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HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION FORCES  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PRESENTATION TO THE  
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION FORCES  
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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STATEMENT OF:

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(Acquisition, Technology & Logistics)

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Chairman Courtney, Ranking Member Wittman, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for having us here today to provide testimony on the United States Air Force's Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) budget request for projection forces aviation programs and capabilities. The leadership and support of this subcommittee is critical to our achievement of national security priorities to defend the homeland, deter nuclear and non-nuclear strategic attacks, deter aggression and be prepared to prevail in conflict, and build a resilient joint force.

The Department of the Air Force consists of approximately 700,000 Airmen and Guardians that enable our country to meet the challenges associated with the full range of national security threats. Providing our Airmen and Guardians with the capabilities they need to deter, and if necessary, win is our most sacred obligation. The advancements of China's military modernization efforts and Russian aggression in Eastern Europe highlight the pacing challenges we face and the urgency with which we must act.

The Department of the Air Force's FY23 President's budget request aims to accelerate the development and fielding of a more modern and operationally relevant force that the current strategic environment demands. Our budget request balances the risks of maintaining the current operational requirements of combatant commands with the need to develop and deliver the Air Force needed. The aircraft we seek to retire have served us well and exceeded the requirements they were developed to meet. However, they are not well-suited for today's contested environments or future high-end conflicts. The average age of the Air Force fleet is 29 years with many aircraft flying beyond their intended lifespan and becoming significantly more expensive to sustain.

With congressional support in Fiscal Year 2022, the Air Force was allowed to begin the transition to better face our pacing challenge. While grateful for this support, we continue to face restrictions on the retirement of outdated fighter, tanker, cargo, and command and control aircraft. These restrictions impede investment in the necessary capabilities to deter competitors and win future conflicts. We are conscious of the difficulties associated with these changes and are eager for continued collaboration with Congress, industry, and the communities that support our Air Bases to ensure our Nation's security.

## **CURRENT CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY**

Following National Defense Strategy (NDS) guidance, the Air Force seeks to invest in technologies and field systems that are both lethal and survivable against tomorrow's threats. This ultimately means transitioning away from many legacy platforms in order to free up manpower and resources to modernize and field more capable systems. If we are to modernize to address the emerging threat, we must use resources tied to our legacy platforms and weapons systems that are decreasing in relevance today and will be irrelevant in the future. Retaining systems that have either limited contributions, or are simply not relevant in the future fight, delays modernization and exacerbates future capability gaps. If deterrence fails, our Airmen must have the training, tools, platforms, and operating systems required to win. We must strike a balance between risk in the near-term and risk in the future.

### **Acquisition Focus**

With the completion of the NDS and the arrival of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, SAF/AQ has begun to assess the current programs of the Department of the Air Force and evaluate ongoing efforts to adapt acquisition policies and processes to overcome the pacing challenges posed by the People's Republic of China and deter threats of other strategic competitors.

In the initial stages this involves a number of key focus areas including: delivery of operational capability and meeting the needs, both current and future, of U.S. forces who are confronting rapidly evolving challenges from strategic competitors; modernize our nuclear deterrent to ensure it remains credible and secure; sustaining a complex and aging Air Force fleet; improving our ability to field innovative new capabilities and especially to acquire software and software-intensive systems; and supporting and developing the skills of our acquisition workforce, allowing them to help our forces meet the challenges we face. A key enabler of these activities is our advancing capabilities for digital acquisition.

Throughout the first 100 days, SAF/AQ will be engaging with Department leadership, the Program Executive Officers, and industry, both traditional and non-traditional, to establish clear priorities for the acquisition enterprise. Once set, I welcome the opportunity to share those priorities with this subcommittee and answer any questions you may have.

## **Bomber / Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) Force Structure**

Our budget request supports the NDS's call for a full-scope modernization of nuclear delivery systems, to ensure a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent to backstop our integrated deterrence approach. Our nuclear deterrent underpins U.S. strategy and diplomacy, as well as every operational plan. It safeguards the homeland, assures allies, and deters adversaries. Sentinel provides an evolutionary capability that enables the U.S. to address growing current and evolving future threats, while simultaneously increasing the safety, security, and reliability of the U.S. Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBM) force. Air Force bombers anchor the air leg of the Nation's Nuclear Triad. As a unique national security capability, the B-21 represents the future of this bomber force. As modernization continues, the Air Force it will gradually transition the current three-bomber fleet to a two-bomber fleet of next-generation B-21s and modernized B-52s to provide nuclear and conventional global strike options for decades to come.

