

Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps
Gen. Eric M. Smith

General Smith is currently serving as the 36th Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps.

Born in Kansas City, Missouri, and raised in Plano, Texas, General Smith graduated from Texas A&M University and was commissioned in 1987. He has commanded at every level, including Weapons Company, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment during Operation Assured Response in Monrovia, Liberia; 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment during Operation Iraqi Freedom; and 8th Marine Regiment/ Regimental Combat Team 8 during Operation Enduring Freedom. He also served in Caracas, Venezuela as part of the U.S. Military Group.

As a General Officer, he commanded U.S. Marine Corps Forces Southern Command, 1st Marine Division, III Marine Expeditionary Force, and Marine Corps Combat Development Command.

General Smith's staff assignments as a General Officer include serving as the Director of Capability Development Directorate, Combat Development and Integration; Senior Military Assistant to both the Deputy Secretary of Defense and Secretary of Defense; and Deputy Commandant for Combat Development and Integration.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED
BY THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

PRESENTATION TO
THE ARMED SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SUBJECT: The Fiscal Year 2024 Budget Request for Military Readiness

STATEMENT OF: General David W. Allvin
Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force

13 April 2023

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED
BY THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE
ON READINESS

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Waltz, Ranking Member Garamendi, and distinguished members of this committee, on behalf of the Secretary of the Air Force, the Honorable Frank R. Kendall III, and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Charles Q. Brown, Jr., thank you for another opportunity to testify on Air Force readiness.

Our Air Force is an indispensable contributor to national security in an increasingly complex international strategic environment. We exist to defend the homeland, rapidly deploy combat power globally, and fight as part of a joint, allied, and partner team. We are responsible for two-thirds of the Nation's strategic nuclear triad, which is foundational to defense priorities. Our conventional and nuclear capabilities provide unique options for our Nation's leaders, with the inherent attributes of speed, range, agility, and lethality. We remain the world's premier responder in conflict, crisis, and contingency. Our mission—to "Fly, Fight, & Win…Airpower Anytime, Anywhere" –is underwritten by our readiness, today and in the future. With the strong support of this Congress for FY23, we continued advancing on initiatives and operational imperatives to strengthen and reimagine readiness to adapt to the changing character of war. However, the pace of progress remains insufficient to meet our changing and complex security environment.

Key to our readiness is predictability in providing the resources and tools to execute our strategy. Adequately funding our readiness accounts while pursuing the right investments to develop advanced capabilities to meet future threats must be done thoughtfully. We believe we have struck a responsible balance. Our plan does involve 'new starts,' which will be threatened with a Continuing Resolution, thus delivering a gift to our strategic competitors and potential adversaries we cannot afford—time. We will continue to work with Congress to provide all that is required for a timely, year-long appropriation for FY24.

Secretary Kendall has stated that we must make tough choices in the short term to meet our pacing challenge – the People's Republic of China (PRC). As our Air Force balances to ensure sufficient readiness for today and tomorrow, four additional factors stand out among many that influence our ability to do so. The first factor is our aging fleet of aircraft and aging Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) forces. The average age of our aircraft is 29 years old, with 53 percent of those well past their expected service life. Pair this with these

assets' continued high utilization rate in joint force missions, and the challenge gets more costly. The Minuteman III ICBM, first deployed in 1970, is the world's oldest land-based strategic missile system. We appreciate the support of Congress to enable us to begin this necessary transition from less relevant capabilities and look forward to continued collaboration in the future. The second is the pace at which the People's Republic of China (PRC) advances its capabilities. The PRC continues its seemingly uninhibited advancements in capabilities designed to put the U.S. in a reactive position with respect to pursuing our national interests. Third, due to various factors such as inflation, a tight labor market, unanticipated cost growth, experienced maintenance personnel, and other factors, we continue to face challenges maintaining the viability of our legacy systems that prove less relevant in the face of advancing threats. Fourth, reaching and recruiting our youth and attracting a new generation of inspired Americans is critical and increasingly challenging in a world where shrinking familiarity with military service negatively affects the propensity to serve. Airmen are our greatest asset – if we lag in recruiting great Americans, readiness will suffer in the very near future. The cumulative effects of these four factors provide the undercurrent for enhancing our state of readiness, operational agility, and long-term strategic readiness investments.

RECRUITING

Our success as an Air Force starts and ends with our Airmen. Over the years, we have been fortunate to attract the best of America's youth in sufficient numbers to fill our formations. Recent realities have increasingly challenged the recruiting landscape. Among them were the limitations for our recruiters to access schools and interact with youth in those schools during the pandemic. The tight job market and reduced familiarity with the military further reduce the appreciation of the value of service and the opportunities we provide. As a result, the active duty component barely met recruiting goals in FY23, with the guard and reserves falling short. While we estimate that all three components will not meet goals this year (active duty will likely be short by at least 10%, while the Guard and Reserves may be closer to 30% short), we are aggressively attacking the issue.

We have focused on simple adjustments to open to a broader pool of American applicants ages 17 to 21 due to 77 percent of that cohort not meeting current eligibility requirements but

possessing the necessary talents we need for the future. We continue to evolve pre-existing restrictions to remove barriers to service. For example, policy changes on body composition during accession and tattoos have already proved beneficial within the first few months. Changes to body composition standards to match DoD standards have yielded over 300 newly eligible recruits in less than three months. Tattoos are the third highest disqualification factor for enlisted accessions. Under the new tattoo policy, 43 applicants enlisted who would have previously needed a waiver to serve. This initiative is on track to add approximately 2,500 recruits in 12 months. We increased initial enlistment bonuses and put $15 million in FY23 towards reinvigorating the Enlisted College Loan Repayment Program, making the service a more attractive option after higher education. Additionally, Members of Congress are uniquely positioned to support recruiting efforts by nominating talented future cadets to the U.S. Air Force Academy, amplifying stories within communities, and meeting with service members. This essential teamwork is necessary to reach our upcoming youth and share that service is a viable, advantageous, and honorable choice for our great Americans.

CURRENT READINESS

Aircrew Manning

The national pilot shortage continues to challenge our Air Force. In FY22, our Total Force crewed pilot numbers decreased by roughly 250, leaving the Total Force 1,900 pilots short of the 21,000 required to meet global requirements. The persistence of this challenge is based on several factors. Robust airline hiring continues to draw away experienced pilots critical to producing, training, and developing new pilots. The loss of experience will negatively impact production and retention because this loss is most prevalent in the Field Grade Officer pilot year groups. However, we are taking prudent risks in reducing rated staff manning to not take risks in front-line combat capability or pilot production. Said another way, to date our pilot production challenges have not increased risk in our combat readiness. The reduced rated staff manning will affect individual professional development but ensures we have placed experience and talent in the right place to maintain combat-ready forces.

To improve retention and production, we persistently consider and invest in several monetary and non-monetary incentive programs to address our aircrew's quality of life and

service concerns. Monetarily, we sustain the Aviator Bonus, Aviator Incentive Pay, Special Duty Pay, and Critical Skills Pay. These include long and short-term contracts, with the former offering more money upfront for a longer commitment. We restructured our Aviator Bonus to focus on crewed pilots and our most experienced aviators, offering lump sums to initial eligible crewed pilots and assignment of preference incentives for early sign-ups. The bonus maximum increased for longer commitments – specifically to $50,000 a year. We also highly value the non-monetary incentives for retention and are pursuing various quality-of-life initiatives that address the all-important needs of our Airmen and families. We appreciate this committee's steady support for these vital retention programs.

Along with aircrew retention, we are continuing pilot production investments. In FY22, Undergraduate Pilot Training (UPT) programs produced 1,276 pilots—105 less than the previous year and 224 pilots short of the 1,500 total goal. Maintenance and supply challenges for aging training aircraft compound the throughput timelines. T-38 engine shortages, T-6 and T-38 cartridge and propellant-activated devices (ejection seats) issues, and low GS civilian simulator instructor manning all challenged our ability to meet pilot production quotas. PB24 pursues investments to tackle the sustainment and availability issues ($12.6M T-38 Safety and Sustainment, $11.3M T-6 modifications). To mitigate these challenges, we continue to investigate creative solutions to these persistent challenges and develop accelerated training paths. The force has implemented numerous transformational programs to accomplish this production increase through non-traditional means. Initiatives include measures that integrate a spectrum of immersive technology and devices to increase effectiveness during the airborne portion of flight training and improve the readiness of graduates for the challenges of 5th-generation aviation. 19th Air Force pursues avenues and technology to accelerate training timelines while sustaining the integrity of the force's premier pilot training program.

Undergraduate Helicopter Training-Next departs from the traditional paradigm of requiring initial fixed-wing training before proceeding to rotary-wing training. We expect this to yield more than 90 additional graduates annually and meaningful savings without impacting quality. Air Mobility Fundamentals – Simulator (AMF-S), a simulator-only course now being deployed at scale, provides modern and cost-effective crew and multi-engine fundamentals training, allowing for the divestment of and transition from the T-1 legacy platform. AMF-S will be deployed at all UPT bases by the end of CY23.

The GS Civilian Simulator Instructor (CSI) manning has been a chronic challenge in increasing training throughput. We are pursuing an initiative to offer several incentives to recruit and retain CSIs, including Direct Hire Authority; Recruitment, Relocation, and Retention incentives; and Special Salary Rates.

Combining these transformational programs, the Air Force continues to target a steady-state pilot production potential of 1,580 pilots annually. We will continue to monitor, assess, and improve to ensure we are getting the maximum production in quantity and quality that our current resources enable.

Flying Hour Program (FHP)

The FHP continues to be a valuable metric of aircrew readiness. In FY22, the Air Force executed 100 percent of resourced flight hours, meeting 92 percent of requirements. While we met a high percentage, several factors challenged our ability to fly programmed hours. For example, 6,642 of our total force maintenance positions are currently unfunded, approximately 50 percent of our aircraft maintenance personnel have less than six years of experience, and we face significant supply part shortages and longer-than-expected depot timelines. Timely divestments of less relevant legacy systems will enable us to transfer this qualified maintenance manpower to the appropriate new platforms. Additionally, unforeseen events such as natural disasters, downtime for time compliance technical orders (TCTOs), and other unanticipated contingencies also influence our ability to satisfy our FHP requirements.

The FY24 budget is consistent with FY23 flying hour programming and reflects the hours the Air Force can reasonably fly given existing constraints. Despite the challenges with executing FHP, we continue to search for innovative ways to generate aircraft and quality aircrew training. These include virtual and synthetic training environments to complement real-world training and replicate complex scenarios.

Weapon System Sustainment (WSS)

WSS metrics illustrate a meaningful story regarding divestment to invest in modern technology to bolster readiness. The Air Force maintains substantial capabilities through the WSS portfolio. WSS spans 100 weapon systems, from the oldest B-52 to emerging cyber systems. For FY24, the United States Air Force WSS funding request is $17.9 billion,

representing an increase of $1.1 billion over FY23. The FY24 budget funds 87 percent of all WSS requirements, which is the highest in four years [FY23 (86%), FY22 (85%), FY21 (86%).] The WSS portfolio continues to grow as a result of sustaining old aircraft beyond design life, fielding new weapon systems with increased technical complexity, increasing operational requirements in Contract Logistics Support platforms, and navigating above-inflation increases in labor and material costs.

The Air Force's overall objective is to balance future readiness (modernization and recapitalization) and current readiness to support the National Defense Strategy. Competition for finite resources necessitates prioritizing weapon systems most relevant for deterring and defeating a peer adversary in a future conflict. Our requested WSS funding level has been carefully crafted to ensure near-term capabilities are assured while allowing investment in future capabilities.

ENHANCED OPERATIONAL READINESS AND AGILITY

Air Force Force Generation (AFFORGEN) Model

Over the past few years, the Air Force has developed an AFFORGEN model in coordination with the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Joint Staff. The AFFORGEN model is designed to align how we present forces to combatant commanders with the ability to have predictable, readiness-building training for our Airmen. Over the past two decades, we have offered forces to the joint force in an unsustainable manner, and the readiness impact is becoming more apparent in the face of our pacing challenge. Through AFFORGEN, the USAF has matured and refined what it means to provide combat-credible forces that heighten deterrence and assurance. Doing this refinement better demonstrates the responsiveness and flexibility inherent in airpower and does so in a manner that enables us to sustain readiness today and tomorrow.

