

Stenographic Transcript
Before the

Subcommittee on
Readiness and Management Support

COMMITTEE ON
ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES SENATE

CURRENT READINESS OF U.S. FORCES

Wednesday, February 14, 2018

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CURRENT READINESS OF U.S. FORCES

Wednesday, February 14, 2018

U.S. Senate
Subcommittee on Readiness and
Management Support
Committee on Armed Services
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:32 p.m. in Room SR-222, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. James Inhofe presiding.

Present: Senators Inhofe [presiding], Ernst, Kaine, Shaheen, and Hirono.

1 OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES INHOFE, U.S. SENATOR
2 FROM OKLAHOMA

3 Senator Inhofe: We are going to go ahead and start
4 without our ranking member. I am sure he is around here
5 somewhere.

6 The hearing today will come to order. We meet for the
7 first time this year to receive testimony on readiness. We
8 actually met once before with the same group that is here.
9 Some people got a little upset with your honesty, but I
10 appreciated it.

11 I think it is one of the big ongoing debates we have
12 right now, and you are aware of this, and that is that we
13 have a serious problem that is -- here he is, so we can
14 start. We are just waiting.

15 That is, the American people need to know the problems.
16 And it was from this committee when we had our vices here
17 before that it was compared to the late 1970s, the hollow
18 force and all that. Well, we have problems now, and I like
19 to talk about them. The reason I do is because the general
20 public, if they are just lured into this euphoria that there
21 are no big problems out there, then we cannot justify doing
22 what we should do in rebuilding our military. So there is a
23 difference of opinion in doing this.

24 So anyway, I am going to go ahead and introduce the
25 witnesses here. We have General James McConville, vice

1 chief of staff of the Army; Admiral Moran is the vice chief
2 of Naval Operations; General Glenn Walters, assistant
3 commandant of the Marines; General Stephen Wilson, vice
4 chief of staff of the Air Force. I thank all of you for
5 your service and for being here today. I would like to
6 remind our witnesses that while this is an open hearing, I
7 ask that they do not hold any unclassified information back
8 from this committee.

9 Last month, Secretary Mattis wrote out the National
10 Defense Strategy, which laid out a new strategic approach to
11 addressing military challenges through building a more
12 lethal force, strengthening alliances and attracting new
13 partners, and reforming the department for greater
14 performance and affordability.

15 I believe building a more lethal force begins with
16 rebuilding and maintaining our readiness while we also look
17 forward to modernizing our force structure. Maintaining the
18 delicate balance between the sustained readiness gains while
19 modernizing is more important than ever.

20 For example, our Air Force continues to shrink. Since
21 Desert Storm, there are 30 percent fewer airmen, and less
22 than 50 percent of the Air Force fighter squadrons are ready
23 to fight in high-intensity combat. The Marine Corps has
24 only 32 of its required 38 amphibious warships, severely
25 impeding their ability to achieve unit training levels

1 necessary to recover full spectrum readiness. Repeated
2 collisions in the Pacific highlighted the Navy's need for
3 increased and more training of both enlisted sailors and
4 officers. These are problems that we have that we will be
5 addressing today.

6 Ensuring the safety of the American people, that is
7 really number one what we are supposed to be doing here. So
8 it is up to you folks to join with this committee in trying
9 to rebuild those areas that might have been relaxed a little
10 bit in the last few years.

11 Senator Kaine?

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1 STATEMENT OF HON. TIM Kaine, U.S. SENATOR FROM
2 VIRGINIA

3 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

4 Thanks to all the witnesses for your service and for
5 the opportunity to visit a bit before the hearing today.

6 I want to thank the chairman, who I worked with in the
7 past and look forward to more collaboration together in the
8 bipartisan work that is the tradition of both the
9 subcommittee and full committee.

10 And there is a limit to what we can discuss in open
11 session today, but I echo my statement from last year's
12 hearing and again urge all my colleagues to read the
13 classified readiness reporting that is available to all
14 members, because that will amplify some of what we will
15 discuss. And we may also discuss later whether we ought to
16 do a closed briefing for any member that is interested in
17 getting into some of the classified update material on
18 current readiness status.

