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THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION FORCES

STATEMENT OF

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BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION FORCES OF THE

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

ON

V-22 PROGRAM UPDATE

FEBRUAY 10, 2026

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION FORCES

Chairman Kelly, Ranking Member Courtney and distinguished members of the Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, thank you for the opportunity to address the status of the Joint V-22 Osprey program.

Operated by the Marine Corps, Air Force and Navy, the V-22 Osprey family of tiltrotor aircraft combines the vertical takeoff, hover and vertical landing qualities of a helicopter with the long-range, fuel efficiency and speed characteristics of a turboprop aircraft. As the backbone of Marine Corps combat assault transport capability, the MV-22B operates in multiple theaters from expeditionary sites and afloat. The Air Force's CV-22B conducts long-range infiltration, exfiltration and resupply missions for special operations forces. The CMV-22B is the Navy's long-range/medium-lift element of intra-theater aerial logistics, fulfilling time-critical requirements for transport of personnel and cargo.

The Department of the Navy is the lead component for the Joint V-22 Osprey Program, with Department of the Air Force and U.S. Special Operations Command being fully integrated joint program participants. The Department of the Navy, through Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR), exercises Airworthiness Authority for Marine Corps and Navy variants, is responsible for maintaining airworthiness products for all variants. The Department of the Air Force is the Airworthiness Authority for the Air Force variant, with mutual airworthiness acceptance agreements in place with the Department of the Navy.

NAVAIR is responsible for development, integration, testing, fielding and sustainment of Naval Aviation capabilities. NAVAIR has oversight of approximately 4,000 individual aircraft across more than 40 different types of aircraft and programs, including the V-22 Osprey. NAVAIR equips our warfighters with superior, integrated systems to ensure our people, platforms, weapons and equipment are mission ready 24/7 to dominate any fight.

The V-22 Joint Program Office (JPO), located in Patuxent River, Maryland, is part of the Program Executive Officer for Air, Anti-Submarine Warfare, Assault and Special Mission Programs (PEO(A)). The V-22 JPO is responsible for management of all V-22 Osprey development, integration, testing, fielding and sustainment. The V-22 JPO is staffed with personnel from the Marine Corps, Air Force and Navy. It is a true joint service program as all three Services share in funding common, joint efforts and providing oversight on program execution. In addition to managing the platform's development, fielding and sustainment, the PEO and the V-22 program manager address documented risks of the V-22 program via material

and non-material solutions. As the first operational tiltrotor aircraft, the program has aggressively sought to improve V-22 safety and readiness with available technical solutions and funding. The learning achieved since the aircraft's first flight in 1989, has continually been incorporated both into the V-22 and the next generation of tiltrotor aircraft. Considering the unique tiltrotor configuration of the aircraft, the V-22 JPO has maintained a rigorous process of identifying and addressing platform risks as they emerge. The V-22 JPO is focused on investigating and proactively mitigating potential safety issues within the prioritized resources provided by the Services.

The NAVAIR V-22 Comprehensive Review and the Government Accountability Office report on the V-22 Osprey were both released in December 2025. These reports identified recommendations to improve safety and readiness across the Services. These independent reports are well aligned, and the Services are in the process of implementing all recommendations.

HISTORY OF THE V-22

The V-22 was developed to fulfill a fleet requirement for an aircraft capable of vertical takeoff and landing while also transporting troops at speeds exceeding a conventional helicopter and is a key asset for the U.S. armed forces. The U.S. Marine Corps has operated the platform since 2007, now possessing 323 aircraft, while the U.S. Air Force began its operations in 2009 and currently has 53 aircraft. The U.S. Navy is the most recent Service to adopt the V-22, with operational units since 2020 and a current fleet of 41 aircraft. Cumulatively, the V-22 has logged over 840,000 flight hours across all variants. As noted in the Comprehensive Review, the platform has not undergone a mid-life upgrade since its fielding. The V-22 JPO has identified drive system, airframe and avionics improvements for a mid-life upgrade to enhance readiness and reliability, resolve obsolescence issues, and improve platform safety. The V-22 JPO is working with the services to implement these mid-life upgrade requirements.

