

Statement of
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Subcommittee on Seapower
On The Strategic Airlift Fleet
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Chairman Reed, Senator Wicker and distinguished members of this subcommittee. I would like to begin by expressing my appreciation to this committee for your support to the United States Transportation Command and to the men and women who strive every day to protect our Nation and its interests.

Rapid global mobility is among our nation's greatest asymmetric advantages, and the ability to mobilize forces and materiel within hours, rather than days or weeks, depends on the right-sized fleet of versatile, ready and effective air mobility forces.

This year, the administration proposed a repeal of the statutory requirement for the Air Force to maintain a strategic cargo fleet of 316 aircraft. I fully agree with the administration's proposal. The Congressionally-directed 316 strategic airlift requirement was established before the Mobility Capabilities and Requirements Study 2016 determined the strategic airlift requirement to be 32.7 million ton-miles per day, based on the most challenging wartime airlift scenario. Our analysis confirms 32.7 million-ton-miles per day capacity exceeds the peacetime requirement and can be met with approximately 300 strategic airlift aircraft. Additionally, the strategic airlift aircraft reduction allows the Air Force to retire an additional 15 C-5As and provides a substantial savings by freeing up over \$1.2 billion in taxpayer dollars across the FYDP.

With the Mobility Capabilities and Requirements Study 2016 complete, we now have the analytical justification to recommend repeal of the 316 strategic airlift floor. As I and others have previously stated or testified, it was necessary to wait for the results of the study before making any recommendation on the size of the strategic airlift fleet. I do so confidently today.

The current programmed fleet of 222 C-17s, 52 C-5Ms and 27 C-5As is far more modern and capable than any strategic airlift fleet in our history. To underscore this point, our strategic

airlift fleet of approximately 350 aircraft in 1999 provided about 26 million-ton-miles per day capacity, yet, today, a fleet of only 300 aircraft provides 32.7 million-ton-miles per day. The dramatic improvement in strategic airlift capability provided by C-17s and modernized C-5s has enabled a reduced fleet size to meet all warfighter requirements.

C-17s will continue to meet TRANSCOM's future requirements through currently funded purchases, upgrade programs and fleet rotation. New C-17s arrive with improvements that increase the reliability of the weapon system. Older aircraft enter into the Global Reach Improvement Program to increase their sustainability and reliability. Furthermore, aircraft located in corrosive and training environments are monitored and analyzed for stress and rotated to maintain structural integrity of the fleet.

The C-5 is critical to our oversized and outsized air cargo capability. C-5 fleet management has two main focus areas: C-5 reliability and C-5A retirements. The Reliability Enhancement and Re-Engining Program (RERP) is on track to increase the mission capable rate (MCR) of the C-5 fleet by at least 25% over the current C-5A and at least 15% over the current C-5B ... increasing the utilization rate for these aircraft and allow us to operate into more austere locations. All C-5B and C models and one C-5A model aircraft will undergo RERP resulting in a total of 52 C-5Ms in the inventory. Additionally, the new maintenance processes changed our focus from "fly to fail" on major components to preventative replacement. This has reduced the number of C-5s stranded off-station awaiting parts and will result in a seven percent increase in MCR. Finally, C-5A retirements will improve aircraft availability by removing maintenance intensive jets from the fleet and will allow us to focus our critical maintenance, aerial port, aircrew personnel and resources on a right-sized fleet.

In addition to a more modern and capable fleet, we also continuously improve the efficiency of air mobility operations. This efficiency allows a smaller strategic airlift fleet to

handle wartime and peacetime mobility requirements. For example, with the use of multi-modal operations, we move large volumes of cargo by sea to locations in closer proximity to the area of operations, then by truck from the seaports to the nearby airfields and finally by air to its destination. This concept has been used with great success throughout 2010 and 2011 as we moved almost 7,000 MRAP and MRAP all-terrain vehicles to Afghanistan. Utilizing the combination of air, land and sea modes of transportation, we increased velocity, employed aircraft more efficiently and ultimately reduced costs by almost \$400M in 2010.

Multi-purpose aircraft will also improve the efficiency and capacity of our airlift fleet. The KC-46 fleet, for example, will be sized based on war plan tanker requirements. In those plans, as the need for aerial refueling diminishes, the KC-46 can supplement the heavy airlift fleet by conducting a variety of airlift and aeromedical evacuation missions. Not only will it dramatically change our air refueling concept of operations, it will also allow us to make the whole air mobility system much more efficient.

Our commercial partners provide superb, cost-effective airlift support in peace and in war. Their ability to move bulk cargo around the world complements our organic capabilities. The Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) program's ability to augment our organic airlift fleet helps to reduce the operational burden on those assets. Because of the importance of the CRAF, we continue to seek out incentives, especially those that provide additional peacetime business opportunities, to strengthen participation in the program with modernized aircraft by our commercial airline partners.

At TRANSCOM, we view our success through the eyes of the warfighter. We know the combatant commanders around the world absolutely depend on us to deliver the forces and their sustainment day in and day out. We are committed to deliver what the warfighter needs, where

they need it, when they need it... while also being responsible stewards of the taxpayers' trust and dollars. The men and women of TRANSCOM, our components and industry partners are proud to provide world-class support to those who put themselves on the line every day, and ensure we always, always deliver.
