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THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
DEFENSE SUBCOMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF
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PRINCIPAL MILITARY DEPUTY
RESEARCH, DEVELOPMENT AND ACQUISITION
BEFORE THE
DEFENSE SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE
HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE
ON
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY'S TACAIR PROGRAM

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Chairman Murtha, Congressman Young and distinguished members of the Subcommittee, thank you for providing us with this opportunity to appear before you to discuss the Department of the Navy's tactical aviation programs.

AVIATION PROGRAMS SUMMARY/OVERVIEW:

The Fiscal Year 2009 President's Budget implements a recapitalization strategy to obtain new capabilities - and initiatives to reduce operating costs while sustaining legacy fleet aircraft that are performing magnificently in current operations. We continue to work with industry in seeking ways to reduce costs such as contracting strategies on the F/A-18E/F airframe, MH-60R/S, and the MV-22; and we are implementing a 'prototype' strategy on the Joint Air-to-Ground Missile (JAGM) to ensure high technology readiness and reduced risk prior to entering System Development and Demonstration (SDD). The Fiscal Year 2009 Budget ensures that the Navy and Marine Corps maintain a joint force able to meet the spectrum of threats. The Department continues the development and Low Rate Procurement of the F-35 and continues the development of the E-2D Advanced Hawkeye, EA-18G, the VH-71 Presidential Helicopter Replacement Aircraft (Increment 1), the CH-53K Heavy Lift Replacement aircraft, Unmanned Aviation, and new strike weapons capabilities. In total, Navy/Marine Corps aviation will procure 134 additional tactical and fixed-wing aircraft, 69 rotary-wing aircraft and three VTUAV's for a total of 206 aircraft with our Fiscal Year 2009 funding.

F-35 Joint Strike Fighter (JSF)

In Fiscal Year 2009 Congress appropriated \$1.7 billion RDT&E,N for continuation of F-35 System Development and Demonstration (SDD) including \$200 million for F136 engine and \$1.7 billion APN for the Low Rate Initial Production lot three (LRIP 3) for seven Short Takeoff and Vertical Landing (STOVL) aircraft and the long lead requirements for 14 STOVL and one CV (aircraft carrier suitable variant) aircraft as part of LRIP 4. A subsequent approved FY 2009 Above Threshold Reprogramming (ATR) request provided \$43 million for long lead funding for the other three CV aircraft requested in the Fiscal Year 2009 President's Budget.

A 5th generation aircraft, the F-35 will enhance precision strike capability with unprecedented stealth, range, sensor fusion, improved radar performance, combat identification and electronic attack capabilities compared to legacy platforms. The F-35 carrier variant (CV) enhances the F/A-18E/F Block II and EA-18G in providing long-range strike capability and much improved persistence over the battlefield. The STOVL combines the multi-role versatility of the legacy F/A-18 and the basing flexibility of the AV-8B. The commonality designed into the F-35 program will minimize acquisition and operating costs of Navy and Marine Corps tactical aircraft, and allow enhanced interoperability with our sister Service, the United States Air Force, and Allies. The F-35 is eight years into a 13-year SDD Program. Technical, software, production processes, testing, etc. maturation is tracking to plan and substantially exceeding legacy standards. Three SDD jets (AA-1, BF-1 and BF-2) are in flight testing. The remaining SDD jets and ground test articles plus LRIP I and LRIP II aircraft are in various stages of production.

The SDD jets are taking longer to build than anticipated, but are setting new standards for quality and manufacturing efficiencies that improve with each jet. In flight testing, the initial Conventional Takeoff and Landing (CTOL) aircraft (AA-1) continues to demonstrate superb performance and reduce program risk, with 69 sorties (98 flight hours) flown through late February 2009. BF-1, the first STOVL flight test jet, first flew in June 2008, on the schedule established two-years prior. BF-1 has flown 14 flights, and initial STOVL-mode operations are planned in June 2009. BF-2 first flew on Wednesday 25 February and returned with no flight discrepancies noted. Software is 69 percent (12 million lines) complete against the planned 70 percent complete per the spiral development plan/schedule, with record-setting code-writing efficiencies. Software demonstrates stability (i.e., tens to hundreds of hours error-free run times) across multiple mission system subsystems. Systems integration testing continues on plan via flight tests, a flying lab, and over 150,000 hours of ground labs testing. A fully integrated mission systems jet flies in 2009. The second production lot contract was signed below the cost model prediction. All F-35 variants are projected to meet their respective Key Performance Parameters. LRIP III contract negotiations are ongoing. The F-35 plan for incremental blocks of capability balances cost, schedule and risk.

The F135 engine development has completed 11,000+ test hours on 16 engines through early-February 2009. Prior F135 engine test failures are understood and have been addressed.

The Department supported the omission of continued funding for the alternate engine (F136) in the Fiscal Year 2009 President's Budget request. The DON maintains there are higher priority needs in the budget and that the risks associated with a single engine supplier continue to be manageable. The three Fiscal Year 2007 Congressionally-directed engine studies have been completed. The conclusions, while supportive of competition in general, reinforced the Department's initial findings that the projected savings from not doing competition outweigh the investment and sustainment costs.