### ***B-21***

The B-21 Raider will form the backbone of our future bomber force and is the centerpiece of the Secretary of the Air Force's sixth operational imperative. As China and Russia develop new weapons and defenses, it is imperative we maintain the capability to hold at risk any target on the planet. The B-21 underscores our national security as the most flexible leg of the Nuclear Triad and supports Combatant Commanders across the range of military objectives as both a nuclear and conventional bomber. The FY23 President's Budget includes \$3.25 billion in Research, Development, Test & Evaluation (RDT&E) funding that continues to fund Engineering and Manufacturing development activities. Additionally, the budget includes \$1.79 billion in aircraft procurement to procure the first lot of low rate initial production B-21s, spares, support equipment, and long lead items for the second lot of low rate initial production. There are six B-21 test aircraft in flow on the manufacturing line, which are being built using the same tooling processes and technicians who will build the production aircraft.

In parallel, beddown preparations at Ellsworth Air Force Base (AFB), South Dakota remain on-track. The FY23 President's Budget requests \$168 million to support one new military construction project and funds the third increment of the Low Observable Maintenance Facility at Ellsworth AFB. The first B-21s are projected to arrive at Ellsworth AFB in the mid-2020s with base infrastructure ready to support. A second Environmental Impact Statement

began in calendar year 2022 to assess the final two basing locations, Dyess AFB, Texas and Whiteman AFB, Missouri.

The Air Force is committed and on track to meet its key performance parameter of building B-21s with an average procurement unit cost of \$550 million (Base Year 2010) / \$639 million (Base Year 2019), assuming a minimum fleet of 100 aircraft.

### ***B-52***

While the last B-52 Stratofortress entered service in the U.S. Air Force in 1962, we expect to continue operating the B-52 through 2050. We will continue to invest in modernization programs to keep the platform operationally relevant. Major modernization efforts include the Commercial Engine Replacement Program (CERP), the Radar Modernization Program (RMP), integration of the long-range standoff (LRSO) nuclear air-launched cruise missile, and installation of Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF) secured satellite communication capabilities.

The Air Force's number one priority for the B-52 is to ensure platform viability through 2050 and the CERP enables us to achieve this goal. CERP will replace legacy engines (TF33-PW-103) with new military-derivative commercial Rolls Royce F-130 engines. It is important to note that CERP is more complex than just a standard commercial engine refit. CERP includes new engines, flight systems, and cockpit throttles and displays. The RMP is also necessary to ensure viability through 2050 and will modernize the current Strategic Radar (AN/APQ-166), which is based on 1960s technology modified in the 1980s.

Finally, integration of the LRSO and AEHF will bolster the continuation of the B-52's role in the airborne leg of the Nuclear Triad. The Air Force remains committed to B-52 modernization to ensure the nation's oldest and most versatile frontline long range bomber remains relevant through 2050 and beyond.

### ***B-1***

The B-1 is a long-range, supersonic multirole bomber capable of flying intercontinental missions with the largest payload of guided and unguided weapons in the Air Force inventory. This budget focuses resources on sustaining and modernizing the remaining combat-coded B-1s greatly facilitated by the retirement of 17 B-1s as authorized in the FY21 National Defense Authorization Act. We will ensure the B-1s remain lethal and viable until B-21s are operational in sufficient numbers. The completed Integrated Battle Station upgrade enhances crew

situational awareness and precision engagement capabilities and is the B-1's largest modernization effort ever. The first aircraft with this upgrade was delivered in January 2014 and the last aircraft was completed in September 2020. Additional efforts to update the B-1's communication systems are ongoing and ensure the B-1 remains the backbone of the Air Force's long-range bomber force until the B-21 arrives.

Lastly, the B-1 is the Air Force's threshold platform for the Long Range Anti-Ship Missile (LRASM). Integration of this weapon, coupled with the B-1's long range, high speed, and large payload capacity, postures the B-1 for an important role in any conflict in the Indo-Pacific region.

## ***B-2***

The B-2 is the only long-range strike aircraft capable of penetrating and surviving advanced Integrated Air Defense Systems to deliver weapons against heavily defended targets. Its unique attributes of intercontinental range, precision strike, large conventional or nuclear payloads, ability to penetrate defenses, and low observable profile allow it to execute Nuclear Deterrence Operations, Nuclear Response, Global Strike, and Global Precision Attack missions. The Air Force will ensure the B-2 remains effective until the B-21 is operational. Because delays in the Defensive Management System modernization effort would have limited the operational utility of the system by the time it would have fielded, the Air Force de-scoped the Defensive Management System modernization program. Instead, we are replacing the B-2's unsustainable cathode ray tube displays with modern sustainable displays as part of the B-2 Displays Modernization program.