Across the force, training and doctrine development focuses on the assumption that our forces will operate in complex, disconnected, and decentralized environments. AFFORGEN provides discipline to the process, ensuring we have sufficient time to train against the highest end threat, avoid over-utilization of the force (crews and platforms), and clarify to the Joint Force what the Air Force can provide to the fight. The AFFORGEN model expands the

traditional 1:2 deploy-to-dwell rotational model to a 1:3 model, thereby creating sustainable capacity that satisfies the requirements of the National Defense Strategy.

AFFORGEN also optimizes resources for appropriate allocation to training and preparation cycles to best ready our forces. We expect all AFFORGEN Force Elements to reach Initial Operating Capability in FY24, at which time the Air Force will fill Combatant Commander requirements using Force Elements.

STRATEGIC READINESS INVESTMENTS

Nuclear Modernization

As the threat to international stability continues to grow and the pace with which the PRC and others develop, the importance of strategic deterrence and long-range strike cannot be understated. The USAF remains fully committed to the recapitalization of the nuclear enterprise. The service's sacred duty is to ensure the President of the United States has flexible and responsive deterrence options in this increasingly adversarial environment. We must provide a robust nuclear readiness portfolio to continue upholding our promise to the Nation.

To deter both large-scale and limited nuclear attacks against the United States, our allies, and partners, the DAF is recapitalizing our two legs of the nuclear triad, our nuclear command, control, and communications (NC3) systems, and capabilities to further strengthen regional deterrence. We are modernizing our ICBM forces, bombers, and the F35-A dual-capable fighter aircraft. We are replacing the nearly 50-year-old Minuteman III ICBM with the critically needed LGM-35A Sentinel system. The service recently unveiled the B-21 Raider for the bomber leg, a testament to America's enduring advantages in ingenuity and innovation and proof of our commitment to building advanced deterrence capabilities. Our stalwart B-52 forces, which we are modernizing, and the development of the Long-Range Standoff Weapon bolster the bomber leg. Additionally, the F-35's nuclear certification is on schedule and supports both U.S. and NATO countries. These weapon systems and our robust nuclear command and control provide the flexible and responsive nuclear capabilities needed to deter strategic attacks, assure Allies and partners, and achieve U.S. objectives if deterrence fails. The $23.1 billion FY24 President's Budget supports these critical efforts and continues to get significant technologies into the hands of the warfighter by the end of the decade.

Modernizing the ICBM leg of the triad includes a heavy reliance on DoD Military Construction (MILCON) as we synchronize new weapons delivery platforms and support facilities. MILCON is consistently affected by the volatility of inflation, tight labor markets, and supply chain issues, as is the case across the country. The DAF will remain transparent in communicating necessary costs and investments to nuclear modernization. However, stable and consistent Congressional funding remains vital to ensuring a safe, secure, and credible nuclear deterrent.

Operational Test and Training Infrastructure (OTTI)

The Air Force uses several physical training ranges to sharpen the combat effectiveness of aircrews; however, the current operational training infrastructure does not deliver the high-end training capability the Air Force and the joint force need. The Air Force is modernizing select ranges based on the Threat Matrix Framework to address this shortfall. The FY24 President's Budget will allow us to continue the FY23 plan to modernize the Nevada Test and Training Range and the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex to emulate a peer or near-peer adversary environment by FY30. In addition, we plan to upgrade six primary test ranges and maximize operational airspace for 5th-generation tests and training while maintaining flexibility to accommodate military, public, and environmental concerns. The planned improvements include high-fidelity threat emitters, jammers, and improved targets, as part of an integrated system that allows ranges to function as realistic and reactive adversaries.

The Air Force requires additional investment in synthetic training capabilities to meet the National Defense Strategy priorities. For example, using a robust, dependable, and cost-effective synthetic training capability, the Air Force Joint Simulation Environment (JSE) effort will enable aircrew and other operators to train and maintain readiness against our near-peer adversaries. JSE also helps us overcome live-fly training limitations, such as range size constraints restricting our ability to replicate threats and allowing potential adversaries to observe our training. While we will always leverage the opportunities for synthetic training, we believe that some airmanship can only be gained in the air, and we will continue to refine the balance.

Installation and Infrastructure Resilience with Agile Combat Employment (ACE)

The Air Force is committed to protecting our Airmen, civilians, contractors, families, and resources and the forward operating locations from which they will operate in a future threat environment. We currently rely on a limited number of isolated, forward air bases in the Western Pacific and several fixed bases in Eastern Europe. Advances in potential adversary long-range precision strike capability increasingly threaten these bases. Competitors who continue to invest in weapon magazine depth, range, and accuracy hold our locations, as well as our allies and partners, at risk. Additionally, potential adversaries confront U.S. efforts to gain allied and partner access, basing, and overflight. As a result, we must define and acquire a mixture of cost-effective responses to these threats that enable resilient forward basing.

In concert with Secretary Kendall's Operational Imperatives, the Air Force has developed multiple initiatives to bolster resilient forward basing in a contested environment. Specifically, the Agile Combat Employment (ACE) scheme of maneuver increases readiness by dispersing operations from large bases to networks of smaller locations. ACE complicates the adversary's wartime calculus and denies them the lucrative targeting opportunities known, fixed, and unprotected locations provide. Through ACE, the Air Force is transitioning from an extensive, centralized, unhardened infrastructure to smaller, dispersed, resilient, and adaptive basing that includes active and passive defenses. Refining ACE continues to be worked at all echelons of the force, including updating Air Force Doctrine, testing in ongoing exercises and worldwide training, and innovating at the unit level. In FY24, $1.2 billion funds the resilient forward-basing operational imperative, including ACE funding. We continue our work on identifying and creating capabilities and formalized training programs to field an agile force that sets the theater and establishes distributed command and control.

ACE requires a sound mixture of investments to ensure its effectiveness. The force must invest in and acquire prepositioned essential supplies and fuel, improved agile expeditionary communications, and active and passive defenses of distributed operating bases. We must expand the number of bases from which we can operate and provide a mix of defenses, concealment, and hardening, as well as the ability to maintain logistics support from multiple locations. In key areas, ACE also requires war reserve materiel, aircraft support, and other logistics. Additionally, a critical enabler of ACE is the development and training of multi-

capable Airmen. Supplying today's Airmen with modernized training programs and tools is paramount to actualizing this development.

Without support from Congress and our regional Allies and partners, our investments are not assured. We must continue to develop and build partner nation capabilities to defend our air and space bases and guarantee the means to effectively communicate with our allies so we may all be ready for the future as one team.

CONCLUSION

As we head into a pivotal year, our Airmen continue to innovate against the challenges they confront and remain our greatest asset. Airmen deliver airpower time and again despite manning challenges, aging fleets, and cumbersome supply and technical issues. Their devotion to duty, resilience in the face of adversity, collective enthusiasm, and innovative spirit deserves our admiration and unwavering support. Our Airmen answer our Nation's call in an era of strategic uncertainty that demands unprecedented agility. Our team has the intellect and energy required to overcome any challenge—at home or abroad.

What is important here is an investment in readiness will ensure that our force will have what they need for the fight tomorrow and be well-equipped to meet the future. Modernization is readiness—tomorrow's readiness. Investing in modernization is necessary to prepare our homeland defenses for existing threats and anticipated threats for tomorrow. We understand that hard decisions must still be made, which require some significant risk-taking at levels we might not be used to shouldering. The committee, the Department of Defense, and the Air Force share the tough decisions and risks. We will work collectively across the Department of Defense and look forward to the continued partnership with this committee and this Congress to accurately assess the impact of our decisions and to deliberately assume and mitigate risks accordingly.

On behalf of the 689,000 Total Force Airmen and their families, thank you for helping us optimize and ready our force to defend this great Nation.

General David W. Allvin

Gen. David W. Allvin is the Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force, Arlington, Virginia. As Vice Chief, he presides over the Air Staff and serves as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Requirements Oversight Council and Deputy Advisory Working Group. He assists the Chief of Staff with organizing, training and equipping of 689,000 active-duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian forces serving in the United States and overseas.

Gen. Allvin graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1986. He has commanded at the squadron and wing levels, including the 97th Air Mobility Wing, Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma. He has held major command staff assignments and served on the Joint Staff.

Gen. Allvin served as Commanding General, NATO Air Training Command – Afghanistan; Commander, 438th Air Expeditionary Wing, Kabul, Afghanistan; Commander, 618th Air and Space Operations Center; Director, Strategy, Concepts and Assessments; Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Plans and Requirements, Headquarters, U.S. Air Force and Director, Strategy, Plans and Policy, Headquarters U.S. European Command; and as Vice Director, Strategy, Plans and Policy, the Joint Staff. Prior to his current assignment, he was Director for Strategy, Plans, and Policy, J-5, Joint Staff.

Gen. Allvin is a command pilot with more than 4,600 hours in more than 30 aircraft models, including 800 flight test hours.

EDUCATION
1986 Bachelor of Science, Astronautical Engineering, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.
1989 Master of Science, Management, Troy State University, Troy, Ala.
1992 Distinguished Graduate, Squadron Officer School, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.
1998 Distinguished Graduate, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
1999 Master of Airpower Art and Science, School of Advanced Airpower Studies, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2000 Air War College, Maxwell AFB, Ala., by correspondence
2004 Distinguished Graduate, Master of Science, National Security Strategy, National War College, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.
2006 Executive Leadership Seminar, Smeal Business College, Pennsylvania State University, College Park
2008 Program for Senior Managers in National Security, The George Washington University, Washington, D.C.
2008 Air Force Enterprise Leadership Seminar, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
2009 Program for Senior Executive Fellows, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.
2010 Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations, New York City, N.Y.
2013 Combined Force Air Component Commander Course, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2014 Joint Flag Officer Warfighting Course, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2020 Leadership at the Peak, Center for Creative Leadership, Colorado Springs, Colo.

ASSIGNMENTS
June 1986–August 1987, Student, Undergraduate Pilot Training, 82nd Student Squadron, Williams Air Force Base, Ariz.
November 1987–August 1990, C-12F Copilot, Aircraft Commander, Instructor Pilot and Flight Examiner, 58th Military Airlift Squadron, Ramstein Air Base, Germany
August 1990–June 1993, C-141B Copilot, Aircraft Commander, Instructor Pilot and Flight Examiner, 36th Military Airlift Squadron, McChord AFB, Wash.
June 1993–June 1994, Student, U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School, Edwards AFB, Calif.
June 1994–July 1997, C-17 Globemaster III and C-130J Super Hercules Experimental Test Pilot, Flight Commander, Flight Examiner and Assistant Operations Officer, 418th Flight Test Squadron, Edwards AFB, Calif.
August 1997–June 1998, Student, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
July 1998–June 1999, Student, School of Advanced Airpower Studies, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

June 1999–April 2001, Assistant Chief, Commander's Action Group, Headquarters Air Mobility Command, Scott AFB, Ill.
April 2001–June 2003, Commander, 905th Air Refueling Squadron, Grand Forks AFB, N.D.
June 2003–June 2004, Student, National War College, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.
June 2004–June 2005, Chief, Organizational Policy Branch, Policy Division, Joint Staff, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
June 2005–April 2006, Special Assistant to the Director, Joint Staff, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
May 2006–July 2007, Vice Commander, 12th Flying Training Wing, Randolph AFB, Texas
August 2007–July 2009, Commander, 97th Air Mobility Wing, Altus AFB, Okla.
August 2009–August 2010, Senior Air Force Fellow, Council on Foreign Relations, New York City, N.Y.
September 2010–August 2011, Commanding General, NATO Air Training Command - Afghanistan, NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan/Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, and Commander, 438th Air Expeditionary Wing, Kabul, Afghanistan
September 2011–April 2012, Vice Commander, 618th Tanker Airlift Control Center, Scott AFB, Ill.
April 2012–June 2013, Commander, 618th Air and Space Operations Center (Tanker Airlift Control Center), Scott AFB, Ill.
June 2013–September 2014, Director, Air Force Strategic Planning, Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Plans and Programs, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
October 2014–August 2015, Director, Strategy, Concepts, and Assessments, Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Plans and Requirements, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
August 2015–July 2018, Director, Strategy and Policy, Headquarters U.S. European Command, Stuttgart-Vaihingen, Germany
August 2018–January 2019, Vice Director, Strategy, Plans, and Policy (J-5), Joint Staff, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
January 2019–November 2020, Director for Strategy, Plans, and Policy, J-5, Joint Staff; and Senior Member, United States Delegation to the United Nations Military Staff Committee, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.
November 2020–present, Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va.