The V-22 is a complex and revolutionary aircraft requiring continuous coordination across the Department and defense industrial base. Bell-Boeing is the V-22 Osprey prime contractor with Rolls-Royce as the prime contractor for V-22 Osprey engines. More than 30 other companies complete the sourcing pool for over 60,000 orderable parts on the V-22. There is regular coordination between original equipment manufacturers and the V-22 JPO to work through engineering investigations, safety investigations, testing, design changes, etc., as well as

regular contract actions taken to incorporate changes and update items. Safety concerns can be identified and reported by any supplier.

MISSION OF THE V-22 OSPREY

Through its unrivaled capabilities as the world's only operational tiltrotor aircraft, the V-22 continues to perform missions with the speed and versatility unique to the Osprey and U.S. military.

In the Western Pacific, the CMV-22B provides a critical advantage to the Carrier Strike Group by providing a significant leap in operational reach and flexibility for logistics. This is enabling the rapid transport of personnel, vital supplies, MEDEVAC/CASEVAC and uniquely, the transportation of the F-35C engine power module, over the vast distances of the Indo-Pacific theater. This ability to quickly reposition and resupply forces across the region is a decisive mobility advantage, enhancing the agility and operational effectiveness of our naval forces in that strategic environment. In its first deployment, the CMV-22B transported a sailor with a critical medical emergency from ship to hospital providing life-saving care at a range and speed only the CMV-22B is capable of, and it continues its vital support of the Carrier Strike Group around the world today.

Meanwhile, the CV-22B is providing the Air Force Special Operations Command with the capability for the rapid, long-range, clandestine insertion, extraction and resupply of special operations forces into sensitive areas that would be otherwise inaccessible. Its ability to execute missions in a single period of darkness has reduced complexity and increased the chances of success, while unable to provide real world examples of its employment due to the classified nature of its mission, it has been a definitive game-changing advantage for the Air Force Special Operations Command.

Furthermore, since achieving its Initial Operational Capability in 2007 the Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey has provided a revolutionary capability for expeditionary operations. Making up the core component of the Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) Air Combat Element, the MV-22B allows Marines to conduct rapid, long-range missions, inserting troops and supplies from ships and land bases over much greater distances and at higher speeds than the legacy helicopters it replaced. It has unequivocally transformed how the Marine Corps executes amphibious assaults and sustained operations ashore. Whether the MV-22B is providing humanitarian

support during natural disasters, providing security response to U.S. Embassies or providing mission support to joint operations, the MV-22B has become a vital part of our Nation's 911 force.

Although the V-22 Osprey continues to be one of our most aero-mechanically complex aircraft, the advantage it brings to our fighting men and women cannot be overstated. However, these unique benefits present similarly unique challenges that NAVAIR, the V-22 JPO and the entire Department of War are working deliberately to meet.

COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

On December 12, 2025, the Department of the Navy, in coordination with the Department of the Air Force, publicly released the NAVAIR V-22 Comprehensive Review. NAVAIR ordered the in-depth review in September 2023 to assess V-22 performance and identify actionable plans to improve platform safety and readiness. The review reaffirmed the airworthiness of the V-22 platform under established controls allowing the continued safe operations of this critical joint capability. The Department of the Navy and Services are actively implementing the review's 32 distinct recommendations to enhance the safety and readiness of the V-22 platform. With sustained efforts to address recommendations, the Department will continue to improve safety and readiness of the platform.

Also in December 2025, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released its report, "Osprey Aircraft: Additional Oversight and Information Sharing Would Improve Safety Efforts" (GAO-26-107285), on the V-22 Osprey. Both the NAVAIR V-22 Comprehensive Review and the GAO's V-22 Osprey reports were supported by the same V-22 information so, as expected, similar findings and recommendations were published in GAO's report. More specifically, both reports highlighted the need for action on governance and knowledge sharing, which has been captured in our processes.

In response to the Comprehensive Review and GAO report, the Department of the Navy and Services began to implement recommendations as soon as they began to emerge. Currently, of the 32 recommendations identified in the V-22 Comprehensive Review, 24 are closed, the planning for five are in work and are expected to complete this year, and three have plans in place and are being monitored to ensure progress to plan. In the case of the GAO report, all recommendations are being implemented.

ACTIONS TO DATE

All recommendations in the Comprehensive Review and GAO report are being implemented. The V-22 JPO has focused on development and fielding of material and non-material solutions to address safety risks and readiness improvements.