19 An opening point would be I think we all took a step
20 forward on the readiness issue by the passage of the
21 Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018. Not a perfect budget, and
22 there has never been one. We could find flaws. But to my
23 way of thinking, the best part about it was it is forward-
24 focused. Secretary Mattis has been warning us, as have all
25 of you, about the problems of C.R.s for years. And the

1 ability to find a budget deal, which we will reduce to an
2 appropriations deal that is forward-focused for a year and a
3 half, I think it will be very, very positive in enabling you
4 to plan and predict in a way that we have not been giving
5 you the ability to do that in the past.

6 I want to make sure, as we write the NDAA 2019, that we
7 take advantage of that deal to really make sure that this
8 authorizing act helps us restore the spectrum of readiness.

9 We have heard all kinds of testimony and information
10 from the various branches about readiness challenges.

11 The Air Force has informed Congress that it needs
12 additional support in the areas of personnel shortages,
13 operational training. We see that at Langley in Virginia in
14 support infrastructure. The Army needs assistance in
15 tackling personnel challenges, improving critical kinetic
16 modernization capacities, and also enhancing training in
17 full spectrum operations. The Navy continues to cycle
18 through maintenance and modernization while trying to
19 maintain readiness across its seven pillars. And the Marine
20 Corps is on a path to balance global demand through five
21 pillars of institutional readiness.

22 In discussions before this hearing with each of you,
23 you kind of all talked about how you feel like we are on a
24 path and we are making progress on the path. We have a long
25 way to go, and giving you certainty on the budget will

1 enable you to continue on the path.

2 We have a need, and I want to hear, hopefully, from
3 each witness today about how the services will track
4 progress toward readiness through the Readiness Recovery
5 Framework, R2F, to ensure that we meet readiness guidelines.

6 I have said at these hearings before, readiness
7 hearings always remind me of when I was Governor dealing
8 with emergency preparation. Most things I dealt with as
9 Governor, if I dealt with unemployment, I could ask what the
10 unemployment rate is. If I dealt with education, I have to
11 ask what the high school graduation rate is. When you are
12 dealing with emergency preparation, it is different. How do
13 you measure how you will do tomorrow? And readiness
14 measures are kind of like that. How do you know how you
15 will do tomorrow? And readiness measures, we need to know
16 kind of how you set them and then how you are tracking
17 toward them.

18 And I am also interested in, particularly, and I have
19 stressed this before, updating from the Navy on the shipyard
20 optimization plan, which is something that we included in
21 the NDAA last year.

22 Finally, just one concluding comment that is sort of
23 Virginia-specific and personal to me, but it is not just
24 Virginia-specific. In the written testimony that you
25 submit, none of you address sort of climate- or weather-

1 related challenges to our infrastructure. And this is a big
2 deal in Virginia. The center of naval power in the world is
3 in Hampton Roads, and we are seeing sea-level rise, for
4 whatever cause, sea-level rise really affecting our
5 installations, making roads into the naval base subject to
6 flooding, requiring resilience investments to raise piers
7 and make other adjustments. And I remember we had a hearing
8 about this once down in Hampton Roads and had 500 people
9 turn out to talk about it, and we were feeling like, is this
10 just us? And one of our DOD witnesses said, hey, try
11 running a military base where there are water shortages, try
12 running a military base where there are fire risks.

13 So it is not just us. We are dealing with increasing
14 severe weather that then puts a cost burden in how you make
15 a resiliency investment to maintain infrastructure. So I
16 may ask some questions about that as well.

17 But I appreciate all your service.

18 I appreciate the tradition of this subcommittee and our
19 work together with the chair. And with that, Mr. Chair, I
20 will hand it back to you.

21 Senator Inhofe: And I would say to Senator Kaine that
22 I really appreciated the personal visit from you guys to be
23 able to get into these things, because we are in a recovery
24 mode right now, and it is going to take our interest to do
25 it.