SUMMARY OF JOINT ASSIGNMENTS
June 2004–June 2005, Chief, Organizational Policy Branch, Policy Division, Joint Staff, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va., as a lieutenant colonel then
June 2005–April 2006, Special Assistant to the Director, Joint Staff, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va., as a colonel
September 2010–August 2011, Commanding General, NATO Air Training Command - Afghanistan, NATO Training Mission-Afghanistan/Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, and Commander, 438th Air Expeditionary Wing, Kabul, Afghanistan, as a brigadier general
August 2015–July 2018, Director, Strategy and Policy, Headquarters U.S. European Command, Stuttgart-Vaihingen, Germany, as a major general
August 2018–January 2019, Vice Director, Strategy, Plans, and Policy (J-5), Joint Staff, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va., as a major general
January 2019–November 2020, Director for Strategy, Plans, and Policy, J-5, Joint Staff; and Senior Member, United States Delegation to the United Nations Military Staff Committee, the Pentagon, Arlington, Va., as a lieutenant general

FLIGHT INFORMATION
Rating: command pilot
Flight hours: more than 4,600
Aircraft flown: C-12F, C-141A/B, KC-135R/T, C-17, C-130, C-130J, C-23, F-15, F-16 and T-38

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS
Defense Distinguished Service Medal
Defense Superior Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters
Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster
Bronze Star Medal
Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters
Air Medal with oak leaf cluster
Aerial Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster

Joint Service Commendation Medal
Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters
NATO Meritorious Service Medal
Non-Article 5 NATO Medal (International Security Assistance Force)

PUBLICATIONS
"Paradigm Lost: Rethinking Theater Airlift to Support the Army After Next," Cadre Papers, Sept. 9, 2000

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION
Second Lieutenant May 28, 1986
First Lieutenant May 28, 1988
Captain May 28, 1990
Major Aug. 1, 1996
Lieutenant Colonel May 1, 2000
Colonel July 1, 2005
Brigadier General Sept. 2, 2010
Major General July 26, 2013
Lieutenant General Jan. 31, 2019
General Nov.12, 2020

(Current as of November 2020)

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED
BY THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
UNITED STATES SPACE FORCE

PRESENTATION TO THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2024 U.S. Space Force Budget Request for Military Readiness

STATEMENT OF: General David D. Thompson, Vice Chief of Space Operations
United States Space Force

19 April 2023

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED
BY THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Waltz; Ranking Member Garamendi; distinguished members of the subcommittee; thank you for another opportunity to testify on the current status of, and future plans for, the readiness of the U.S. Space Force. On behalf of the Secretary of the Air Force, the Honorable Frank Kendall, and the Chief of Space Operations (CSO), General Saltzman, I continue to appreciate this subcommittee's strong support as we develop and sustain the ready space forces our nation requires.

Space is a unique domain that is not only fundamental to our national security, but to our very way of life. And yet, the space domain has dramatically shifted to a contested environment, where our potential adversaries are increasingly active, aggressive, and disruptive. As a result, Congress created the Space Force to better protect our national interests and directed that it be organized, trained, and equipped to: (1) provide the United States freedom of operation in, from, and to space, (2) conduct prompt and sustained space operations, and (3) protect US interests in space.

However, our competitors continue to rapidly field space capabilities that threaten the United States' freedom of action and national security. While the world has witnessed the destructive and irresponsible nature of some of these threats, to include direct-ascent antisatellite tests, potential adversaries' daily activities in the space domain endanger and imperil our national security. To effectively support a comprehensive approach to integrated deterrence, the Space Force's lean and agile force posture must be prepared to respond, as necessary, to defeat such hostile activity. Simply put, to retain and improve U.S. advantages in the space domain, we must field the most resilient, effective, and ready space forces across the globe.

Readiness is ensuring our forces have the tools, training, and manpower to accomplish their critical functions. The Space Force is ultimately responsible for ensuring our Guardians are ready to accomplish their missions in an increasingly complex, congested, and contested environment. To meet that task, it is imperative that our force design, readiness standards, and test and training infrastructure adequately prepare our forces for the challenges they face today and are likely to face in the future.

While the Space Force has made significant progress over the past three years, there is still more we must accomplish. On November 22, 2022, the CSO outlined three lines of effort to ensure that the Space Force maintains urgency and momentum in the progress we have made over the past three years:

- ***Field Combat-Ready Forces*** so that the Space Force has the personnel, training, and equipment required to prevail in a fight.
- ***Amplify the Guardian Spirit*** so that the Space Force attracts, develops, inspires, empowers, and retains individuals who thrive in our organization and under our values.
- ***Partner to Win*** so that the Space Force can collaborate with mission partners to accomplish our critical set of roles and functions.

Underpinning these lines of effort is the critical need to be ready for the high-end fight. We need to deliver and field the forces and capabilities necessary to adequately deter and ultimately dominate potential adversaries.

DELIVERING SPACE FORCE READINESS

More Resilient and Effective Space Capabilities
As the CSO recently testified, the Space Force is accelerating its pivot towards resilient satellite constellations, ground stations, networks, and data links; informed by transformational force design analysis. Space Force readiness, and the Department's broader integrated deterrence emphasis, ultimately

demands resilient space systems and capabilities that effectively deter both on-orbit and terrestrial threats. As such, most of the Space Force's on-orbit assets must be proliferated, disaggregated, and distributed.

Through effective and efficient proliferation, the Space Force will not only ensure enduring access to space capabilities, but it will also disincentivize and deter targeted aggression. The President's Fiscal Year 2024 (FY) budget request demonstrates the Department's significant, analytically-informed . investments in resilient systems. Planned upgrades include military Missile Warning, Missile Tracking, Space Data Transport, Command, Control, Communications, Battle Management (C3BM) systems, and space-based targeting proliferated architecture that will be more resilient during a strategic attack.

As always, the Space Force will continue to work closely with DoD and Intelligence Community stakeholders, as well as our allied and commercial partners, to develop and deliver a digital engineering ecosystem that enables the Space Force to rapidly mature innovative concepts into integrated solutions and deliver warfighting capabilities faster.

Force Design
A key element of readiness are the capabilities inherent in the systems the Space Force uses to execute its missions. The Space Force, primarily through the Space Warfighting Analysis Center (SWAC), executes a force design process intended to assess future capabilities through the lens of operational need, counter-space threat, and cost.

Additionally, in implementing the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022, the Secretary of Defense designated the CSO as the Force Design Architect for Space Systems of the Armed Forces. In this new role, the CSO presents the Secretary of Defense with coordinated space-mission force design recommendations for the Armed Forces. Such recommendations are informed by high-fidelity modeling and analysis which balance warfighting performance, resilience against peer adversaries, and affordability. Recommendations include a transition plan to position the Department to make programmatic and budgetary decisions related to science and technology investments, force development, and acquisition. Current force design priorities are space data transport and tactical targeting – both of which are vital to prevailing in peer-to-peer conflicts.

Operational Test and Training Infrastructure
At its very core, Space Force readiness requires our systems and operators to be ready for the full spectrum of operations in a contested space domain. And while our organizational structures and processes increase our ability to assess and sustain readiness levels, the Space Force needs an appropriate infrastructure to adequately conduct test and evaluation, advanced training, and tactics development activities against a thinking adversary to effectively deliver readiness generation.

When I last testified before this subcommittee, I described the Space Force's operating concept and core elements of its Operational Test and Training Infrastructure (OTTI). OTTI is an "umbrella" term, describing a collection of distributed, enterprise-wide test and training systems and processes, effectively integrated and synchronized to establish and sustain combat readiness across the spectrum of conflict. It aggregates multiple program elements and their associated activities, programs, capabilities, and funding.

The Space Force's current OTTI is a loose federation of systems that build proficiency and procedural currency for a benign environment – it does not build warfighting capacity demanded by the current and emerging strategic environment. The Space Force does not yet have the ability to present realistic threat-stimuli to missions specific trainers; conduct integrated – both intra-service and joint – training; or visualize and "experience" the domain.

That said, Congress's strong support for Space Force's OTTI efforts has greatly accelerated these priorities, and the Space Force continues to make significant strides in developing and implementing its planned OTTI architecture, governance structure, and resourcing strategy, which is appropriately reflected in the President's FY 2024 budget request and in the Department's Future Years Defense Program.

Readiness and Training
The Space Force continues to prioritize and advance our updated readiness, training, and force generation initiatives. The new Space Force Generation model, SPAFORGEN, reached Initial Operational Capability on October 1, 2022, and cycles Guardians through three phases to increase individual and overall force readiness. The "Prepare" and "Ready" phases afford Guardians with the time and capacity for training to develop the tools, skills, and capabilities necessary for mission execution in a contested domain against a thinking adversary. This includes both operational procedures and high-end training to certify forces for contested operations in space.

As part of SPAFORGEN, Space Training and Readiness Command (STARCOM) is making great strides to prepare space forces to prevail in competition and conflict through innovative education, training, doctrine, and testing. Last August, STARCOM completed the first and largest to-date of a new series of exercises that included both live and simulated events to test combat tactics of our Total Force including both Guardians and Air National Guard space professionals. As we move forward, STARCOM will continue to increase space-related content and engagement for Guardians in Basic Military Training (BMT); Non-Commissioned Officer Academy; United States Air Force Academy; Officer Training School (OTS); and Reserve Officer Training Corps.

Force Presentation to Combatant Commands
The Space Force presents space capabilities that underpin all instruments of our national power. Pursuant to law, the Space Force retains the responsibility to organize, train, and equip space forces. To that end, the Space Force generates and presents ready space forces to Combatant Commands to deter threats and, if necessary, prevail in conflict.

Our SPAFORGEN model ensures that forces presented to Combatant Commands can execute missions and tasks and are equipped to make appropriate recommendations on the effective employment, task organization, operational synchronization, and command relationships of space forces. Unlike the previous force generation model, the new approach packages forces into optimized capabilities-based elements and standardizes the way we present forces to the Combatant Commanders.
To ensure full integration and synchronization of space activities with other domains in combatant commands' areas of responsibility in 2022, the Space Force activated three new component field commands for U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. Central Command, and U.S. Forces Korea. Component field command Guardians provide space planning and employment expertise, as well as command and control for the combatant commanders.

Unit/Mission Transfers
In accordance with existing statute and congressional intent, the DoD continues to transfer fully mission-capable space operational units, support equipment, property, and related resources from other services and organizations to the Space Force with no mission degradation or adverse personnel impact.

In FY 2022, the US Army transferred its Satellite Payload, Planning, Management, & Control function, which included five Wideband Satellite Communications Operations Centers, four Regional Satellite Communications Support Centers, Consolidated Satellite Communication Systems Experts, and 502 associated manpower authorizations (302 military/200 civilian). The transfer of this function and

associated resources is directly in line with the USSF Military Satellite Communications mission.

Additionally, in accordance with Title 10, United States Code, Section 9086, the DoD successfully transferred the Space Development Agency (SDA) to the Space Force. The Space Force continues to ensure SDA's seamless integration within the service and remains steadfast in its commitment to ensure adequate resourcing and manning.

