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ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

STATEMENT OF
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BEFORE THE
SEAPOWERS SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
ON
MAJOR NON-SHIPBUILDING ACQUISITION PROGRAMS
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Introduction

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Seapower Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the state of Naval Aviation, with specific emphasis on the programs and plans to sustain and modernize our P-3 and MH-60 platforms and equipment.

When I appeared before this Subcommittee last year, I spoke of how the leading role played by Naval Expeditionary forces in responding to crises pointed to an increasing demand for what the Navy-Marine Corps team and Naval Aviation bring to the fight. Clearly in this past year, this trend has continued--even accelerated--as our forward-deployed Carrier Battle Groups and Amphibious Ready Groups have served the Nation's interests in support of Operations NOBLE EAGLE and ENDURING FREEDOM.

Our remarkable success in these operations validates the requirement for unconstrained, sustained and forward Naval Maritime forces. The lion's share of the credit rests with the Sailors and Marines who serve with distinction and honor—meeting the challenge of increased operations tempo despite the effects of a prolonged drawdown of personnel and equipment. I appreciate the actions by members of this Subcommittee, the Senate and the Administration to meet our most pressing personnel and readiness needs. I am mindful of the choices we need to make to balance the modernization and recapitalization efforts necessary to ensure Naval Aviation and Naval Maritime forces

remain capable of meeting the Nation's security requirements into the 21st century and beyond.

Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance

Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance aircraft (P-3/EP-3) continue to fulfill critical warfighting roles including undersea warfare; surface warfare; electronic warfare; intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance; maritime interdiction; littoral strike and targeting. Enhanced connectivity and integration into Battle Group Concept of Operations (CONOPS) places a premium on these aircraft as we move into the future. A key modernization effort for both the maritime patrol and reconnaissance fleet is the replacement of mission systems in our legacy aircraft to give the warfighter the capability to conduct anti-submarine warfare (ASW), anti-surface warfare (ASUW) and Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) in the 21st Century.

The P-3 Aircraft Improvement Program (AIP) is an upgrade to the P-3 weapons system which was designed to provide a more robust Anti-Surface Warfare capability. The COTS sensor and connectivity improvements allowed for rapid fleet introduction that proved their value during multiple worldwide operations, most recently Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). P-3 AIP equipped aircraft collected, analyzed and disseminated time critical intelligence to Joint and Coalition forces in OEF, while also participating in Leadership Interdiction and Maritime Interdiction Operations in the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean. Our investment in AIP is well leveraged, as this aircraft

has performed well in unique roles in the global war on terrorism, including overland and overwater ISR operations, littoral surveillance, maritime interdiction operations, and full support of joint task forces. AIP is a suite of sensor upgrades that significantly and rapidly increases capabilities not only in ASUW, but also for Over-the-Horizon Targeting (OTH-T); Command, Control, Communications, Computers and Intelligence (C4I); and survivability. By protecting the Battle Group from surface and sub-surface threats, our P-3 aircraft in conjunction with organic helicopter assets, allowed the Carrier Air Wing's tactical aircraft to focus exclusively on power projection.

Our EP-3E electronic warfare and reconnaissance aircraft continue to meet critical CINC ISR collection requirements. The primary mission of these aircraft is to detect and report tactically significant communication and radar signals then associate these signals with enemy warfare activity or potentially hostile units. A P-3C to EP-3E conversion program is in place and fully funded to meet the inventory requirement of 16 aircraft. There are two planned upgrades to the EP-3E force. The Sensor System Improvement Program (SSIP) integrates and installs new tactical communications, Electronic Signals Monitoring (ESM), and special signal processing and exploitation systems. The second effort is the Joint Airborne Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) Architecture (JASA) Block Modernization Program (JMOD). The JMOD program is an extensive systems upgrade designed to keep the EP-3 ahead of the projected threat and is the bridge to future Navy manned and unmanned ISR programs.

Multi-Mission Maritime Aircraft

The Multi-Mission Maritime Aircraft (MMA) program plan presents a path forward to recapitalize the capabilities currently provided by the Maritime Patrol and Reconnaissance Force. The Navy has completed the Analysis of Alternatives (AoA), identifying a manned aircraft as the key element of the system. The analysis also identified the potential application of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV). In the interim, the legacy P-3C force is going to be kept viable through sensible modernization until the introduction of MMA. This approach will enable the Navy to deliver more reliable and capable replacement aircraft faster, minimize costs and technical risks. Our schedule has the selection of the preferred alternative for development in FY04 with the goal for introduction to the Fleet in the 2010-2012 timeframe.

Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV)

In August of this past year, the Secretary of the Navy announced his intent to increase the Navy's emphasis on unmanned systems. With increased emphasis on this key transformational area, the Navy and Marine Corps re-examined their UAV requirements and priorities. The resulting Naval UAV Strategy has both a short-term plan to capitalize on existing systems and a longer-term plan to develop a family of unmanned vehicles.

The Navy has initiated an accelerated procurement of a Global Hawk system as part of the Broad Area Maritime Surveillance (BAMS) requirement to satisfy the Long-

Dwell-Standoff ISR mission area. This will be a two-phased process. Phase I will be procurement of an Air Force production line Global Hawk system which will have modifications to the existing sensor package to make it more compatible with a maritime environment. A system will consist of two air vehicles with payloads, a launch and recovery element and mission control element. The system will be used primarily for experimentation and CONOPS development leading to Phase II. Phase II (now called BAMS UAV) will leverage from the Broad Area Maritime and Littoral Armed Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Mission Needs Statement and Analysis of Alternatives to competitively acquire high altitude long endurance vehicles with robust and fully capable maritime sensor payloads. The thrust of BAMS UAV will be towards developing sensor/payload capability or identifying existing sensor/payloads capable of performing BAMS missions. The Navy intends to explore all non-developmental options for the vehicle. A competition may result if multiple vendors can provide vehicles appropriate to the Navy's requirement.

MH-60 Helicopters

The CNO recently approved a fleet proposal to restructure our Navy helicopter forces around the two linchpin airframes to the Helicopter Master Plan, the MH-60R and MH-60S. This new concept of operations (CONOPS) will align the leadership of Helicopter Aviation with the Carrier Air Wing and bring about warfighting efficiencies. Our helicopter force will downsize from seven type/model/series to two while meeting our littoral warfighting requirements. Capitalizing on efficiencies of singular

maintenance, logistics, and training systems, our plan satisfies the needs of both our active and reserve forces.

The MH-60R Multi-Mission Helicopter is the future aircraft for the Navy's tactical helicopter community supporting Surface Combatants and Aircraft Carriers. The MH-60R will eventually replace the Navy's existing fleet of SH-60B and SH-60F helicopters. The warfighting systems will provide an advanced multi-mode Inverse Synthetic Aperture Radar (ISAR), the Airborne Low Frequency (dipping) Sonar (ALFS), a greatly enhanced electronic support measures and self defense sensor suite, and upgraded mission computers. In June 2001, the MH-60R program received approval from ASN(RDA) to revise the acquisition strategy from remanufactured airframes to new production aircraft. The acquisition program rebaseline, incorporating this new manufacture strategy and extension of the schedule to allow further subsystem testing and maturity, has been approved.

The MH-60S Multi-Mission Combat Support Helicopter is the future aircraft for organic airborne mine countermeasures, combat search and rescue, special operations, and logistics support. The MH-60S will replace the Navy's aging fleet of H-46, H-1, H-3 and HH-60H helicopters. This spring, we certified the Fleet Replacement Squadron "ready-to-train" and we plan to introduce initial operational capability of the MH-60S in the fall of 2002. Retirement of the CH-46D, the Navy's logistic workhorse (in its 34th year of service) is targeted for August of 2004. Follow-on systems changes will

introduce the network, sensors, weapons and survivability suites necessary for the multi-spectral Battle Group tasking.

Summary

America's global security interests, recent world events and on-going operations in the Northern Arabian Sea and Afghanistan are validating both our past decisions with regard to aircraft, weapons and personnel, as well as our commitment to sustaining the readiness of our forces, which now routinely deploy in harm's way. Forward presence, maritime dominance and decisive landward power projection in the littorals require modern aircraft and weapons systems capable of responding rapidly to a wide range of missions in an increasingly complex and demanding threat environment. We must plan, invest and equip our maritime forces so they are shaped to bring overwhelming force to the fight. Naval Aviation continues to make extraordinary contributions to the Nation's defense. We are committed to keeping Naval Aviation robust and relevant and we will keep faith with our warfighters in the Fleet to ensure they have the aircraft and equipment necessary to engage in combat and prevail.