1 Let's start with you, General McConville. Opening
2 statements would be great.

3 General McConville: Yes, sir.

4 Senator Inhofe: Your statements will be made a part of
5 the record, so you do not need to go beyond 5 minutes,
6 unless you really want to.

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1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL JAMES C. McCONVILLE, USA, VICE
2 CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

3 General McConville: Good afternoon, Chairman Inhofe,
4 Ranking Member Kaine, and distinguished members of the
5 subcommittee. Thank you for the invitation to testify on
6 the readiness of our Army.

7 In the face of an unpredictable, competitive, global
8 environment, our Army stands ready to compete, to deter, and
9 to win tonight. While there are challenges facing our Army,
10 we remain poised to accomplish our essential mission, which
11 is to fight and win our Nation's wars.

12 We appreciate Congress' effort to end the drawdown and
13 to increase Army's end-strength, and we are grateful for the
14 bipartisan budget agreement, which will fund Army readiness
15 recoveries through fiscal year 2019.

16 The demand for Army forces remains high. The Army
17 currently supports combatant commanders with more than
18 178,000 soldiers globally. Simultaneously recognizing we
19 cannot fight tomorrow's wars with yesterday's weapons and
20 equipment, we have enacted sweeping modernization reforms.
21 The establishment of cross-functional teams focusing on the
22 Army's six modernization priorities and the introduction of
23 the Army's Futures Command will increase unity of effort,
24 agility, and accountability while building a more agile and
25 lethal force.

1 We request your continued assistance to provide timely,
2 predictable, and sustained funding to ensure the Army
3 maintains the competitive edge and remains the best trained,
4 best equipped, and best fighting force in the world.

5 Thank you for your time this afternoon. Thank you for
6 your support to our men and women in uniform, and I look
7 forward to your questions.

8 [The prepared statement of General McConville follows:]

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1 Senator Inhofe: Very good. Thank you.

2 Admiral Moran?

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1 STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL WILLIAM F. MORAN, USN, VICE CHIEF
2 OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, UNITED STATES NAVY

3 Admiral Moran: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member
4 Kaine, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. I
5 really appreciate you inviting us back again this year. And
6 also, thank you for the bipartisan budget agreement, which
7 goes a long way toward much needed financial stability and
8 building a more lethal military force.

9 Once PB-18 is enacted, we will aggressively and
10 responsibly accelerate our readiness recovery plan to earn
11 your trust. As capable as we are today, we will continue to
12 invest in making us even more capable in the future.

13 PB-19 is a strategy-driven budget. It is tightly
14 aligned with the National Defense Strategy, which provides
15 clear strategic direction for the United States Navy. The
16 program we have built is laser-focused on rebuilding
17 readiness and making our teams more lethal. As Secretary
18 Mattis has stated, it is a budget that restores our
19 competitive advantage, and it is what we need to bring us
20 back to a position of primacy.

21 Last year, Members of Congress invested \$1.7 billion in
22 Navy readiness. We allocated every single penny of that
23 critical investment to arrest the erosion we were seeing in
24 fiscal year 2017 and previous years. And it put us on a
25 path in fiscal year 2018 to restore our most pressing

1 readiness needs.

2 In the past few months, I have visited several units
3 around the fleet, including many being maintained in our
4 public and private shipyards.

5 Last year, at this hearing, you may remember us
6 discussing the USS Albany, an L.A.-class submarine which had
7 been tied up for over 3 years due to inadequate resources.
8 I am happy to report to you today that the crew is wrapping
9 up their time after over 4 years in the yards and is excited
10 about finally being able to get underway.

11 On the aviation front, instead of shutting down flight
12 operations for several fleet squadrons, we are able to
13 continue operating and training our pilots and our aircrew.
14 We are also able to begin addressing understocked spare
15 parts, and we are able to build a more effective work force
16 in our aviation depots.

17 That extra money also helped us recover a number of
18 deferred surface ship maintenance and modernization periods,
19 and allowed us to restock our munitions.