Looking forward, in FY 2024, the United States Army intends to transfer its Theater Missile Warning Battlespace Characterization (TMW-BC) functions, including four Joint Tactical Ground Station (JTAGS) locations (Osan, Misawa, Al Udeid, Sigonella), one skill qualification Training Suite, the JTAGS Product Office (JPO), and 97 associated manpower positions to the Space Force. The transfer of this function and associated resources is directly associated with the Space Force's Missile Warning mission. The Space Force already operates the Space Based Infrared System constellation and Strategic Missile Warning ground infrastructure; adding the Theater Missile Warning function will consolidate global Missile Warning under one military Service.

Integration with Allies and Partners
Allies and Partners represent a significant advantage for the United States. Our strategic competitors do not have the potential for establishing the coalitions and cooperation that the U.S. can establish. This is especially true in the space domain. The Space Force continuously engages with our allied and partner spacefaring nations to guarantee shared military, civil, and industrial success in space. Especially as our competitors continue to demonstrate reckless and dangerous actions within the space domain, it remains imperative to deepen our existing ties with allies and partners to maintain space stability. As the CSO has stated, spacepower is a collective endeavor, and the Space Force is prioritizing partnerships most likely to deliver combat ready forces and capability to allow the United States and our allies to deter or prevail in a fight.

The Space Force is executing the CSO's Partner to Win Line of Effort which states we cannot succeed without robust joint, coalition, international, interagency, academic, and commercial partnerships. We are striving to eliminate barriers to collaboration in any form, to include over classification and incompatible systems. The Space Force must also prioritize direct collaboration and placing Guardians in positions where such collaboration can organically strengthen. To that end, in January 2023 the Space Force published its Guidance for Global Partnerships, which directs the service and all its components to evolve from data-sharing agreements to operations integration, payload sharing, and mission sharing, where appropriate. Further, the Space Force continues to lead international Space Engagement Talks, and efforts to share our force design analysis, which are identifying focused resource commitments that allow trusted partners to share the burden of delivering combat-ready space forces and the spectrum of worldwide capabilities.

Weapon System Sustainment
Space Force Weapon System Sustainment directly supports the Space Force's ability to sustain the day-to-day readiness of 52 weapon systems performing Space missions, to include Sensing, Navigation, Satellite Communications, Space Domain Awareness, Battlefield Command & Control, and Space Control. The President's FY 2024 budget request supports missions to provide space capabilities to the joint force while balancing Service priorities and managing risk. This position takes a predictive planning and proactive approach to mitigating obsolescence as our future requirements continue to grow due to increasing costs for hardware, software, and cybersecurity maintenance driven by aging space systems.

Facilities and Infrastructure Investment
Space Force Facility, Restoration, and Modernization and Military Construction total obligation authority enables the Service to prioritize requirements to reduce risk to mission and the force. Structural, electrical, and power improvements to operational facilities reduces risk to mission and enables our joint and coalition partners in the fight, while quality of life infrastructure and facility improvements reduce risk to the force by improving resiliency amongst our Guardians, Airmen and their families. The Space Force derives almost all of its support from the Air Force, including logistics, security, medical services and human resources; however, the Space Force's ability to prioritize its unique requirements at our 14 installations, more than 70 sites, and other geographically separated units ensures we appropriately align responsibility, resources, accountability and authorities for the Space Force to execute its assigned missions as an independent service.

The Space Force's top installation priorities include sustaining critical facilities and infrastructure that enable the full spectrum of missions—from launch and command and control to post-launch and into the operational phase of sustaining 52 Space Force Weapons Systems.

The President's FY 2024 budget request reflects an increase from last year due to the Service prioritizing projects that reduce risk to Space and Combatant Command missions at Pituffik Space Base, and the Eastern and Western Ranges to support Assured Access to Space. Moving forward, the Space Force will continue to prioritize projects that increase facility and infrastructure resiliency and Service readiness.

THE GUARDIAN IDEAL AND PROGRESS TO A DIGITAL SERVICE

Talent Management
The Space Force continues to shape the Guardian experience and foster an organizational culture that empowers exercising mission command to secure American interests in space and contributing our unique space domain expertise in joint operations. The Space Force is setting the foundation to achieve the tenets of the Guardian Spirit, through the Space Force's human capital multi-pronged approach. First, through building a competency-based requirement system and inventorying all competencies and levels of mastery for each Guardian, the Space Force can make informed and connected development and assignment decisions, leading to greater Guardian involvement in their careers and greater mission accomplishment. Additionally, while we continue to develop a new performance appraisal system to focus on contribution to the team and mission, including multi-sourced input where appropriate, we are implementing a Guardian-centric bridging strategy for evaluations tying our values to mission accomplishment.

The Space Force will shift from managing people within prescribed career fields to managing positions based on the competencies and experiences needed to succeed. For instance, we have implemented beta test for aligning competencies and levels of mastery to requirements, and as part of managing talent, we conducted our first development team event for Master Sergeants bringing all Senior Non-Commissioned Officers in line with this concept. Eligible Guardians were able to self-nominate for critical positions and state their career desires, and commanders provided recommendations for each eligible Guardian as well. During the event, key enlisted leaders assessed each Guardian's demonstrated performance, the Guardian's potential, the best interest for the Guardian, their families, and the best interest of the service to match Guardians to key leadership and developmental positions. The inclusion of the Guardian's voice enables transparent choice architecture across the enterprise to meet both personal strengths and service needs.

Further, the USSF is in the process of establishing intermediate-level education and senior-level education programs in collaboration with a private university, culminating in a Master of International Public Policy degree starting in Summer 2023. The programs are being designed to meet service and joint professional

military education requirements and will be offered to USSF and sister service officers and civilians as well as international and interagency partners. This approach allows the Space Force to tailor its education for leaders for unique space related issues and establish a mechanism, whereby Guardians earn a degree from a recognized private university. The collaboration will enable greater capacity to offer STEM electives, opportunities for laboratory research, and increased access to a wider range of commercial space sector engagements along with the traditional elements of joint professional military education.

We expect leaders at every level to take bold, purpose-driven, and data-informed actions, while making full use of their team's diverse abilities to overcome challenges to accomplish our mission as set forth in the National Defense Strategy.

Space Digital Workforce
Because of its highly technical nature, the Space Force requires a workforce that retains the digital fluency to rapidly turn data into useful insights to accelerate innovation of operational and business activities. Digital aptitude remains essential to help lead the transformation to becoming an interconnected, innovative, digitally-dominant force in order to deter and defeat threats to space operations. To help achieve this goal, the Space Force continues to provide Digital University access to every Space Force member, including civilians, which incorporates curated digital content designed to establish a foundational level of fluency on modern digital topics.

The Space Force remains on the forefront of digital transformation to meet demand for existing and emerging need. The President's FY 2024 budget request builds upon our previous investments and sustains our commitment to creating a space digital workforce capable of meeting our joint warfighter requirements. To this end, the Space Force will continue to build a cadre of organic software coders to streamline software development and promote the adoption of software technology that will prove instrumental to Space Force operations, testing, and training.

THE WAY AHEAD

The rich history of America's space endeavors is defined by determination, persistence, and willingness to innovate. Now is the time to invest in accelerating such innovation and deter those who seek to disrupt such endeavors. We will not cede our unfettered access to the space domain.

In that effort, the Space Force will continue to prioritize readiness in all capacities. We need to ensure that we field the greatest fighting force, systems, and capabilities necessary to deter potential adversaries from acts of aggression and, if necessary, defeat them in conflict. Our innovative approaches to individual and enterprise-wide readiness will sustain our advantage in space and allow our Nation to pursue groundbreaking civil, military, and commercial capabilities.

As our potential adversaries, particularly China and Russia, continue to make significant space-related advances that broadly threaten our freedom of movement, maintaining space readiness has never been more critical. Antisatellite tests, hypersonic and maneuverable missile demonstrations, and a host of other dangerous and irresponsible behaviors require the Space Force to aggressively deploy effective deterrence mechanisms – including a resilient, reliable, and effective set of space capabilities.

To reiterate, the Space Force's overall readiness depends wholly on our people, equipment, and training. By retaining the optimal quantity and mix of personnel; fielding and protecting the right systems; and deploying basic, advanced, and continuous full-spectrum training, the Space Force will sustain the resilient, effective, and ready force our Nation requires.

Thank you for your continued leadership and support for the Space Force and our Guardians, and I look forward to working with this committee.

General David D. Thompson

General David D. Thompson is the Vice Chief of Space Operations, United States Space Force. As Vice Chief he is responsible for assisting the Chief of Space Operations in organizing, training and equipping space forces in the United States and overseas, integrating space policy and guidance, and coordinating space-related activities for the U.S. Space Force and Department of the Air Force.

The U.S. Space Force organizes, trains, equips and maintains mission-ready space forces that provide missile warning, space domain awareness, positioning, navigation and timing, communications and space electronic warfare for North American Aerospace Defense Command, U.S. Strategic Command, U.S. Space Command and other combatant commands.

General Thompson was commissioned in 1985 as a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy. He is a career space officer with assignments in operations, acquisition, research and development and academia. Gen. Thompson has commanded operational space units at the squadron, group, and wing levels; he is also an Olmsted Scholar, graduate of the Senior Acquisition Course and Level III- Certified Program Manager. Prior to his assignment as Vice Chief of Space Operations, Gen. Thompson was the Vice Commander, U.S. Space Force.

EDUCATION

1985 Bachelor of Science, Astronautical Engineering, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colo.
1989 Master of Science, Aeronautics and Astronautics, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind.
1990 Squadron Officer School, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala.
1993 Olmsted Scholar, Johannes Kepler University, Linz, Austria
1998 Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2000 Advanced Program Managers Course, Defense Systems Management College, Fort Belvoir, Va.
2001 Air War College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
2005 Master of Science, National Security Industrial Policy, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.
2005 Senior Acquisition Course, National Defense University, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.

ASSIGNMENTS

July 1985–May 1988, Experimental Rocket Propulsion Engineer and Chief, Motor/ Component Operations Section, Air Force Rocket Propulsion Laboratory, Edwards Air Force Base, Calif.
June 1988–July 1989, Graduate Student, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Ind.
August 1989-October 1992, Instructor of Astronautics, Assistant Professor and Executive Officer, Department of Astronautics, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colo.
October 1992–May 1993, Student, Defense Language Institute, Presidio of Monterey, Calif.
June 1993–July 1995, Olmsted Scholar, Johannes Kepler University, Linz, Austria
August 1995–July 1997, Program Manager, Advanced MILSATCOM Program, MILSATCOM Joint Program Office, Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles AFB, Calif.
August 1997–June 1998, Student, Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
July 1998–August 2000, Spacelift Requirements Officer and Chief, Spacelift Vehicle Requirements Branch, Headquarters Air Force Space Command, Peterson AFB, Colorado Springs, Colo.
September 2000–April 2002, Deputy Director, Commander's Action Group, Headquarters Air Force Space Command, Peterson AFB, Colo.
June 2002–July 2004, Operations Officer and Commander, 2nd Space Launch Squadron, Vandenberg AFB, Calif.
August 2004–June 2005, Student, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.
June 2005–July 2007, Commander, 45th Operations Group, Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, Fla.
July 2007–May 2009, Commander, Aerospace Data Facility - Colorado, Buckley AFB, Colo.
June 2009–June 2010, Director of Space Forces, U.S. Air Forces Central Command, Southwest Asia
July 2010–May 2011, Vice Commander, U.S. Air Force Warfare Center, Nellis AFB, Nev.
May 2011–March 2012, Director of Air, Space and Cyberspace Operations, Air Force Space Command,

Peterson AFB, Colo.
March 2012–January 2014, Deputy Director of Global Operations, U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt AFB, Neb.
January 2014–June 2015, Director of Plans and Policy, U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt AFB, Neb.
July 2015–July 2017, Vice Commander, Air Force Space Command, Peterson AFB, Colo.
July 2017–April 2018, Special Assistant to the Commander, Air Force Space Command, Peterson AFB, Colo.
April 2018–December 2019, Vice Commander, Air Force Space Command, Washington, D.C.
December 2019–September 2020, Vice Commander, U.S. Space Force, Washington, D.C.
October 2020–present, Vice Chief of Space Operations, U.S. Space Force, Washington, D.C.