The Air Force reached Full Operational Capability to re-host the Stores Management Operational Flight Program software in the Flexible Strike program. This enables the B-2 to take advantage of advanced digital weapon interfaces, including those used by the B61-12 nuclear weapon. Other on-going B-2 modernization programs include Adaptive Communication Suite upgrades, enhancement of the Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) system, replacement of the Crash Survivable Memory Unit, integration of hardware upgrades for employment of the B61-12 nuclear weapon, and software upgrades to allow the B-2 to carry the extended range variant of the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM-ER). Finally, the B-2 will continue sustainment efforts for the on-going Low Observable Signature and Supportability Modification effort to improve aircraft maintainability and availability.

### ***Hypersonic Weapon Integration***

Hypersonic weapons provide an important capability for Combatant Commanders, and the Air Force is committed to ensuring our long-range strike platforms can employ these systems. In-line with the Air Force's two bomber fleet strategy, we will ensure these weapons are capable of being delivered via our modernized B-52 fleet. In the near-term, the Air Force will utilize the FY22 \$10 million congressional add to continue maturing the capability to externally carry hypersonic weapons utilizing the B-1. The speed, responsiveness, and range of air-launched hypersonic weapons combined with bomber payload capacity provide a necessary and compelling response to meet and surpass the pacing threat of China and Russia.

### **Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) Modernization**

ICBMs are integral to U.S. nuclear deterrence. The Air Force is in the initial stages of replacing the 1970s-era Minuteman III capability with the LGM-35A Sentinel Weapon System through the Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD) acquisition program. The GBSD is the most cost effective option for modernizing the ICBM leg of the Nuclear Triad and supports the NDS to modernize the capability of nuclear forces. This weapon system will extend and improve the capabilities of the ground-based leg of the Nuclear Triad, providing a credible and responsive deterrent capability against current and emerging adversaries through 2075. The new weapon system will provide improved nuclear surety, safety, and effectiveness with enhanced security features. The new weapon system will provide more efficient operations, maintenance, and security by modernizing critical infrastructure and decreasing lifecycle costs.

The GBSD acquisition program remains on track in pursuing a low risk, technically mature design and is using innovative digital engineering and acquisition strategies to increase development speed and ensure on-time delivery. Deployment is scheduled to begin in the late-2020s in order to resolve capability, attrition, and age-out concerns with the Minuteman-III weapon system, as well as meet warfighter requirements. The nation is focusing investment on these new missiles and the associated infrastructure and accompanying re-entry systems.

### **Tanker Fleet**

The Air Force tanker fleet is a critical capability to all Joint operations. It is crucial that we prioritize modernization over legacy capacity. We are modernizing the tanker fleet through four separate efforts. First, the Air Force is investing \$574M across the FY23 Future Years

Defense Program (FYDP) to modernize a smaller legacy tanker fleet. Second, we are continuing to deliver new KC-46s with \$13.1B invested in new aircraft procurement across the FYDP. Third, the Air Force is initiating the KC-Y program in FY23 with \$423M for RDT&E across the FYDP and \$1.3B for procurement in FY27 for an initial aircraft delivery in approximately FY29. Finally, the Air Force is continuing divestment of legacy KC-10s and recapitalization of KC-135s that will result in a tanker fleet comprised of 362 KC-135s, 26 KC-10s, and 95 KC-46s by the end of FY23. As of April 2022, we have accepted 57 KC-46 Pegasus aircraft out of a planned total of 179 KC-46s. As we transition away from the aging KC-10 and right-size the KC-135 fleet, we continue to look towards the next generation for tanker recapitalization options.

### ***KC-46***

While we continue to sustain the current tanker capability, building the future tanker fleet remains one of the Air Force's top acquisition priorities. The KC-46 will deliver greater operational readiness, flexibility, and survivability to the Global Reach mission. Ninety-four production aircraft are on contract, and the Air Force is in negotiations with Boeing for 15 aircraft in FY22.