20 All of this started with your help. So when PB-18 is
21 finally signed and PB-19 is enacted on time, we will be able
22 to sustain the recovery you helped us jumpstart last year
23 and grow and improve our lethality as a Navy. Together,
24 these changes will expand the margin of victory in any
25 future fight, and it will move us closer to the Navy the

1 Nation needs.

2 Finally, we should talk about our people today. This
3 year, we are growing the Navy to close personnel gaps at
4 sea, adopting innovative policy solutions to retain the very
5 best talent we have, and we are committed to changing the
6 way we train to be even more effective.

7 As you well know, people are the foundation of our
8 military advantage. And the growing economy will heighten
9 the competition for all of that talent, which makes stable,
10 predictable funding, as reflected in your budget agreement,
11 all the more important to all of us sitting at this table.
12 This will help keep us competitive and allow us to bring in
13 even more young men and women from all across the country.

14 It is on their behalf, and their families, that I thank
15 you for your continued support, and I look forward to your
16 questions.

17 [The prepared statement of Admiral Moran follows:]

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1 Senator Inhofe: Very good. Thank you.

2 General Walters?

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1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL GLENN M. WALTERS, USMC, ASSISTANT
2 COMMANDANT, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

3 General Walters: Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member
4 Kaine, and distinguished members of this subcommittee, thank
5 you for the opportunity to appear today and report on the
6 readiness of your Marine Corps.

7 The Congress and the people of our great Nation expect
8 the Marine Corps to be forward-deployed and forward-
9 postured, ready and capable of rapid action to win our
10 Nation's battles. Our readiness is essential to fulfilling
11 this responsibility.

12 Previous strategies focused our investments on
13 readiness to defeat violent extremist organizations and meet
14 steady-state combatant commander requirements. After years
15 of prioritizing readiness to meet these requirements, our
16 defense strategy now defines readiness as our ability to
17 compete, deter, and win against the rising peer threats we
18 face.

19 We must modernize to achieve this definition of
20 readiness. Your support in passing the fiscal year 2017
21 request for additional appropriations provide a welcome step
22 toward correcting our readiness challenges.

23 We thank the Congress for efforts in reaching the
24 recent bipartisan budget agreement. Predictable, on-time,
25 and sustained budgets remain the essential requirement for

1 the Marine Corps to meet our obligations as the Nation's
2 force in readiness. With your commitment and continued
3 support, we will move forward with our responsibility to
4 ensure your Marine Corps is organized, manned, trained, and
5 equipped, and postured to protect our fellow Americans,
6 assure our allies, and deter and defeat any adversary.

7 Thank you and I look forward to your questions.

8 [The prepared statement of General Walters follows:]

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1 Senator Inhofe: Very good.

2 General Wilson?

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1 STATEMENT OF GENERAL STEPHEN W. WILSON, USAF, VICE
2 CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

3 General Wilson: Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Kaine,
4 members of this committee, thank you for allowing me to
5 testify before you today. On behalf of the Secretary, the
6 chief, and the 670,000 airmen, many in harm's way as I
7 speak, it is a privilege to be here with my distinguished
8 vice chiefs.

9 As an Air Force, we defend the homeland. We own the
10 high ground of air and space. We project decisive combat
11 power forward with our joint team to defend America's
12 interests and our allies worldwide.

13 Since the hearing last year on readiness, we have
14 continued the longest period of combat in our Nation's
15 history, 27 years. We have exacerbated this period of
16 combat with a decade of fiscal disorder while our forces
17 shrank, our equipment aged and our equipment atrophied,
18 leading to erosion of full-spectrum readiness.

19 In parallel, as the new National Defense Strategy makes
20 clear, great power competition has reemerged. Today, our
21 strategic competitors, China and Russia, are moving at a
22 speed and scale unseen in recent history. We must counter
23 that with sustained, urgent action.

24 With your help, we can accelerate the building of a
25 more lethal force ready to compete, to deter, and to win any

1 fight anywhere.

2 Aided by your funding in 2017, we have arrested the
3 readiness decline. We began to do so with a keen focus on
4 our number one resource, our people. Thanks to your help,
5 we will be adding 3,300 airmen a year over the next 5 years.