SUMMARY OF JOINT ASSIGNMENTS
July 2007–May 2009, Commander, Aerospace Data Facility - Colorado, Buckley Air Force Base, Colo., as a colonel
March 2012–January 2014, Deputy Director of Global Operations (DJ3), U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt AFB, Neb., as a brigadier general and major general
January 2014–June 2015, Director of Plans and Policy (J5), U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt AFB, Neb., as a major general

BADGES
Command Space Operations Badge
Parachutist Badge
Master Acquisition Badge
Missile Maintenance Badge

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS
Defense Superior Service Medal with oak leaf cluster
Legion of Merit
Bronze Star Medal
Defense Meritorious Service Medal
Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters
Air Force Commendation Medal
Air Force Achievement Medal with two oak leaf clusters

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS
2006 Outstanding Space Operations Crew, Air Force Association
2009 National Reconnaissance Office Gold Medal
2012 General Jerome F. O'Malley Distinguished Space Leadership Award, Air Force Association
2018 Peter B. Teets Government Award, National Defense Industrial Association
2019 Space Leadership Award, Federation of Galaxy Explorers
2019 Outstanding Aerospace Engineer, Purdue University

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION
Second Lieutenant May 29, 1985
First Lieutenant May 29, 1987
Captain May 29, 1989
Major Aug. 1, 1996
Lieutenant Colonel May 1, 2000
Colonel Aug. 1, 2004
Brigadier General June 18, 2010
Major General Oct. 10, 2013
Lieutenant General April 4, 2018
General Oct. 1, 2020

(Current as of October 2020)

WITNESS RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ASKED DURING THE HEARING

APRIL 19, 2023

RESPONSE TO QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. GIMENEZ

General GEORGE. The Army is not actively pursuing a large contract purchase of Lenovo computers. As of April 24, 2023, Army Cyber Command reported 1,840 out of 735,105 systems on the unclassified system were Lenovo, and 316 systems out of 35,448 on the secret network were Lenovo. Under current authorities, policies, and regulations, Lenovo is not a prohibited source.

Army Cyber Command is providing direction to commands and organizations to provide a holistic understanding of security risks and operational impact regarding the Lenovo systems currently on Army networks. The Army understands the importance of the potential security threat and will ensure a comprehensive review. [See page 19.]

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MEMBERS POST HEARING

APRIL 19, 2023

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. ROGERS

Mr. ROGERS. According to the Department, DOD is the third largest city in the United States with 3.2 million people—placing it behind Los Angeles and New York City and ahead of Chicago. From an emergency services perspective, DOD manages 150,000 first responders, 220 public safety answering points (PSAPs), and 1500 operators across 4200 installations. As you may be aware, states and communities are rapidly transitioning from outdated, analog 9–1–1 systems to Next Generation 9–1–1 (NG911) which will "enhance emergency number services to create a faster, more resilient system that allows voice, photos, videos and text messages to flow seamlessly from the public to the 911 network while also improving public safety answering points' ability to help manage call overload, natural disasters and transfer of 911 calls based on caller location data." According to the 2020 National 911 Progress Report, 12 states have fully implemented NG911 while 9 are rapidly approaching that threshold. However, DOD, whose installations are connected to the surrounding communities, is not transitioning to NG911 at the same rate. As a recent Institute for Defense Analyses report highlighted, "NG911 is both an operational requirement and a strategic capability supporting multiple missions." Migrating to NG911 will enhance "capabilities to save lives and protect property" and will have a "direct, positive impact on several mission areas including Public Safety, Emergency Management, Force Protection, Anti-Terrorism, Mission Assurance, and Critical Infrastructure Protection." Failure to migrate to NG911 in a timely manner will turn installations into islands unable to coordinate with local partners and leverage modern technology. As IDA concluded, "This situation is likely to result in higher risk to life and property, and degraded capabilities to fulfill safety obligations to their military personnel and under the numerous mutual aid agreements in place today."

Questions: 1. Does DOD have a detailed NG911 rollout plan? If so, please provide. 2. Specifically, what is the timeline associated with the plan? 3. Does it include individual installations? 4. What budgetary resources are needed to fulfill the plan? 5. What budgetary resources are needed to implement NG911 at all DOD installations? When will this be completed? 6. Are any installations currently fully NG911 operational? If so, which ones?

General GEORGE. Answer 1: In order to comply with federal laws (e.g. the Ray Baum Act) and national standards, the Army has a fiscal year (FY) 2025 plan to roll out Next Generation 911 (NG 911) as one of the five interoperable Public Safety Communications (PSC) capabilities that make up the Base Emergency Communications System (BECS). BECS will modernize the Army's PSC and will increase interoperability between first responders and mutual aid partners. It will provide them with the ability to send, receive, and exchange information, data, imagery, and video, thus enhancing the protection of life, health, and safety on Army installations.

Background: On September 30, 2022, the Army approved the BECS Capabilities Development Document, codifying BECS as an Army Program of Record. Subsequently, on February 16, 2023, the Army identified the Program Executive Office Enterprise Information Systems to lead the BECS acquisition program for the Army.

Answer 2: The Army has already initiated its NG 911 incremental implementation with the voice modernization project which improves networks, voice, and data capabilities across our installations. Concurrently, the geographic information system upgrades incorporate residential addressing and mapping on Army installations. The FY 2025 comprehensive BECS acquisition strategy will begin with NG 911 implementation at a rate of five to ten installations per year. Ultimately, the pace at which the Army can transition to NG 911 is contingent upon its ability to: 1) fully resource the requirement; and 2) maintain synchronicity between the Department of Defense (DOD), states, and our installation migration plans.

Answer 3: The BECS Capabilities Development Document estimates 93 Army installations will require NG 911.

Answer 4/5: The Army NG 911 implementation and sustainment plan spans 12 years (FY 2025–FY 2036) and estimates a cost of ~$18 million annually across 93 installations, totaling approximately $216 million.

Answer 6: No Army installations are NG 911 fully operational at this time.

Mr. ROGERS. According to the Department, DOD is the third largest city in the United States with 3.2 million people—placing it behind Los Angeles and New York City and ahead of Chicago. From an emergency services perspective, DOD manages 150,000 first responders, 220 public safety answering points (PSAPs), and 1500 operators across 4200 installations. As you may be aware, states and communities are rapidly transitioning from outdated, analog 9–1–1 systems to Next Generation 9–1–1 (NG911) which will "enhance emergency number services to create a faster, more resilient system that allows voice, photos, videos and text messages to flow seamlessly from the public to the 911 network while also improving public safety answering points' ability to help manage call overload, natural disasters and transfer of 911 calls based on caller location data." According to the 2020 National 911 Progress Report, 12 states have fully implemented NG911 while 9 are rapidly approaching that threshold. However, DOD, whose installations are connected to the surrounding communities, is not transitioning to NG911 at the same rate. As a recent Institute for Defense Analyses report highlighted, "NG911 is both an operational requirement and a strategic capability supporting multiple missions." Migrating to NG911 will enhance "capabilities to save lives and protect property" and will have a "direct, positive impact on several mission areas including Public Safety, Emergency Management, Force Protection, Anti-Terrorism, Mission Assurance, and Critical Infrastructure Protection." Failure to migrate to NG911 in a timely manner will turn installations into islands unable to coordinate with local partners and leverage modern technology. As IDA concluded, "This situation is likely to result in higher risk to life and property, and degraded capabilities to fulfill safety obligations to their military personnel and under the numerous mutual aid agreements in place today."

Questions: 1. Does DOD have a detailed NG911 rollout plan? If so, please provide. 2. Specifically, what is the timeline associated with the plan? 3. Does it include individual installations? 4. What budgetary resources are needed to fulfill the plan? 5. What budgetary resources are needed to implement NG911 at all DOD installations? When will this be completed? 6. Are any installations currently fully NG911 operational? If so, which ones?

Admiral FRANCHETTI. 1. The Navy is in the process of modernizing information systems to include transition to internet protocol services (IP). In 2015, the Navy awarded a contract to AT&T Government Services to establish private IP networks to be used to route 911 calls originating from existing Navy End Office TDM telephone switches, to deliver them to one of seven regional 911 dispatch centers in the United States and Guam. The Navy is working closely with the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA), the lead DOD agent, in implementing modernized solutions that take advantage of the latest technologies while ensuring the solutions maintain the integrity and security of the networks employed by DOD.

2. The Navy is working closely with the Defense Information Systems Agency (DISA) on the modernizations solutions and strategy to achieve a cohesive 911 operating system, while maintaining the integrity and security of Navy networks.

3. Should the Navy invest in upgrading its installation telephony and switching infrastructure, we will make a phased investment that includes individual installations.

4. All of the Navy's Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP), public safety networks, and telephone infrastructure will require significant investment to attain compliance with applicable laws. This improvement will eliminate dependency on the third-party commercial service providers which are not providing compliant NG911 solutions and carry cybersecurity non-compliance risk if used for NG911 in its current configuration. Naval Information Warfare Center (NIWC) Atlantic has completed the design and cost estimates for implementing Location Information Servers (LIS) with the Navy Voice-Over-IP (VoIP) upgrades. The final plan from N2N6 will inform resource requirements.

5. Budgetary resources are required to upgrade the telephony and switching infrastructure. There is no estimated completion date. Navy seeks to balance the requirements for facility investment with the requirements for continued investment in quality of life/quality of service and operational readiness of the fleet.

6. No Navy installations are fully NG911 operational.

Mr. ROGERS. According to the Department, DOD is the third largest city in the United States with 3.2 million people—placing it behind Los Angeles and New York City and ahead of Chicago. From an emergency services perspective, DOD manages 150,000 first responders, 220 public safety answering points (PSAPs), and 1500 op-

erators across 4200 installations. As you may be aware, states and communities are rapidly transitioning from outdated, analog 9–1–1 systems to Next Generation 9–1–1 (NG911) which will "enhance emergency number services to create a faster, more resilient system that allows voice, photos, videos and text messages to flow seamlessly from the public to the 911 network while also improving public safety answering points' ability to help manage call overload, natural disasters and transfer of 911 calls based on caller location data." According to the 2020 National 911 Progress Report, 12 states have fully implemented NG911 while 9 are rapidly approaching that threshold. However, DOD, whose installations are connected to the surrounding communities, is not transitioning to NG911 at the same rate. As a recent Institute for Defense Analyses report highlighted, "NG911 is both an operational requirement and a strategic capability supporting multiple missions." Migrating to NG911 will enhance "capabilities to save lives and protect property" and will have a "direct, positive impact on several mission areas including Public Safety, Emergency Management, Force Protection, Anti-Terrorism, Mission Assurance, and Critical Infrastructure Protection." Failure to migrate to NG911 in a timely manner will turn installations into islands unable to coordinate with local partners and leverage modern technology. As IDA concluded, "This situation is likely to result in higher risk to life and property, and degraded capabilities to fulfill safety obligations to their military personnel and under the numerous mutual aid agreements in place today."

Questions: 1. Does DOD have a detailed NG911 rollout plan? If so, please provide. 2. Specifically, what is the timeline associated with the plan? 3. Does it include individual installations? 4. What budgetary resources are needed to fulfill the plan? 5. What budgetary resources are needed to implement NG911 at all DOD installations? When will this be completed? 6. Are any installations currently fully NG911 operational? If so, which ones?

General SMITH. The DOD Chief Information Office C3, supported by Defense Information Systems Agency's (DISA) Global Public Safety Communications Office is the executive agent for DOD Public Safety Communications. They have established four overarching levels of efforts to modernize DOD's Public Safety Communications, which includes Next Generation 9–1–1 (NG911), Next Generation Wireless, Public Safety Internet of Things (IoT), and Enterprise Mass Warning and Notification (EMWN). The Marine Corps is collaborating with DOD stakeholders to conduct technical reviews between Emergency Communications, Public Safety and its Title 10 Command and Control Communications to seek alignment each of these independently regulated communications capabilities into a single communications solution. The Marine Corps timeline is aligned with the DOD governance and funding timeline and will initiate planning actions in FY24 and across the FYDP. DOD's guidance includes development of Public Safety Communications policies and supporting technical requirements with State and local-level 9–1–1 authorities, identifying Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement requirements and aligning NG911 transition efforts.