The first KC-46 aircraft delivered to Main Operating Base 1, McConnell AFB, Kansas, on 25 January 2019. The Formal Training Unit at Altus AFB, Oklahoma, received its first KC-46 on 8 February 2019. The Air Force established Main Operating Base 2 at Pease Air National Guard Base, New Hampshire, on 8 August 2019, and Main Operating Base 3 at Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina, on 12 June 2020. Main Operating Base 4a at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey received its first two KC-46 aircraft on 9 November 2021. The Air Force will continue taking delivery of KC-46s at a rate of approximately 1.25 per month.

The Air Force remains committed to ensuring Boeing corrects deficiencies identified in both developmental and operational test and evaluation. Partnered with Air Mobility Command, we have worked hard to accept the KC-46 while ensuring its major deficiencies—the Remote Vision System (RVS) and stiff air refueling boom—are properly addressed without undue burden on taxpayers or warfighters.

On 2 April 2020, we reached agreement with Boeing to fix the RVS deficiencies through significant upgrades, known as RVS 2.0, at no additional cost to the government. On 11 April 2022, the Air Force and Boeing officially closed the Remote Vision System (RVS) 2.0

Preliminary Design Review (PDR). The RVS 2.0 design provides marked improvements over the current system. The overall RVS 2.0 program is still on schedule, with design solution and start of fleet retrofit expected in FY24. The air refueling boom engineering change proposal, initially awarded in August 2019, was definitized on 30 September 2020, and the design solution is expected to complete in FY24, with retrofit starting in FY25.

The Director, Operational Test and Evaluation (DOT&E) has stated Initial Operational Test and Evaluation (IOT&E) will conclude after the RVS and boom deficiencies are resolved; IOT&E is expected to complete in FY24. The full-rate production decision is planned after IOT&E is complete and we are in receipt of the statutorily-required Beyond Low Rate Initial Production report from DOT&E.

Despite its current deficiencies, the KC-46 is safe to operate (adhering to flight manual cautions provided to our operators) and will be the Air Force's best tanker for contested environments due to enhanced situational awareness, battle management, and threat countermeasures. By accepting the KC-46 with known deficiencies, the Air Force has enabled familiarization and operational test activities while working with Boeing on long-term efforts to correct deficiencies. Accepting the KC-46, and fixing deficiencies in parallel with operational test and evaluation, is the fastest way to achieve full operational capability to meet warfighter requirements.

At this time last year, only the Navy's F/A-18 was fully certified for unrestricted refueling with the KC-46. Additionally, at this time last year, no KC-46s were or had been presented to USTRANSCOM for tasking.

Beginning last July, the Interim Capability Release Program (ICR) allowed USTRANSCOM to "task" KC-46s to support approved receivers under the plan. Since then, continued approval of additional receivers has led to the KC-46 being cleared for 85% of missions tasked by USTRANSCOM. These additional approvals include bombers, tankers, airlift, ISR and fighters (F-15, F-16, F-18, F-22 and F-35). The KC-46 is now also capable of being tasked to conduct passenger and aeromedical evacuation missions.

KC-46 aircraft have conducted nearly 9000 missions since January 2019 with US and coalition receivers delivering nearly 80 million pounds of fuel through over 37,000 safe and effective aerial refueling contacts. Within the next few months, additional receivers will likely be approved via the ICR process, allowing nearly all boom-compatible receivers to be refueled

by the KC-46 except the A-10 and some Air Force Special Operations Command C-130 aircraft. This alleviates pressure on legacy tanker fleets and allows some continued legacy divestiture.

The FY23 President's budget requests \$186.2 million in RDT&E funding for the ongoing KC-46 Engineering and Manufacturing Development and post production modification efforts, to include the boom telescope actuator redesign that resolves the stiff boom deficiency, on-going test and receiver aircraft certifications, and increased effort on the KC-46 Block 1 program. Additionally, the budget requests \$2.83 billion not only to procure 15 aircraft in Production Lot 9 along with associated engines, spares, and support equipment, but also to support increased depot standup and organic sustainment.

### ***KC-10 and KC-135***

The average age of our KC-135 and KC-10 tankers is 59 and 35 years old, respectively. Both fleets are challenged by aircraft parts obsolescence and diminishing manufacturing source issues. With the help of organic Air Force depots and industry, we are able to maintain these platforms as effective and safe weapon systems for the warfighter. We are executing several key modernization, safety, and compliance initiatives to ensure our KC-135 fleet remains viable beyond 2040.

The FY23 President's budget request will continue KC-135 modernization efforts, including the Block 45 program, the Aero-I Satellite Communications (SATCOM) program, Mobile User Objective System, Real Time in Cockpit, and the Rudder Position Indicator program. The Air Force is also funding three new modernization efforts in FY23, including two radio upgrades and Center Console Refresh.

