

RECORD VERSION

STATEMENT BY

**LIEUTENANT GENERAL N. ROSS THOMPSON, III
PRINCIPAL MILITARY DEPUTY TO THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
FOR ACQUISITION, LOGISTICS AND TECHNOLOGY AND
DIRECTOR, ACQUISITION CAREER MANAGEMENT**

AND

**LIEUTENANT GENERAL JAMES D. THURMAN
DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, G-3/5/7**

BEFORE THE

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE
COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

ARMY FORCE PROTECTION

FIRST SESSION, 111TH CONGRESS

MARCH 12, 2009

**NOT FOR PUBLICATION
UNTIL RELEASED
BY THE COMMITTEE
ON APPROPRIATIONS**

Introduction

Chairman Murtha, Congressman Young, and distinguished Members of the Appropriations Committee: Thank you for this opportunity to discuss Army force protection programs. We are pleased to represent Army leadership, the civilian and military members of the Army acquisition workforce, and the more than one million courageous men and women in uniform who have deployed to combat over the last seven years and who have relied on us to provide them with world-class weapon systems and equipment for mission success. The Army's top priority remains the protection of our warfighters, and we thank the Members of this Committee for your shared commitment to this goal. Your advice and guidance along with your steadfast support is recognized throughout our ranks and is deeply appreciated.

The global security environment is ambiguous and unpredictable. We are in the midst of a long war, the third longest in our Nation's history and the longest ever fought by our All-Volunteer Force. Our battlefield has no front lines and poses threats throughout the entire operational area. Aware of this threat, we have adapted our institutional processes to expedite the development and delivery of the latest force protection equipment to our deployed forces. We recognize that our enemy is highly adaptive, and we have established systems – enabled by your funding and support – to responsibly and rapidly procure equipment and promising technologies to protect the force.

It is important to understand that the Army's framework for force protection is a system-of-systems approach that integrates layers of protection. These layers – situational awareness, individual protection, vehicle protection, and countermeasures –

are integrated through the development of appropriate tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs), based on lessons learned, which are rehearsed through realistic training. Our warfighters in theater realize that force protection requires the integration and application of all these capabilities to reduce vulnerability to attacks in an asymmetric threat environment.

We face an adaptive enemy who works continually to identify and exploit our vulnerabilities. Our challenge is to identify and address these efforts through a combination of TTPs and materiel changes, and our progress is substantial. We have made major improvements in the system-of-systems we employ to protect the lives of our warfighters, as well as our processes for developing and fielding weapon systems and equipment.

System of Systems Approach to Force Protection

The Base Expeditionary Targeting and Surveillance System – Combined (BETSS-C) resulted from an urgent requirement for enhanced **situational awareness** and improved persistent surveillance in Iraq and Afghanistan. BETSS-C is comprised of surveillance sensors, closed circuit TV, Pan-Tilt-Zoom Cameras, Long Range Thermal Imagers, security monitoring stations and Mid-Range Thermals for see-in-the-dark capability as well as thermal signatures in light or zero light conditions up to three kilometers. This effort is in direct support of force protection and intelligence pattern analysis of our operating bases in OIF and OEF. The current validated requirements are to support more than 450 locations throughout OIF and OEF, including Joint Security Stations, Forward Operating Bases, and Combat Outposts. Fielding continues at rates of nine to 12 locations per month in OIF and 13 locations per month in OEF.

OEF has also requested additional (subject matter experts/trainer/maintainers/operators) personnel to augment some of their smaller operating locations. The personnel are currently being trained and will begin to deploy to the theater this month. BETSS-C requirements are currently being reviewed and revalidated by U.S. Central Command.

Additional capability will be added to our force protection layered approach in the form of Unattended Ground Sensors (UGS). UGS is designed to provide a low-cost, network-enabled reporting system for situational awareness and force protection in urban and rural settings. Two major subgroups of sensing systems – Tactical-UGS and Urban-UGS – are used to perform mission tasks such as perimeter defense, surveillance, target acquisition, situational awareness, and early warning. Besides the current fielding of UGS in support of operational needs, the Future Combat Systems' UGS program has a capability that will be placed in current Army formations. Fielding is planned for 2011.