DOD's Guidance for FY24–28 proposes a number of installations be modernized by fiscal year for each Component. The Marine Corps tentatively plans to transition 13 installations as follows: four in FY24 (MCLB Albany, MCAS Beaufort, MCAS Yuma, MCRD Parris Island), two in FY26 (MCB Camp Butler, MCAS Iwakuni) and seven in FY28 (MCAGCC Twentynine Palms, MCLB Barstow, MCB Camp Lejeune, MCB Camp Pendleton, MCAS Cherry Point, MCAS Miramar, MCB Quantico). Complex challenges, including the fast pace of State and local level transition plans, resourcing levels and DOD information technology architectures, impact the Marine Corps' timely to transition to NG911. The Marine Corps' overseas installations requirement to connect to Host Nation emergency and public safety communications infrastructure faces additional technical and political challenges. The Marine Corps identified NG911 funding requirement investment costs of $212M across the FYDP for procurement, operations and maintenance to support the material solution, system sustainment, and labor. Additional requirements (and costs) are being analyzed now to support Military Construction and Installation Communication infrastructure, which are necessary at several installations to eliminate legacy technologies and to implement an Internet Protocol (IP) technical solution that is fully interoperable and resilient with State/local and industry mission partners. The Marine Corps' current estimate is $212 million, comprised of $81.3M in labor and $130.7M for procurement of materiel. We currently expect deployment to occur over a seven-year period.

The Marine Corps currently does not have any installations that are fully NG911 operational.

Mr. ROGERS. According to the Department, DOD is the third largest city in the United States with 3.2 million people—placing it behind Los Angeles and New York

City and ahead of Chicago. From an emergency services perspective, DOD manages 150,000 first responders, 220 public safety answering points (PSAPs), and 1500 operators across 4200 installations. As you may be aware, states and communities are rapidly transitioning from outdated, analog 9–1–1 systems to Next Generation 9–1–1 (NG911) which will "enhance emergency number services to create a faster, more resilient system that allows voice, photos, videos and text messages to flow seamlessly from the public to the 911 network while also improving public safety answering points' ability to help manage call overload, natural disasters and transfer of 911 calls based on caller location data." According to the 2020 National 911 Progress Report, 12 states have fully implemented NG911 while 9 are rapidly approaching that threshold. However, DOD, whose installations are connected to the surrounding communities, is not transitioning to NG911 at the same rate. As a recent Institute for Defense Analyses report highlighted, "NG911 is both an operational requirement and a strategic capability supporting multiple missions." Migrating to NG911 will enhance "capabilities to save lives and protect property" and will have a "direct, positive impact on several mission areas including Public Safety, Emergency Management, Force Protection, Anti-Terrorism, Mission Assurance, and Critical Infrastructure Protection." Failure to migrate to NG911 in a timely manner will turn installations into islands unable to coordinate with local partners and leverage modern technology. As IDA concluded, "This situation is likely to result in higher risk to life and property, and degraded capabilities to fulfill safety obligations to their military personnel and under the numerous mutual aid agreements in place today."

Questions: 1. Does DOD have a detailed NG911 rollout plan? If so, please provide. 2. Specifically, what is the timeline associated with the plan? 3. Does it include individual installations? 4. What budgetary resources are needed to fulfill the plan? 5. What budgetary resources are needed to implement NG911 at all DOD installations? When will this be completed? 6. Are any installations currently fully NG911 operational? If so, which ones?

General ALLVIN DOD CIO is the lead for the DOD and DAF CIO is in close coordination with them for the rollout of NG911. All questions regarding the roll out of NG911 should be directed to the office of DOD CIO.

Mr. ROGERS. According to the Department, DOD is the third largest city in the United States with 3.2 million people—placing it behind Los Angeles and New York City and ahead of Chicago. From an emergency services perspective, DOD manages 150,000 first responders, 220 public safety answering points (PSAPs), and 1500 operators across 4200 installations. As you may be aware, states and communities are rapidly transitioning from outdated, analog 9–1–1 systems to Next Generation 9–1–1 (NG911) which will "enhance emergency number services to create a faster, more resilient system that allows voice, photos, videos and text messages to flow seamlessly from the public to the 911 network while also improving public safety answering points' ability to help manage call overload, natural disasters and transfer of 911 calls based on caller location data." According to the 2020 National 911 Progress Report, 12 states have fully implemented NG911 while 9 are rapidly approaching that threshold. However, DOD, whose installations are connected to the surrounding communities, is not transitioning to NG911 at the same rate. As a recent Institute for Defense Analyses report highlighted, "NG911 is both an operational requirement and a strategic capability supporting multiple missions." Migrating to NG911 will enhance "capabilities to save lives and protect property" and will have a "direct, positive impact on several mission areas including Public Safety, Emergency Management, Force Protection, Anti-Terrorism, Mission Assurance, and Critical Infrastructure Protection." Failure to migrate to NG911 in a timely manner will turn installations into islands unable to coordinate with local partners and leverage modern technology. As IDA concluded, "This situation is likely to result in higher risk to life and property, and degraded capabilities to fulfill safety obligations to their military personnel and under the numerous mutual aid agreements in place today."

Questions: 1. Does DOD have a detailed NG911 rollout plan? If so, please provide. 2. Specifically, what is the timeline associated with the plan? 3. Does it include individual installations? 4. What budgetary resources are needed to fulfill the plan? 5. What budgetary resources are needed to implement NG911 at all DOD installations? When will this be completed? 6. Are any installations currently fully NG911 operational? If so, which ones?

General THOMPSON. DOD CIO is the lead for the DOD. The Department of the Air Force CIO is in close coordination with them for the rollout of NG911. We have forwarded this question to the office of DOD CIO.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. WALTZ

Mr. WALTZ. Do you see benefits with the JROTC program and its ability to help with recruiting?

General GEORGE. The mission of Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) is to assist high schools in motivating students to be better citizens. The Army's JROTC program is an overwhelmingly positive youth citizenship program supporting more than 272,000 cadets at more than 1,700 high schools across the nation. JROTC's presence in high schools in areas that lack a military presence helps connect those communities with our Armed Forces. Across all programs, JROTC cadets have higher attendance, graduation rates, and grade point averages than their peers, who do not participate in the program. While JROTC is not a recruiting program, approximately 44% of Army enlistees came from a high school with a DOD JROTC program.

Mr. WALTZ. An ongoing GAO study details the current disrepair of barracks across the services. Some of the photos show rooms that are similar to condemned buildings, rather than barracks for our service members. What are you doing to ensure safe and sanitary places for service members to live? How are these problems allowed to persist?

General GEORGE. The Army is investing over $1 billion per year in barracks for construction, facilities sustainment, restoration, and modernization across the 5-year Future Years Defense Program. This investment will help to improve conditions for unaccompanied soldiers across all types of barracks–permanent party, training, and transient. Issues such as facility condition, functionality and deficit are the main factors that are weighed when identifying barracks projects for investment. Earlier this year, senior Army leadership directed all components to inspect all barracks for life, health, and safety conditions. We have also implemented an Army-wide inspection program for all barracks to identify and prioritize deficiencies. As concerns are observed or identified for remediation or correction, we are taking immediate action.

Mr. WALTZ. Do you see benefits with the JROTC program and its ability to help with recruiting?

Admiral FRANCHETTI. The Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) program has historically had a positive impact on the Navy's recruiting efforts. JROTC instills a sense of patriotism and a desire for younger individuals to serve their country. This early exposure significantly increases the likelihood of students to consider a career in the Navy. JROTC emphasizes leadership skills by fostering personal growth and self-discipline in its participants. These qualities are highly valued in the Navy.

By nurturing leadership abilities, JROTC prepares students for future naval service, making them more attractive candidates to recruiters. Most importantly however, the program's strong presence in high schools facilitates recruiter access to the student population by developing relationships with school administrators and their faculty. These relationships provide Navy recruiters with an easier path to engage with school officials, thereby gaining access to the student population. This access allows recruiters to provide firsthand information about Navy opportunities, career paths, and benefits to students who may be curious about the service and those who may already be interested in serving.

Mr. WALTZ. The Commandant of the Marine Corps cites amphib availability at about 32 percent. Our ability to project power, on a persistent basis, is critical to our ability to successfully operate from competition to conflict. What is the Navy doing to improve Navy surface vessel maintenance and increase readiness for ARG–MEUs? Why is the Navy requesting to decommission amphibious ships to a level below the requirement set by the FY23 NDAA?

Admiral FRANCHETTI. The Navy continues to emphasize its focus on achieving measurable performance improvement to improve surface vessel maintenance. The Navy is accomplishing this by improving schedule adherence, reducing new and growth work during availabilities and identifying and improving Maintenance Figures of Merit. The Navy is investing in maintenance and readiness in PB–24, fully funding all executable ship maintenance. The Navy is committed to working closely with private shipyard partners to improve surface ship maintenance and modernization outcomes. In particular, Performance-to- Plan-driven improvements—such as the goal of awarding contracts 120 days before the start of a maintenance availability, level loading ports through better prediction of workload, better availability planning, and improved long-lead-time material acquisition have provided effective solutions for readiness and reduced maintenance delays. As part of the joint force, the Navy has met every global force demand for naval amphibious forces. Navy Amphibious Forces provided over 100% of the SECDEF Global Force Management Allo-

cation Plan base order in FY22, and is on course to do so again for FY23. Further, the Navy supports the 31 amphibious ship requirement, but it needs to be the right 31 ships with a capable, sustainable mix of ship classes to ensure we meet the nation's need for ARG/MEUs for decades to come. The Navy recently delivered the Battle Force Ship Assessment and Requirements report which continues to validate the need for 31 amphibious ships.

We prioritize readiness and modernization over maintaining force structure. In doing so, we maintain a combat-credible Navy now and in the future.

Mr. WALTZ. An ongoing GAO study details the current disrepair of barracks across the services. Some of the photos show rooms that are similar to condemned buildings, rather than barracks for our service members. What are you doing to ensure safe and sanitary places for service members to live? How are these problems allowed to persist?

Admiral FRANCHETTI. As directed in Section 2814 of the Fiscal Year 2022 NDAA, Navy is developing a sustainable path to eliminate poor and failing Unaccompanied Housing (UH). The Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations' joint memo, "Setting a New Course for Navy Quality of Service," states that every Sailor deserves the opportunity to live off the ship. This intent is a line of effort under the Quality of Service (QoS) Cross Functional Team, which is developing a comprehensive and integrated approach to improve UH; the Navy is targeting investments to improve the condition of inadequate UH and identifying sustainable, optimized UH policies to ensure safe, reliable housing for all Sailors.

The Navy is focusing on several efforts to increase ownership, advocacy and visibility of UH issues to improve living conditions. To that end, on 2 May, Navy released NAVADMIN 102/23, Navy Unaccompanied Housing Resident Bill of Rights and Responsibilities. This bill of rights and responsibilities outlines what residents should expect while residing in Navy-controlled UH. It also highlights their individual responsibilities while residing in UH.

Last fall, Commander Navy Installations Command (CNIC), the Navy Housing program manager, standardized the inspections program that includes semi-annual preventive medicine unit to ensure the health and safety of residents, and the installation UH management staff conducts monthly inspections for adequacy and habitability of facilities. The standardized inspections conducted by UH staff identify issues requiring correction to ensure safe, reliable housing for Sailors. In addition, as part of our UH improvement efforts, we have reinvigorated the Command inspection program to better monitor daily living standards. This intrusive leadership provides UH management and unit command leadership the ability to proactively identify any relevant maintenance, health or safety issues in UH.

To help Sailors self-advocate, in 2022, CNIC rolled out a maintenance request QR code program across the enterprise to improve the maintenance request process. The QR code initiative allows residents to report routine maintenance issues at any time of the day or night using their cellular phones. Since the rollout, there has been an increase in the volume of service calls, while completion times have remained steady. As there has not been an increase in staff within UH or Public Works, CNIC is monitoring operational metrics closely to determine optimal staffing requirements.