Additionally, the budget requests funding to keep our KC-10 fleet operational through its planned retirement at the end of FY24, and includes funding for service bulletins and low cost modifications to ensure Federal Aviation Administration certification.

The Air Force FY23 budget request proposes decreasing its tanker fleet from 479 Total Active Inventory to 455 by the end of FY27. In FY23, the Air Force is retiring 14 KC-10s and 18 KC-135s from the Active Duty fleets. These retirements are critical in providing the flexibility to free up resources and manpower to modernize and fund the Air Force's future tanker fleet.

## **Executive Airlift**

### ***VC-25B***

The VC-25B program will replace the U.S. Air Force Presidential VC-25A fleet, which faces capability gaps, rising maintenance costs, and parts obsolescence as it ages beyond 30 years. The VC-25B program will deliver two new aircraft to meet the requirements for the President to execute the roles of Head of State, Chief Executive, and Commander-in-Chief. Two Boeing 747-8 aircraft are being uniquely modified to provide the President, staff, and guests with safe and reliable air transportation and a level of communications capability and security equivalent to that which is available in the White House. Modifications to the 747-8 aircraft began in February 2020 in San Antonio, Texas, and include an electrical power upgrade, dual auxiliary power units that are usable in flight, a mission communication systems, an executive interior, military avionics, a self-defense system, autonomous enplaning and deplaning, and autonomous baggage loading.

The FY23 President's budget requests \$493 million to continue Engineering and Manufacturing Development, aircraft modifications, and other product support activities.

### ***C-40***

The C-40 is a modified 737-700 Boeing Business Jet used to provide safe and reliable global air transportation for U.S. officials, including members of the Executive and Legislative branches of government, as well as other Defense officials. The fleet has been undergoing communications upgrades to ensure secure and robust communications that meet Executive-level requirements. The FY23 President's budget reflects \$2.2 million in procurement funding to address low cost modifications and service bulletins in order to provide secure and reliable government air transportation to these passengers.

## **Strategic and Tactical Airlift**

### ***C-5***

The C-5 Super Galaxy provides all-weather worldwide strategic airlift for combat forces, equipment, and supplies, exemplifying Rapid Global Mobility as outlined in the NDS. Current investment programs focus on fleet obsolescence, maintainability, and safety of flight.

The FY23 President's budget requests \$46.0 million in procurement funding, predominantly for communications, navigation, surveillance/air traffic management (CNS/ATM) and core mission computer/weather radar (CMC/WxR) system equipment. CNS/ATM upgrades include Automatic Dependent Surveillance-Broadcast (ADS-B) Out modifications required for

global airspace compliance. The CMC/WxR effort replaces an antiquated radar system and upgrades the core mission computer processor to meet the demands of future software modifications. Production funding also includes procurement of training systems.

Additionally, the FY23 President's budget requests RDT&E funding to support replacement of the Multifunctional Controls and Displays (RMCD). This comprehensive sustainment modification mitigates the obsolescence of the current control and display units and increases capacity for future technology integration into the cockpit.

### ***C-17***

The C-17 is the only aircraft in the Air Force inventory that combines tactical capability with strategic range to operate from austere airfields. The fleet of 222 aircraft provides our Nation with unmatched flexibility to conduct theater and inter-theater direct delivery, airdrop, aeromedical, and special operations airlift missions. Agile and efficient software and hardware updates ensure timely readiness, safety, and capability improvements as this premier airlift platform contributes to our national security objectives.

The FY23 President's budget requests \$152.0 million in procurement funding to continue critical modifications to the C-17 fleet. This includes a filter fire mitigation for the On-Board Inert Gas Generating System, Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures defensive systems, and training system upgrades. The modification effort of a replacement heads-up display will address obsolescence of the current C-17 heads-up display and improve the system's availability, reliability, and maintainability. Production funding also includes procurement of training systems.

Additionally, FY23 RDT&E funding will address obsolescence and flight safety issues. The Beyond-Line-of-Sight communication system effort modernizes multi-channel voice and data communication subsystems to ensure the C-17 keeps pace with changes in Department of Defense communication infrastructure, and begins production in FY23.