In January 2026, Commander Air Force Special Operations Command hosted a V-22 Osprey Joint Program review with Deputy Commandant for Aviation, Commander Naval Air Forces and the Program Executive Officer, in response to the Comprehensive Review, and Government Accountability Office (GAO) report recommendation for additional oversight and information sharing. This Joint V-22 Leadership Forum (JVLF) brings Marine Corps, Air Force and Navy stakeholders together to remove barriers to achieving V-22 safety and readiness objectives. This review was also supported by Acting Assistant Secretary of War for Readiness as Chair of the Defense Safety Oversight Council Integration Group. The V-22 Program Manager provided an overall update on actions taken to implement the V-22 Comprehensive Review and GAO report recommendations.

Additionally, in January 2026, the V-22 JPO, working with our industry partners at Bell-Boeing, began fielding an improved Proprotor Gearbox (PRGB) that implements X-53 Triple-Melt Steel upgrades. This steel, and its manufacturing process, represents cutting-edge technology for aircraft drive systems and is expected to significantly reduce microscopic material impurities that could potentially lead to premature gear system failure.

The V-22 JPO is addressing the risk of hard clutch engagements through material and non-material solutions. A full redesign of the Input Quill Assembly is currently in test. In the interim, the flight hour limit placed on the existing assembly has proven effective with over 127,000 flight hours without incident.

With these solutions, NAVAIR and the V-22 JPO are confident that drive system related causes of recent mishaps are being addressed and mitigated.

In addition to these high priority efforts, NAVAIR and the V-22 JPO continue to work diligently to reduce or eliminate the most impactful V-22 system safety risks. In the past 20 years, through a combination of aircraft modifications, aircrew training and maintenance procedure improvements, 29 system safety risks have been eliminated and an additional five

downgraded, while continuously investigating and interdicting numerous potential safety concerns before risk acceptance is considered.

Although significant progress has been made, there is still more work to do. The V-22 JPO is implementing plans of action to address the entire scope of system and non-system safety risks. Moreover, internal systems have been examined and revised to ensure that future system and non-system safety risks are identified, resourced for mitigation and solutions implemented as rapidly as possible.

In response to the Comprehensive Review and GAO report, multiple levels of safety oversight and information sharing for the Joint V-22 Osprey program have been implemented. As part of this effort and to ensure senior leader oversight, the Joint V-22 Leadership Forum has been established. This body, led by the U.S. Marine Corps' Deputy Commandant for Aviation, the Navy's Commander, Naval Air Forces, the Commander, Air Force Special Operations Command and the NAVAIR Commander, provides continuing oversight of the V-22 program and reports directly to the Service Vice-Chiefs on all matters relating to safety and readiness of the Osprey.

Following Department of the Navy processes for system safety, the Naval Safety Commander in concert with the Air Force Safety Center ensures information sharing. Concurrently, NAVAIR administers System Safety policy and oversight for all Naval Aviation platforms, including the V-22. Internal to the V-22 program, each Service dedicates representatives to facilitate cross-Service coordination, review and adjudication of safety items with an overarching objective of maintaining a proactive safety posture.

In addition to improving safety, the NAVAIR and V-22 JPO teams have been focused on improving aircraft readiness. To that end, holistic plans for a V-22 mid-life upgrade are being developed to modernize the drive system, airframe and avionics. These efforts will significantly improve aircraft readiness, availability and maintainability while facilitating rapid future modernization through the incorporation of a modular open systems approach.

As part of this mid-life upgrade the Marine Corps and Navy are working to implement V-22 Nacelle Improvements, successfully demonstrated on the Air Force CV-22B. Since first installation, the CV-22B has seen Aircraft Availability increase by over 20%, Mean Flight Hours Before Failure increase by over 1,500 hours, and Mean Maintenance Hours per Flight Hour decrease by over 2 hours.

When combined, these upgrades will address the aircraft's most critical capability and readiness gaps and are expected to keep the aircraft ready to fight through the 2050s and beyond.

CONCLUSION

The V-22 Osprey plays an integral role in supporting U.S. military operations and ensuring the airworthiness of these vital assets is critical to supporting U.S. national security interests. NAVAIR and the V-22 JPO remain committed to transparency and safety regarding all V-22 operations. Between the NAVAIR V-22 Comprehensive Review, the GAO V-22 Osprey report and our existing internal safety governance systems, we are confident that we have identified the most critical issues impacting the aircraft's safety and readiness and have a comprehensive plan to address them all. NAVAIR and the V-22 JPO will execute the resources allocated to the program to implement safety and reliability improvements that will keep the V-22 Osprey ready to respond when the Nation calls.