6 We are also funding more flying hours and munitions,
7 more equipment and parts, depots, training, and our training
8 infrastructure. But we must get away from the C.R. this
9 year in time to turn the corner, so that our resources can
10 be used against space superiority, deterrence, training, air
11 superiority, and cyber, amongst others. We will then
12 leverage 2019 to accelerate a multiyear climb toward full-
13 spectrum readiness.

14 To move at the speed of relevance, we need your
15 continued help in the following areas: first and foremost,
16 budget stability and return to physical order; second,
17 competitive personnel policies that allow us to attract and
18 retain America's best talent; we also need continued support
19 for risk-taking innovation to outpace the competition; and,
20 finally, national research efforts in science and technology
21 to expand America's competitive space. Collectively, these
22 efforts will help build a more lethal and ready force.

23 Let me close with an example of the alternative and
24 what can happen if we don't act with urgency. And I will go
25 back to the 1950s when a retired Army senior officer, a West

1 Point graduate of 1924, a Bataan Death March survivor who
2 spent 3 and a half years in captivity in prison camps like
3 Cabanatuan, said the following in a speech at a conference.
4 "Appearing before you is an expert in failure, an authority
5 on disaster. I am one of the few Americans who has lost a
6 war, who has seen an American Army overrun and defeated by a
7 combination of starvation, sickness, unpreparedness, with
8 superior enemy forces and the nearest reinforcements 7,000
9 miles of enemy-controlled ocean away. I have seen veteran
10 officers change overnight into tired, beaten, unshaven old
11 men just trying to walk to the next waterhole.

12 "We used to say if what is happening could happen to
13 everyone in United State of America for just 1 week, I
14 believe the security of the country would never be again
15 endangered by complacency, by red tape, or by fear of
16 expenditure for its insurance."

17 He went on to say, "As a Nation, we must be prepared.
18 We must be ready, because time is now reckoned in minutes
19 and hours instead of months and years. And in a future war,
20 that time will not be available."

21 Those comments were made by my grandfather, Colonel
22 Ovid Wilson, and I would say his profound insights about the
23 loss of readiness offer wisdom that cannot be ignored today.

24 So make no mistake, we are again in a great power
25 competition, and margins of victory and defeat are

1 extraordinarily narrow. Time to ready is scarce. Speed
2 wins in preparation as in battle. We must throw off the
3 yoke of the red tape and risk-aversion to empower airmen for
4 sustained, urgent action.

5 Thank you for helping arrest the readiness decline. We
6 have turned the corner. Now we must accelerate, gain speed,
7 and climb to ensure America's airmen are more ready, more
8 lethal to fight any adversary anywhere on the planet.

9 I look forward to your questions.

10 [The prepared statement of General Wilson follows:]

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1 Senator Inhofe: General Wilson, you just said you
2 needed 3,300 airmen. Are you talking about new airmen
3 coming in? In the next what period of time?

4 General Wilson: Mr. Chairman, that is 3,300 per year
5 over the next 5 years.

6 Senator Inhofe: Per year over the next 5 years. Of
7 them, how many are actually pilots?

8 General Wilson: I can give you a breakdown.

9 Senator Inhofe: We know the topline figures of those,
10 but are you making any headway from the last time you and I
11 talked? We had this committee hearing, which you attended,
12 and that was one of the serious problems that the Air Force
13 has.

14 General Wilson: Our pilot production is certainly a
15 serious challenge going forward. We are still about 2,000
16 pilots short. We have an aircrew crisis task force underway
17 led by a general officer who shows up to work every day with
18 nothing on his mind but how we fix this problem.

19 Senator Inhofe: Okay. We have all talked about this.
20 We did dodge a bullet, in terms of C.R.s. And I think with
21 what we have done, we are going to be pretty in good shape
22 in terms of fiscal year 2018 and 2019, but then we go back
23 to fiscal year 2020, which we really need to be trying to
24 figure out a way to do these things more in advance.