With regard to **individual protection**, the Army has fully matured the Rapid Fielding Initiative, providing an increasing array of state-of-the-art, individual and small unit protection equipment to our deployed forces. This program facilitates Soldier modernization in a systematic and integrated manner with an equipment list of 73 items that includes the Advanced Combat Helmet, night vision equipment, protective eyewear, hearing protection, and other essential, technologically advanced capabilities. Originally scheduled to be completed by the end of Fiscal Year 2007 (FY07), the Rapid Fielding Initiative program has been extended indefinitely because of its success in providing ongoing support to our warfighters in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Army provides every Soldier in theater with Interceptor Body Armor (IBA), a centerpiece program for the Army that is saving lives every day. IBA is a modular design that provides protection against fragmentation and small arms ammunition. The current Army body armor provided to Soldiers – Improved Outer Tactical Vest (IOTV) equipped with Enhanced Small Arms Protective Inserts (ESAPI) plates – meets operational requirements and is proven both in rigorous testing and in combat to be the best body armor in the world.

The Army has continually improved its body armor over time. The current IOTV has three primary improvements: (1) a quick release, (2) less weight, and (3) more area coverage. The quick release allows removal of the body armor in case of an emergency, to avert drowning, or enable medical personnel ready access to an injured Soldier. In seeking the next generation of body armor, the Army continually collaborates with industry to meet Army requirements. For example, the Army sponsors open industry days and holds Soldier protection demonstrations to allow industrial base vendors to demonstrate their body armor products. In addition, the Army has research and development funds programmed in the Program Objective Memorandum for future developments of the next generation body armor.

The Army will procure 120,000 sets of X-Small Arms Protective Inserts (XSAPI) plates in 2009. These plates will be shipped to Kuwait as a contingency stock and will be available for use by the theater commander. Although XSAPI provides increased protection, we continue to work with industry to determine how we can make the inserts lighter to lessen our Soldiers' load without jeopardizing force protection.

Another critical component of protection for Soldiers is the Fire Resistant Environmental Ensemble (FREE), a multi-layered versatile, all climate system that allows combat vehicle and aircrew members to adapt to varying mission requirements and environmental conditions. FREE is designed to increase comfort and ergonomic efficiency and replaces legacy cold-weather clothing.

In the area of **vehicle protection**, the Army and U.S. Marine Corps have fielded, in record time, an entirely new family of vehicles providing enhanced crew protection – the Mine Resistant Ambush Protection (MRAP) vehicle. The requirements, procurement, and test and evaluation communities, along with the industrial base, have done an outstanding job in meeting the needs of our warfighters. In the last 15 months the Army has delivered more than 10,600 MRAP vehicles to Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait, of which nearly 9,400 are in operational use. Recently, we began executing our plan to cascade the oldest variants out of Iraq and into the training base. We expect these vehicles to arrive in the United States in April. During that time, we received insightful assessments from commanders and Soldiers regarding MRAP performance, capabilities, and recommended improvements. Our industry partners have challenged the limits of technology, pursuant to our requirements, and evolved MRAP vehicles from providing only Improvised Explosive Device (IED) protection to providing IED and Explosive Formed Projectile (EFP) protection. We are working with our industry partners to develop and rapidly field a smaller, lighter, more maneuverable IED/EFP protected vehicle.

The next evolution of MRAP is the MRAP-All Terrain Vehicle (M-ATV). A Request for Proposal was released in December 2008 and evaluation of vendor

proposals is underway. One of the Army's equipping tenets is to provide our Soldiers with the best available equipment and capabilities that technology will allow. The MRAP vehicle program is a resounding success. This family of vehicles has dramatically enhanced survivability for Soldiers involved in IED and EFP engagements, not only in saving the lives of our warfighters, but in many cases allowing them to walk away unharmed from horrendous explosions. We thank the Members of this Committee for your support for this vital program. We could not have done this without your commitment to protect our Soldiers.