### ***C-130H/J Fleet***

The C-130 fleet consists of C-130H and newer C-130J aircraft, as well as special mission aircraft (AC/LC/EC/MC/HC/WC-130s). C-130Hs and C-130Js are medium-size transport aircraft capable of completing a variety of tactical airlift operations across a broad range of missions. The fleet delivers air logistics support for all theater forces, including those involved in combat operations.

### ***C-130H***

The Air Force continues to modernize the C-130H fleet through a four-pronged approach emphasizing aircraft safety, airspace compliance, modernization, and partial recapitalization. Our C-130H Center Wing Box replacement program breathes new life into some of our hardest flown aircraft, enabling them to continue to safely operate well into the future. The C-130H Avionics Modernization Program (AMP) Increment 1 ensures the C-130H fleet is outfitted with modern communication equipment and complies with U.S. and international airspace transponder mandates. We completed the AMP Increment 1 installations for the C-130H fleet in May 2021. The AMP Increment 2 program improves the C-130H fleet maintainability and reliability by providing a new digital avionics suite and mitigating obsolescence and diminishing manufacturing source challenges. The FY23 President's budget requests \$0.4 million in RDT&E and \$115.4 million in procurement funding to support the C-130H fleet.

As with other weapon systems, the Air Force is taking measured risk in the C-130 portfolio as it focuses resources toward the future force. Specifically, in FY23 we plan to reduce the total C-130 fleet from 279 aircraft to 271 aircraft (110 C-130Hs and 161 C-130J aircraft).

### ***C-130J***

The Air Force has partially recapitalized the C-130H fleet with C-130Js, which also supports our Special Operations missions by providing Special Forces with extra weight carrying capacity, longer range, and better fuel efficiency. These special mission variants of the C-130J conduct airborne psychological operations and offensive electronic warfare (EC-130J), weather reconnaissance (WC-130J), search and rescue (HC-130J), and special operations (MC-130J and AC-130J). The Air Force has multiple modification efforts for the C-130J, including Center Wing Box replacement, Large Aircraft Infrared Countermeasures, Block 8.1, and communications upgrades. The C-130J Block 8.1 modernization program, currently in production, delivers new communication and data link capabilities, a modern flight management system, and other key capabilities to the field. In addition, the Air Force plans to upgrade both our C-130H and C-130J fleets with a Mobile User Objective System and a Second Generation Anti-Jam Tactical Ultra High Frequency Radio satellite communication system to ensure we maintain key communication links anywhere in the world.

The FY23 President's budget requests \$11.1 million for C-130J RDT&E and \$187.6 million for C-130J procurement and modification efforts. The FY23 President's budget also

requests funding for HC/MC-130J RDT&E and HC/MC-130J procurement and modification efforts.

### **Connecting the Joint Force**

One effort that will stress how fast and smart our requirements, acquisition, and operations process can move is Joint All-Domain Command and Control (JADC2) powered by the Advanced Battle Management System (ABMS). Charged by the Secretary of Defense with leading the concept development for JADC2, the Department of the Air Force is building ABMS to create decision superiority by delivering relevant information and capabilities to warfighters and operators at all echelons. ABMS will integrate today's and tomorrow's sensors; develop applications embedded with artificial intelligence, sophisticated algorithms, and multi-layered protections to make sense of massive amounts of trusted data; link space capabilities with weapons systems and personnel across all domains; and design pods, platforms, pathways, procedures, and policies that connect and integrate the warfighter better and faster than in any time in our history.

Operationally optimized ABMS/JADC2 is one of the Secretary of the Air Force's Operational Imperatives (OIs) and is a foundational capability in many other OIs. The ABMS acquisition effort will pursue two interconnected investment paths: enduring digital infrastructure investments and Capability Release packages, which leverage those enduring investments but focus on closing kill-chains and delivering immediate operational capability. The Department of the Air Force (DAF) Rapid Capabilities Office (RCO) is working in conjunction with the wider acquisition community to ensure Air Force and Space Force systems have seamless interoperability and compatibility to meet the JADC2 operational requirements. The six ABMS capabilities required to connect the warfighter are secure processing, connectivity, data management, applications, sensor integration, and effects integration.

Driven by requirements approved by the Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force and the Chief of Space Operations, Capability Release #1 (CR #1) (Airborne Edge Node) connects select tactical assets and C2 functions to the transport layer and the ABMS digital infrastructure at the tactical edge, enhancing situational awareness and decision making at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. We look forward to working with this subcommittee to ensure the Department of the Air Force maintains sufficient military advantage

to secure our vital national interests and support our allies and partners in Fiscal Year 2023 and beyond.