25 I want to ask one question of all of you, the same

1 question. We know what has happened to us with our 17 years
2 of sustained fighting. We know the problems that we have.
3 That seems to be all we talk about. But I would like to
4 have you, from your perspective, give us the cost of not
5 addressing these readiness issues. This is a readiness
6 committee. Readiness is what is important. That relates to
7 risk in lives.

8 Starting with you.

9 General McConville: As far as the risks, readiness, I
10 equate it to pushing a boulder up a hill, and when you stop
11 pushing, the boulder rolls down.

12 For a while there, we weren't getting the appropriate
13 funding to properly maintain our units at the proper level.
14 We are getting that funding right now, but it needs to
15 sustain, because we need to kind of fill in the holes in
16 readiness that we let develop over the last couple of years
17 when we were not getting the timely, predictable, and
18 sustained funding that we needed.

19 Senator Inhofe: Yes.

20 Admiral Moran, what would you say to that?

21 Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. There are so many components
22 to readiness. You could pick at any one of them and find
23 areas we need to work harder on and where the lack of
24 resources, especially the last several years, has really
25 been a difficult challenge for all of us.

1 But I think about it as a capital-intensive service,
2 and the amount of maintenance and upgrades and modernization
3 to pace the threat or get out in front of the threat is an
4 enormous cost, and that is part of our readiness component.

5 If you can't get the ships underway, the submarines
6 underway, or the airplanes flying, then you are going to
7 have readiness problems across-the-board. I think that is
8 obvious.

9 What always pays for those big capital investments in
10 our business are people and munitions. And we have taken
11 risk in those areas over the last 10 years because the
12 resources haven't been there. Now we are starting to buy
13 that back.

14 But when I think about the people, it is also the
15 readiness component, which talks to experience and building
16 intuition on a battlefield, at sea, in the air. And those
17 things, you cannot buy back. Once you pass by a year or 2
18 of that kind of proficiency and that kind of training, it is
19 very difficult to buy it back, unless you get it in situ, at
20 the time when the person going through that training needs
21 it the most.

22 Senator Inhofe: Yes. Thank you.

23 General Walters, we hear more, at least I hear more,
24 about the readiness and what it is taking in both the
25 Marines and the Army than I do in some of the other

1 services. How do you come out on this?

2 General Walters: Sir, readiness, if you view it as a
3 commodity, you build it, and it has a shelf-life, because it
4 is all about the people.

5 So combine unstable funding and a drawdown, then you
6 lose people, and you really lose opportunity.

7 So the opportunity cost of not training over time to
8 build back up, it might be that sergeant that you let out
9 who has had 8 years of experience, now I have to start over
10 with a private and make him a sergeant. So that is the
11 condition we find ourselves in right now with squad leaders,
12 and that is where our tension is.

13 But truly, lost opportunity and lost time are something
14 that is not a one-for-one recovery. So I will echo my mates
15 here that stable funding over time at the right amount, with
16 paying attention to our people, will get us out of the hole.
17 And we have the plan for that, sir.

18 Senator Inhofe: Okay. I appreciate that.

19 General Wilson, you already answered that question in
20 your opening statement.

21 Let me get back to the budget thing and the problem
22 that we are looking at as we move forward. With the recent
23 budget deal and the pending passage of the appropriations
24 act for fiscal year 2018, we are already 5 months into the
25 fiscal year, and I am concerned that the services will be

1 unable to execute 12 months of money in 6 months remaining,
2 and yet the need is there.

3 Why don't each one of you address that timing problem
4 that is there that you are going to have to be facing?

5 General McConville: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

6 Sir, we appreciate the authorizations for the money
7 that we need for readiness. Now we need to get it into the
8 hands of our units, so they can spend it. The sooner we can
9 do that, the better off we are going to be. If we are
10 spending 55 percent of funds in the last 4 months, some of
11 the things we would like to do as far as predictable funding
12 and long-term lead items and contracting, we do not get the
13 same rigor that we would like to get if we had it sooner.