The Navy has requested $165M in PB24 ($400M FYDP) to renovate and replace poor and failing UH. We appreciate Congress' support for these investments in Navy UH.

Mr. WALTZ. Do you see benefits with the JROTC program and its ability to help with recruiting?

General SMITH. JROTC is among the largest youth development programs in the United States. These programs instill the value of citizenship and civic responsibility, service to our country (including opportunities within the military, national, and public service sectors), personal responsibility, and a sense of accomplishment in participating students. Over the last decade, Marine Corps JROTC (MCJROTC), serving over 27,000 students in 254 high schools, has provided opportunities through our co-curricular and extra-curricular activities[1] to introduce students to means for improving career readiness skills and knowledge of emerging workforce careers in science, technology, engineering, math, computer science, and cybersecurity. Although recruiting is not the purpose of JROTC, the MCJROTC historical

[1] Co-curricular activities—drill, marksmanship, enrichment trips, and physical training. These are taught in conjunction with academic curriculum. Extracurricular activities—competition teams in drill and exhibition drill, marksmanship, and precision marksmanship, Cyber, Academic Bowl, and PT/Raider. These are conducted outside of the academic curriculum.

data continues to demonstrate a benefit of MCJROTC to service. The data from the last three graduation reports[2] show the following:

Graduation Year	2020	2021	2022
Graduating Seniors	4,849	4,683	4,442
Service Academy Appointments	35	29	40
ROTC Scholarships	88	75	143
Service Enlistments	1,011	853	1,119
Total Military Service	1,134	957	1,302
Percentage Military Service	23.4%	20.4%	29.3%

Mr. WALTZ. The Commandant of the Marine Corps cites amphib availability at about 32 percent. Our ability to project power, on a persistent basis, is critical to our ability to successfully operate from competition to conflict. Has the requirement for 31 amphibious vessels changed? How does lagging amphibious availability hurt your readiness?

General SMITH. Our requirement remains no less than 31 amphibious warfare ships. The increased time that our Amphibs spend in the maintenance phase consumes approximately half our Marines training and certification time. Per the Navy OFRP, our ships should average about eight months of their notional 36 month cycles in maintenance. Over the past ten years that number is slightly over twelve months since 71% of maintenance periods were extended. On top of that, when factoring in all other emergent maintenance requirements, our AWS average closer to 15 of 36 months in maintenance. We prioritize shipboard operations and training for our deploying ARG/MEUs, so the maintenance does not impact them quite as heavily, however across the Service we've seen over 82 incidents in the past two years where training or deployments were negatively impacted by lack of available ships. In summary, Marines cannot become proficient at operating in an amphibious environment, as required by Title 10 Sec 8063, unless they are provided time aboard amphibious warfare ships.

Mr. WALTZ. An ongoing GAO study details the current disrepair of barracks across the services. Some of the photos show rooms that are similar to condemned buildings, rather than barracks for our service members. What are you doing to ensure safe and sanitary places for service members to live? How are these problems allowed to persist?

General SMITH. The Marine Corps inventory of unaccompanied housing (UH) is comprised of 672 facilities, of which 16% (108) are below an acceptable condition level (rated as Q3 or Q4 facility condition index). We want every Marine living in facilities that meet high standards. Accordingly, we have embarked upon a path to improve overall quality of UH to Q2 or higher by 2030, prioritizing barracks facility renovations. For example:

- In FY22, the Marine Corps renovated 14 barracks, totaling $117.8M, to improve the quality of life of an estimated 3,353 Marines.
- In FY23, the Marine Corps is on track to execute the renovation of an additional 16 barracks, totaling $262.2M, to improve the quality of life of an estimated 4,763 Marines.
- In FY24, the Marine Corps plans to renovate 13 barracks, totaling $116M, to improve the quality of life of an estimated 4,339 Marines.

We are also focusing on oversight procedures to improve the condition of inadequate UH and more broadly provide for high quality facilities in a predicable, sustainable manner. For example, we are testing QR codes on the doors of our barracks rooms at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar and Camp Pendleton for Marines to scan and report maintenance concerns. Additionally, on the laundry rooms doors of these test barracks, we have placed QR codes there to enable Marines to report which washers and dryers require maintenance. The goal of QR codes access to maintenance reporting is to ensure a more responsive, accurate, and connected reporting and remedy system. We are also making targeted investments using MILCON projects like P158, which in the FY24 base budget for a $131M Bachelor Enlisted Quarter and Support Facility aboard Marine Barracks Washington, Of

[2] The graduation report is information submitted by graduating cadet.

course, the Marine Corps can accelerate the pace at which we get all barracks assets to Q2 or higher, should the President or Congress decide to make additional funding be available. The Marine Corps has 12 additional "shovel-ready" barracks renovations projects totaling $155M to improve the quality of life for an additional 4,178 Marines. In the end, care for our Marines is a leadership issue. Management tools are needed but cannot replace on scene leadership.

Mr. WALTZ. Do you see benefits with the JROTC program and its ability to help with recruiting?

General ALLVIN. Yes, we see the value of JROTC. One of the challenges we face in recruiting is an unfamiliarity with what the Air Force is and does. Having the presence of AFJROTC in schools offers the opportunity for youth and their influencers (teachers) to be educated on the value proposition of service, and for our potential future Airmen to "see themselves" as part of this institution, to include all the opportunities for growth/experience/education/leadership that will serve them throughout their lives.

Mr. WALTZ. An ongoing GAO study details the current disrepair of barracks across the services. Some of the photos show rooms that are similar to condemned buildings, rather than barracks for our service members. What are you doing to ensure safe and sanitary places for service members to live? How are these problems allowed to persist?

General ALLVIN. The Department of the Air Force (to include Space Force) recognizes that the environment in which our Airmen and Guardians live impacts their quality of life, their ability to do their job, and our ability to recruit and retain the force. Taking care of unaccompanied Airmen and Guardians living in dormitories is a fundamental responsibility of leadership, installation commanders, and senior enlisted leaders. In keeping with this commitment, the DAF has numerous projects underway or planned between FY2023 and FY2026 to modernize and ensure safe, quality unaccompanied housing that supports mission requirements and provides improved privacy and greater amenities for junior personnel. DAF housing offices work to keep our families and single Airmen and Guardians safe every day. These housing offices conduct dormitory inspections on a routine basis and they brief our members upon move-in about maintenance and safety precautions. Additionally, during resident change over, dormitory rooms undergo maintenance and are again inspected. If problems are discovered, teams make corrections before assigning the unit. Overall, our dorms are in satisfactory condition—with 99% of dorms above the OSD standard—but we continue working hard to increase investment to improve facility conditions. The long-range investment plan is captured in the Dormitory Master Plan that integrates data and commander assessments. In response to Section 2814 of the FY22 NDAA, the DAF made a concerted effort to increase investment in dormitory facility conditions. Section 2814 requires the DAF to invest approximately $1.1B in permanent party dorms across FYs22–26—the DAF is exceeding this requirement, targeting $1.7B. In FY23, the DAF authorized $342M in O&M funding for dorm maintenance & repair projects. DAF's ongoing unaccompanied housing projects include construction of a dormitory at Clear Space Force Station, Alaska, and a follow-on increment for a Basic Military Training dormitory at Joint Base San Antonio, Texas. For FY24, the DAF budget request includes $50 million in MILCON for a Surety Dormitory at Royal Air Force Lakenheath, UK. Additionally, we are planning to spend $251M in O&M funding on 38 projects to maintain, repair, and improve dormitory facilities.

Mr. WALTZ. Do you see benefits with the JROTC program and its ability to help with recruiting?

General THOMPSON. JROTC programs are citizenship programs, not military recruiting programs. Our ROTC units teach character, leadership skills, the importance of fitness, and a commitment to national service. As a result, they familiarize youth with Air Force and Space Force core values and increase the propensity to serve. JROTC programs can help create positive relationships with educators and provide an avenue for recruiters to engage with student cadets. There are ten Space Force JROTC detachments managed by the Air Force.

- Arlington Career Center, Arlington, Va.
- Del Norte High School, Albuquerque, N.M.
- Durango High School, Las Vegas, Nev.
- Falcon High School, Peyton, Colo.
- Huntsville High School, Huntsville, Ala.
- Klein High School, Spring, Texas
- Shadow Mountain High School, Phoenix, AZ
- Space Coast Junior/Senior High School, Cocoa, Fla.
- The Academy for Academic Excellence, Apple Valley, Calif.
- Warren County High School, Warrenton, N.C.

Mr. WALTZ. An ongoing GAO study details the current disrepair of barracks across the services. Some of the photos show rooms that are similar to condemned buildings, rather than barracks for our service members. What are you doing to ensure safe and sanitary places for service members to live? How are these problems allowed to persist?

General THOMPSON. The Department of the Air Force (to include Space Force) recognizes that the environment in which our Airmen and Guardians live impacts their quality of life, their ability to do their job, and our ability to recruit and retain the force. Taking care of unaccompanied Airmen and Guardians living in dormitories is a fundamental responsibility of leadership, installation commanders, and senior enlisted leaders. In keeping with this commitment, the DAF has numerous projects underway or planned between FY2023 and FY2026 to modernize and ensure safe, quality unaccompanied housing that supports mission requirements and provides improved privacy and greater amenities for junior personnel. DAF housing offices work to keep our families and single Airmen and Guardians safe every day. These housing offices conduct dormitory inspections on a routine basis and they brief our members upon move-in about maintenance and safety precautions. Additionally, during resident change over, dormitory rooms undergo maintenance and are again inspected. If problems are discovered, teams make corrections before assigning the unit. Overall, our dorms are in satisfactory condition—with 99% of dorms above the OSD standard—but we continue working hard to increase investment to improve facility conditions. The long-range investment plan is captured in the Dormitory Master Plan that integrates data and commander assessments. In response to Section 2814 of the FY22 NDAA, the DAF made a concerted effort to increase investment in dormitory facility conditions. Section 2814 requires the DAF to invest approximately $1.1B in permanent party dorms across FYs22–26—the DAF is exceeding this requirement, targeting $1.7B. In FY23, the DAF authorized $342M in O&M funding for dorm maintenance & repair projects. DAF's ongoing unaccompanied housing projects include construction of a dormitory at Clear Space Force Station, Alaska, and a follow-on increment for a Basic Military Training dormitory at Joint Base San Antonio, Texas. For FY24, the DAF budget request includes $50 million in MILCON for a Surety Dormitory at Royal Air Force Lakenheath, UK. Additionally, we are planning to spend $251M in O&M funding on 38 projects to maintain, repair, and improve dormitory facilities.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. GARAMENDI

Mr. GARAMENDI. The AIR and SEA Card programs are critical to national security and military readiness across the world. The Air Card fuel program contract process administered by DLA has previously had issues. What effect would the degradation of this program have on your service's readiness should aircraft and marine fuel suppliers in the network be limited or lost? Are you concerned about the loss of competitive prices or disruption of this long-standing network?

General GEORGE. The cost of fuel, efficient contracting, and general fuel management are all essential to Army readiness. The Army, like the other armed services, relies on the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) to effectively manage fuel contracts. DLA currently uses the Aviation Into-plane Reimbursement (AIR) and Ships' bunkers Easy Acquisition (SEA) Card programs to manage fuel contracts between vendors and purchasing customers; the Army relies on DLA to mitigate any readiness concerns or disruptions in the supply network. The Army is always concerned with the Standard Fuel Price, though the Stand Fuel Price is set by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) for each FY.

Mr. GARAMENDI. The AIR and SEA Card programs are critical to national security and military readiness across the world. The Air Card fuel program contract process administered by DLA has previously had issues. What effect would the degradation of this program have on your service's readiness should aircraft and marine fuel suppliers in the network be limited or lost? Are you concerned about the loss of competitive prices or disruption of this long-standing network?

