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HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE TACTICAL AIR AND LAND FORCES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESENTATION TO THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TACTICAL AIR AND LAND FORCES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HEARING DATE/TIME: May 2, 2019, 9:00 A.M.

SUBJECT: Department of the Air Force Acquisition and Modernization Programs in the Fiscal
Year 2020 National Defense Authorization President's Budget Request

STATEMENT OF:

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Director, Force Structure, Resources, and Assessments

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Chairman Norcross, Ranking Member Hartzler, distinguished members of this subcommittee, thank you for your support of the men and women in uniform who serve our nation and for the opportunity to address your questions related to Tactical Air and Land Forces initiatives.

INTRODUCTION

In his testimony in March to the House Armed Services Committee, General Dunford discussed several challenges the Joint Military Net Assessment identified including the Joint Force's decreasing competitive advantage in the Air Domain. The 2018 Joint Military Net Assessment – a three-month study that included inputs from across the Department of Defense, the Intelligence Community, and academia – outlined capability, capacity and readiness issues within the Tactical Air portfolio that informed the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's program recommendations to the Secretary of Defense. The Chairman's recommendations focused on balancing the capabilities we need for today's operations with the depth, flexibility, and advanced technologies required to respond to the challenges of the future.

TACTICAL AIRCRAFT FORCE MIX, CAPACITY ISSUES AND RISK MITIGATION STRATEGIES

From the Joint Force perspective, 5th generation capabilities remain essential to success against near-peer competitors. However, adapting the force we have today, while we design the force needed for tomorrow's challenges requires a mix of capabilities within the Tactical Air portfolio. In the short term, the 4th generation aircraft fleet provides essential capacity to meet National Defense Strategy demands while we continue to acquire and modernize our 5th generation aircraft. Long term, this portfolio transitions to a majority of 5th generation aircraft as we continue to acquire the F-35 through 2040. In the interim, we must maintain a relevant mix of 4th generation capability and capacity to meet the demands across the National Defense Strategy as multiple airframes exceed their service life over the next decade.

CURRENT AND FORECASTED TACTICAL AIRCRAFT SHORTFALLS AND MITIGATION STRATEGIES

The tactical aircraft portfolio faces both near-term capability shortfalls until we complete modernization efforts for our 5th generation fleet and capacity issues as our 4th generation fleet ages-out. Modernization of our 5th generation fleet, including Block 4 upgrades for the F-35,

remains a critical component of maintaining our competitive advantage against pacing threats. Through the 2030s, improving capability and capacity by recapitalizing the F-15C fleet with the F-15EX enables the Joint Force to feasibly meet Combatant Command demands while the tactical aircraft portfolio transitions to a majority 5th generation fleet by 2040. In addition to mitigating capability and capacity issues, filling missions that do not require stealth, for example defensive counter air of rear air bases, with multi-role 4th generation aircraft will enable the limited 5th generation aircraft fleet to focus resources and improve readiness for potential operations against peer competitors.

ADVANCED BATTLE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

As I testified last year, our adversaries continue to field capabilities that threaten the survivability and viability of our large-body high-value airborne assets used for battle management, command, and control by forcing these aircraft outside of their effective ranges. The increasing threat has created challenges and risk across our Air Battle Management fleet, including the Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) that will remain until the Air Force fields the Advanced Battle Management System with equal or greater capability. In the interim, the Joint Requirement Oversight Council has acknowledged the United States Air Force's risk mitigation strategy relating to JSTARS Ground Moving Target Indicator (GMTI) in accordance with 2019 NDAA.

CONCLUSION

I would like to thank you again for the opportunity to appear before the committee and I look forward to your questions.