F/A-18 E/F Super Hornet

In Fiscal Year 2009 Congress appropriated \$1.9 billion in APN for 23 F/A-18 E/F Block II aircraft for the final year of the five-year MYP contract (Fiscal Years 2005 to 2009). The F/A-18E/F continues to transition into the fleet, improving the survivability and strike capability of the carrier air wing. The Super Hornet provides a 40 percent increase in combat radius, 50 percent increase in endurance, and 25 percent increase in weapons payload over our older, legacy Hornets. Over 426 F/A-18E/Fs will have been procured through Fiscal Year 2008. The program is on track to complete procurement of the program of record of 506 aircraft by 2012. The Super Hornet has used a spiral development approach to incorporate new technologies, such as the Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System, Advanced Targeting Forward Looking Infra-Red (ATFLIR), with shared real-time video, Shared Reconnaissance Pod System (SHARP), and Multifunctional Information Distribution System (MIDS) data-link. The APG-79 Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radar system, in the Block II aircraft, has

completed operational testing and the achieved Full Rate Production in June 2007 and Material Support Date in December 2008. Four fully operational AESA-equipped F/A-18F squadrons have been transitioned and two squadrons have been deployed with full Integrated Logistics Support. The F/A-18E/F Fiscal Year 2009 Budget also includes \$129.3 million to implement commonality, maintain capabilities, and improve reliability and structural safety.

F/A-18 A/B/C/D Legacy Hornet

In Fiscal Year 2009 Congress appropriated \$321.6 million for the continuation of the systems upgrade programs for the F/A-18 platform. As the F/A-18 program transitions to the F/A-18E/F and JSF, the existing inventory of 627 F/A-18A/B/C/Ds (as of January 2009) will continue to comprise half of the Navy's strike fighter inventory until 2013. Included in this request is the continued procurement of recently fielded systems such as the Joint Helmet Mounted Cueing System, Advanced Targeting FLIR, Multi-Function Information Distribution System, and a Digital Communications System. The Marine Corps continues to upgrade 56 Lot 7-9 F/A-18A models and 30 Lot 10/11 F/A-18C models to a Lot 21 F/A-18C avionics aircraft capability with digital communications and a tactical data link. The Marine Corps anticipates programmed upgrades to enhance the current capabilities of the F/A-18C/D with digital communications, tactical data link and tactical reconnaissance systems. This upgrade ensures that our F/A-18s remain viable and relevant in support of Tactical Air Integration and Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare. The Marines expect the F/A-18 to remain in the active inventory until 2023. The Marines are also employing the LITENING targeting pod on the F/A-18A+/C/D aircraft in expeditionary operations, to include Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). When combined with data link hardware, the LITENING pod provides real time video to ground forces engaged with the enemy through Remotely Operated Video Enhanced Receiver (ROVER) workstations. Continued analysis of TACAIR inventories will continue throughout 2010 and beyond to determine the health of the legacy fleet as the F/A-18A-D is transitioned to the F-35.

Airborne Electronic Attack (AEA) / EA-18G

In Fiscal Year 2009 Congress appropriated \$128.9 million in RDT&E,N for continuation of SDD and \$1.6 billion in APN for 22 full rate production EA-18G Lot 3 aircraft. The EA-18G continues its development as the Navy's replacement for the EA-6B AEA aircraft. The EA-18G will replace carrier-based Navy EA-6B aircraft by 2012. A total quantity of 27 aircraft will be procured in LRIP. The Navy is using the F/A-18E/F MYP contract to buy the Lot 3 aircraft in Fiscal Year 2009. SDD continues on schedule with the two development aircraft having first flown in 2006 and are currently in developmental test at NAWC, Patuxent River. The program began Operational Evaluation in Fall 2008, leading to Initial Operating Capability (IOC) in Fiscal Year 2009 and Full Operating Capability (FOC) in Fiscal Year 2012.

P-8A Poseidon

In Fiscal Year 2009, Congress appropriated \$1.132 billion for development of the long awaited P-3 replacement aircraft, the P-8 Poseidon. The program is on track for fielding in late Fiscal Year 2013 when the first squadron will have transitioned and be ready to deploy forward in support of the Combatant Commander. The program completed Design Readiness Review in August 2007 and is currently building the fourth of eight test aircraft. The first three test articles (two flight test aircraft and a static test article) have been delivered in accordance with the revised plan designed to recover from the two month machinist strike that interrupted deliveries last fall. The current plan calls for first flight of the first flight test article in late April of this year and the Navy and contractor fully expect the reposition flight to occur as planned.

E-2D Advanced Hawkeye (AHE)

The E-2D Advanced Hawkeye is a critical enabler of transformational intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance by providing robust overland and littoral capability against current and future aircraft and cruise missile-type targets. The E-2D Advanced Hawkeye replaces the current E-2C Hawkeye aircraft. The radar for the Advanced Hawkeye will provide enhanced capability in the overland and the littoral environment, in addition to the open ocean environment, while improving performance against clutter and small targets, adding transformational surveillance and theater air and missile defense capabilities. In Fiscal Year 2009 Congress appropriated \$484.2 million in RDT&E,N for continuation of SDD and \$385.7 million in APN-1 for two Low-Rate Initial Production (LRIP) Lot I aircraft and advanced procurement for Fiscal Year 2010 LRIP Lot II aircraft. This funds one less aircraft than requested in the FY 2009 President's Budget request and underfunds advanced procurement for Fiscal Year 2010 LRIP Lot II aircraft. Two SDD aircraft continue in developmental flight test since August 2007. An 'Operational Assessment' was completed in 1st quarter of Fiscal Year 2009 to support a Milestone-C decision scheduled in March 2009.

SUMMARY

The Fiscal Year 2009 President's Budget reflects considerable effort in identifying affordable solutions for the Department's aviation programs through a balance between sustaining fielded capabilities, as they are employed in the GWOT and continued forward presence worldwide, and a substantive recapitalization effort that will deliver significantly better capabilities to the war fighter. The Department's aviation acquisition team continues to work aggressively to identify efficiencies in the development, testing and subsequent procurement of platforms, components, and weapons systems in order to ensure that investments made result in quality products and services provided to the fleet.

In closing Mr. Chairman, we thank you for the opportunity to testify before your Subcommittee regarding the Department of the Navy's tactical aviation programs.