Admiral FRANCHETTI. 1. The SEA and AIR Card programs are critical enablers for procuring commercially available Marine Gas Oil and Aviation Fuel from nearly any commercial port and air station/airport around the world. In the absence of Combat Logistics Force assets, Defense Fuel Service Points, and Fuel Exchange Agreement locations, there is no other quick and organic contracting mechanism for U.S. Navy ships and aircraft to acquire fuel. Loss, or degradation to the program would create significant gaps in logistics support for units deployed across the world. Additionally, it would exacerbate the complexity of logistics support for dis-

tributed maritime operations, which would eliminate or weaken our ability to project power.

2. Inability to meet operational requirements is a greater concern than the loss of competitive prices, even in a fiscally constrained environment. The greater concern would be if this program were disrupted with no functional alternative. From the end-user side, AIR and SEA Card provides an effective contracting mechanism to rapidly acquire commercially available fuel with minimal lead time. If the AIR and SEA Card programs were not available, the Navy would require an immediate solution from Defense Logistics Agency in order to meet its commercial, bulk fuel requirements for ship port visits to commercial ports and aircraft refueling stops at commercial airports. It should be noted that fuel and fuel-related services are outside the scope of the Husbanding Service Provider Program.

Mr. GARAMENDI. The AIR and SEA Card programs are critical to national security and military readiness across the world. The Air Card fuel program contract process administered by DLA has previously had issues. What effect would the degradation of this program have on your service's readiness should aircraft and marine fuel suppliers in the network be limited or lost? Are you concerned about the loss of competitive prices or disruption of this long-standing network?

General SMITH. The proper and effective use of the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) managed, Aviation Into-plane Reimbursement (AIR) Card program provides Marine Aviation with the flexibility needed to sortie and operate across our Air Stations and commercial aviation infrastructure. The Marine Aviation Logistics Squadrons across our force continue to execute DLA directed control measures to increase program management proficiency at the tactical level and ensure accountability. Any degradation, disruption, or serious loss of the associated network of aircraft fuel suppliers would immediately compel a reassessment of a key planning consideration shaping the execution of Sortie Based Training Plans (SBTP) and operational missions. Disruptions or loss of competitive pricing will ultimately impact the fiscal balance the Service looks to maintain as multiple appropriations are brought to bear in resourcing the operation and maintenance of our aircraft and units. This would almost surely lead to a degradation in readiness of our aviation community.

Mr. GARAMENDI. The AIR and SEA Card programs are critical to national security and military readiness across the world. The Air Card fuel program contract process administered by DLA has previously had issues. What effect would the degradation of this program have on your service's readiness should aircraft and marine fuel suppliers in the network be limited or lost? Are you concerned about the loss of competitive prices or disruption of this long-standing network?

General ALLVIN. AIR cards are administered by DLA-Energy and the AF/A3 community in accordance with DLA Energy Publication P–8: "Fuel Card Program" and Air Force Instruction (AFI) 11–253, "Managing Purchases of Aviation Fuel and Ground Services." The loss or degradation of the AIR Card, as a purchase media—without a suitable replacement for Mission Planners and Aircrews to utilize at commercial airports to purchase fuel and ground services—would have a detrimental impact on the Air Force's ability to execute its mission. It is the Air Force's understanding that DLA-Energy is in the process of awarding the next AIR Card contract and has extended the current contract to ensure there is no lapse or disruption to the network. In FY22, the Air Force purchased fuel at over 1,200 commercial airports, using the cards provided by the AIR Card program. The Air Force purchased over 80 million gallons at DLA contract/Canadian Bulletin locations and 23 million gallons at non-contract locations, accounting for 67 thousand refuel operations, or 7% of the total gallons of aviation fuel purchased.

QUESTION SUBMITTED BY MR. FINSTAD

Mr. FINSTAD. Can you speak to the critical need to modernize the Air National Guard C–130 fleet to C–130J aircraft and the importance of continuing to modernize the fleet by simultaneously upgrading some C–130H aircraft with modern technology?

General ALLVIN. C–130Js are gradually replacing the C–130H fleet through yearly Congressionally added funding which will establish a common interoperable MDS fleet. At the current rate of 16 C–130J models per year, full recapitalization of the remaining 120 C–130Hs will occur in 2033. However, selective C–130H model modernization efforts are still required to ensure the remaining aircraft remain effective and operationally compatible. Further, continued C–130H model propulsion system modernization are needed to improve reliability, fuel efficiency, and performance.

QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY MR. STRONG

Mr. STRONG. 1. It is my understanding that the Army has taken up its own approach to develop a variant of robotic targets. What is the current status of the Trackless Moving Target–Infantry? Is it true that it is five years late in development?

General GEORGE. The Army has successfully matured its Trackless Moving Targets (TMT) program to meet the Army's requirements for trackless targets, including both vehicle (TMT–V) and infantry (TMT–I) variants, to operate on live-fire ranges. The program is executing on schedule and in accordance with the Army's plan.

In 2020, the Army awarded a Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) Phase III production contract to a Michigan-based small business, Pratt Miller Engineering, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Wisconsin-based Oshkosh Defense. The Army produced and deployed 25 TMT-Is and 3 TMT-Vs at two Army Installations. These systems have commonality for ease of maintenance and sustainability and operation. The Army plans to award its Full Rate Production SBIR Phase III contract in 2nd Quarter FY 2024 (2QFY24) for the continued production of both TMT variants to meet the Army's training requirements.

Mr. STRONG. 2. The Maneuver Center of Excellence at Fort Benning has shared that the Army's solution dangerously lacks collision avoidance, doesn't accurately register hits, doesn't provide a thermal signature for nighttime operation, can't replicate human behaviors and has barely been used by soldiers. It is my understanding that the Army is still planning on going to Full Rate Production for TMT, is this true? If so, why—how does this enhance soldier lethality?

General GEORGE. Yes, the Army plans to award its Full Rate Production SBIR Phase III contract for TMT in 2QFY24 to meet the Army's training requirements for trackless targets. The Army is confident these systems will improve soldier lethality with the additional realism that trackless targets provide. The Army is currently unaware of any documented concerns with the TMT program from the Maneuver Center of Excellence.

TMT platforms implement collision avoidance and human behavior replication via pre-planned path following and positive control of the platforms through the Army's live-fire range control software and PME's robotic software. Although the initial systems deployed to Fort Moore (formerly Fort Benning) had issues with registering hits, those issues were addressed and corrected during development. With respect to nighttime capabilities, TMTs have power ports for the connection of devices including thermal blankets, which are required for day and nighttime operations. Although the initial TMT systems deployed to Fort Moore had limited soldier use due to the installation's operational requirements and an early-on technical issue, the TMTs are now being relocated to Fort Liberty (formerly Fort Bragg) to gain more utilization. The TMTs sent to the Joint Readiness Training Center have been utilized in every training rotation since their deployment in October 2022 and more systems are being requested for additional realistic training scenarios.

Mr. STRONG. 1. As you know, the Army has led the way with mass timber adoption through five privatized hotels. Since the first hotel that was built at Redstone Arsenal in 2015, DOD saw mass timber buildings consistently go up almost 40 percent faster, with 44 percent less personnel hours, and a 90 percent reduction in onsite construction traffic. Not only that, but mass timber far exceeds installation resilience standards related to anti-terrorism force protection, lateral winds, seismic activity, and fire performance. Despite these benefits, the DOD has yet to design and build its own facility using the innovative wood products from mass timber despite that speed, strength, and efficiency. What is the Department doing to ensure equal competition in the early MILCON process, particularly to ensure mass timber is considered?

General GEORGE. The Army relies on the design and construction agent to ensure equitable competition for all building materials within our current planning and design process. Life-cycle cost effectiveness is required per the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (Public Law 109–58). As a result, project delivery teams are required to consider multiple alternatives for the various components of each design including, but not limited to, project location, building type, and material availability. Policies currently being written by the Army that prioritize sustainability attributes may have the effect of expanding the use of cross-laminated timber (CLT) for military construction. The Army plans to construct a CLT barracks in FY 2025 at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, and will use data from that process to inform future decisions regarding building materials.

Mr. STRONG. 2. Considering the lessons learned from the Redstone Arsenal hotel, how did USACE ensure education across the MILCON workforce, particularly those responsible for designing the buildings and soliciting for construction bids?

General GEORGE. Multiple presentations/webinars have been facilitated documenting the successes and lessons learned from the Candlewood Suites® hotel at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, with an audience consisting of a cross-section of groups and disciplines within the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

USACE also published and circulated technical notes for both CLT in January 2016 and nail-laminated timber in April 2019 to promulgate knowledge about these materials and the most advantageous building types and geographic regions for their utilization.

Mr. STRONG. 3. Specifically, what has the Army done to ensure the USACE workforce is aware of mass timber construction benefits to get after the MILCON problems we face today?

General GEORGE. While the Army typically does not direct the design and construction agent on what materials and methods to use for military construction, USACE developed a tri-service Uniform Facilities Guide Specification on CLT, which has been approved for use by all U.S. military services. The ready availability of this template helps to facilitate the use of CLT in military construction. In 2016, the International Code Council Tall Wood Building Ad Hoc Committee began formulating building code recommendations for tall wood buildings. In 2018, the Committee's proposals were approved for inclusion in the 2021 International Building Code (IBC). USACE, with its tri-service counterparts, modified and published the Unified Facilities Criteria 1–200–01 DOD Building Code in September 2022, incorporating the 2021 IBC to enable more effective use of CLT and nail-laminated timber in military construction.

Multiple presentations and webinars have been facilitated to discuss the above documents and other recent developments. These events equip USACE project delivery teams with the understanding and confidence to integrate mass timber and other newer technologies.

The USACE Construction Engineering Research Laboratory (CERL) is currently exploring how buildings constructed with mass timber respond to blast conditions. CERL is also partnering with the American Wood Council to provide expertise for the upcoming Army military construction barracks project at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, which will promote decarbonization and electrification. To date, there are five Army hotels constructed by Lendlease, the Privatized Army Lodging program partner and construction firm. These CLT structures include: the Candlewood Suites® hotel at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama (92 rooms); Fort Drum, New York (99 rooms); Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington (127 rooms); and Fort Jackson, South Carolina (West Building—171 rooms; East Building—146 rooms).

Mr. STRONG. 1. I understand that the Marine Corps is planning a $250 million, 5-year IDIQ to support Marine lethality and autonomous robotic targets. I'd like to commend the Corps for doing this, and for using an innovative "Technology as a Service" model that saves the government time, money, and logistics. Do you believe realistic training tools like this are critical to preparing warfighters for combat operations?

General Smith. The Marine Corps' training resources play a critical role in the Service's ability to prepare to meet the demands of current and future operating environments. The provision of modern capable training and range resources remains a Service priority to realize the Naval Expeditionary Force required in Force Design 2030 and Training and Education 2030 to deter current and future real-world pacing threats. The Marine Corps is committed to continued research, integration, and use of the latest technological advances in evolving our training to prepare Marines to counter a peer adversary. These efforts are indicated through the Service's establishment of the Trackless Mobile Infantry Target (TMIT) (e.g., autonomous robotic target) capability. Based upon a Business Case Analysis, the capability is being provided using a Knowledge Based Training Service (KBTS) type contract (e.g., "Training as a Service"). In addition to the TMIT system, the contract includes field service support at each location for the operations and maintenance, and logistical equipment, spare parts, and software/hardware upgrades. The KBTS solution was identified as the most advantageous in terms of performance, benefits, and risks. TMITs significantly enhance standards-based training events, promote enhanced weapons proficiency, and provide the ability to create a more challenging training environment. TMITs contribute to the overarching missions and activities of the Marine Corps by providing human-like behavior in a live-fire training environment to better simulate the actions of adversaries resulting in increased lethality and more effective warfighters. The capabilities that these targets provide allow Marines to conduct a live-fire assault on a realistic enemy, chase that enemy from the objective,

pursue them by fire, and prepare for and repel a counterattack in ways not previously achievable. Realistic training tools like this are critical to preparing warfighters for combat operations. In summary, the Marine Corps will be required to support training of Marines and Marine Corps units in an expanding array of mission essential tasks that require ever-increasing amounts of training space and increasingly sophisticated training and range resources. With the help of Congress we will meet that challenge, enabling Marines to serve as the Nation's Force-in-Readiness.

○