We continue to send Up-Armored High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (UAH) into theater and are upgrading the vehicles' ability to protect our Soldiers. Initiatives such as Fragmentation Kits 6 and 7 are being procured for installation on UAHs to counter IED and sniper attacks. At the same time, we are investing in a myriad of technologies that will increase the platform's capabilities to engage the enemy. Systems such as acoustic gunshot detection systems, Remote Weapons Stations, and Long Range Advanced Scout Surveillance System are intended to increase the ability of our Soldiers to identify and engage the enemy.

In other areas of our Tactical Wheeled Vehicle (TWV) fleets, we are also increasing Soldier protection levels. In the next few months, we will field the first of approximately 6,000 medium vehicles built in line with our Long Term Protective Strategy (LTPS). These vehicles will be capable of easily accepting armor kits that provide better protection when needed and allow removal of the kits when the protection is not needed. We are working with the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command to finalize LTPS and ensure that the TWV fleet armoring requirements reflect the latest

lessons learned. LTPS trucks will be fielded to the next deploying units to ensure that Soldiers receive the most capable armor protection during their deployments. Older trucks are being moved to repair facilities to be reset for reuse within the force in order to ensure Soldiers are equipped with the systems they need based on mission requirements.

The Joint Light Tactical Vehicle (JLTV), a family of vehicles with companion trailers capable of performing multiple mission roles, will replace the HMMWV starting in 2015. JLTV is a Joint Army/U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Special Operations Command program designed to provide protected, sustained, networked mobility for personnel and payloads across the full range of military operations. JLTV will require a design that supports inherent and supplemental armor, scalable to mission.

The Army is fielding the XM153 Common Remotely Operated Weapon System (CROWS) to further protect gunners while still enabling them to engage the enemy with their crew-served weapons. CROWS is a remote weapon station capable of mounting the M2 (.50 caliber), MK19 (40mm grenade), M240B (.308 caliber), or M249 (.22 caliber) Machine Gun. It provides the operator with the ability to control the system from within the protection of an armored vehicle and to engage targets with a high degree of accuracy during day or night while stationary or moving. Fielding is ongoing in Iraq. The first vehicles for Afghanistan with CROWS are planned to be shipped this month with a fielding date of May 2009.

Another layer of force protection is provided by the use of passive and active **countermeasures**. The Army has continued to support both Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) with Counter Radio Controlled IED

Electronic Warfare (CREW) jammers. More than 98 percent of all the outside the wire armored vehicles in OIF have a CREW system installed. OEF is currently receiving more jammers to support the deployment of additional units and equipment.

Additionally, all MRAP vehicles have had CREW jammers integrated stateside before deployment. The Army has devised strategies to keep its current fleet of jammers relevant to a constantly evolving threat, and firmly believe that the success of the CREW program has led to a significant reduction in the Radio Controlled IED threat.

The Counter Rocket Artillery and Mortar (C-RAM) capability is an acquisition success story where Joint efforts enabled the rapid development and fielding of a capability to detect, engage and destroy in-flight rocket, artillery, and mortar rounds. This capability did not exist prior to September 11, 2001. The Army is currently considering the transition of the C-RAM capability to a program of record.

Conclusion

Soldier survivability has increased dramatically with the provision of force protection solutions, and we thank you for your strong support for our efforts. As previously mentioned, your deep and abiding commitment to our men and women in uniform is widely recognized throughout our ranks. American Soldiers – adaptive, competent, and infused with the Army’s values and warrior ethos – continue to perform magnificently as they fight and win our Nation’s wars. As we move forward, the Soldier remains the Strength of the Nation. We look forward to our continued work with this Committee and to ensure we are responsive to your questions.