14 Senator Inhofe: Admiral?

15 Admiral Moran: I guess the good news, Mr. Chairman, is
16 that we have had 10 years at this, to learn how to operate
17 on less than a full year's authorization or appropriation.
18 So we are ready --

19 Senator Inhofe: Not that you are enjoying it.

20 Admiral Moran: No, no, sir, we are not enjoying it at
21 all. But not to make light of it, it is an important
22 question that we are spending a lot of time developing
23 plans.

24 But I think we are going to need some help with the
25 appropriators on how we spend that money. It is not going

1 to go across evenly. The add is so significant that we are
2 going to have to look at having the ability to transfer some
3 of that money from account to account.

4 Senator Inhofe: Do you foresee a problem in that
5 respect?

6 Admiral Moran: Well, I am saying as we go, as we start
7 to make those plans come to fruition, we may find that we
8 can execute more in one area than another faster. And we
9 would like to have some authorities to be able to move the
10 money around as we go and be able to inform Congress as we
11 are doing it.

12 Senator Inhofe: General Walters?

13 General Walters: Yes, sir. As you noted, we have a
14 year's worth of money adds in 2018 and 5 months to spend it.
15 It might help if the appropriators can give us some
16 flexibility, so we can spend 2018 money in 2019 and feather
17 in the plan and give us some authorities to, as Admiral
18 Moran said, move money around when we are executing.

19 So there are lots of things we can do with a little
20 more authority to match the responsibilities that the
21 service chiefs have.

22 Senator Inhofe: They are aware of that, and they have
23 the authority to make those changes.

24 General Walters: Yes, sir.

25 Senator Inhofe: Any comments, General Wilson?

1 General Wilson: Chairman, I have nothing to add. We
2 are going to do our best to spend it in that time frame.

3 Senator Inhofe: Senator Kaine?

4 Senator Kaine: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And it is
5 interesting, preparing for this hearing today after having
6 gotten the budget deal, it made me think about questions in
7 a little bit different way. I am always asking readiness
8 questions about budgetary uncertainty and the effect on
9 readiness, and we have been doing this for years. But
10 assuming that our budget deal is a solid one and holds
11 through the appropriations process, let me ask how each of
12 your branches approach a different readiness issue, which
13 is, the more the combatant commander requirements, the
14 higher the op tempo, the harder it is to find time to build
15 readiness. So that is a balancing issue, too.

16 So assuming that the budgetary issues are now in a
17 little bit better place and you can work on your recovery
18 path, how does each service branch approach this issue of
19 balancing out combatant commander requirements with the need
20 to have time to build back to readiness?

21 General McConville: Senator, for the United States
22 Army, over the last 16, 17 years, our forces have been in
23 high demand. We have a goal of 1 year deployed and 2 years
24 back, and we still have not been able to meet that. We are
25 running a little over 1 year deployed, maybe 1 year and 2 or

1 3 months back.

2 But even during that time frame, we create the
3 readiness. As we do the analysis on what the soldiers are
4 doing while they are back, they are really getting ready for
5 the next deployment. So they are getting the training and
6 the readiness they need to have, so when they go into a
7 combat situation, they are ready to do their job.

8 We appreciate increasing the size of the force, which
9 is going to help. We are also talking to the Joint Staff on
10 some of the missions that we may not have to do in the
11 future to reduce that demand.

12 Senator Kaine: Admiral Moran?

13 Admiral Moran: Yes, Senator. Thank you for the
14 question.

15 As you know, we are desperately trying to drive down
16 the backlog in our maintenance account or our maintenance
17 backlog for our surface ships, submarines, aviation, and so
18 the budget agreement certainly helps get after that.

19 But to your point, the operational demand for our
20 forces remains high, like every other service here. But I
21 think that the global force management process through the
22 Joint Staff, which is done routinely, the RFF, request for
23 forces process, everybody, combatant commanders included,
24 are certainly paying attention to the stresses on the force,
25 to allow us to be able to have time to train and to do the

1 maintenance. We are definitely feeling that appreciation
2 from the COCOMs this time around, even though the demands
3 still remain very high.

4 Senator Kaine: Thanks, Admiral.

5 General Walters?

6 General Walters: Yes, sir, the NDS addresses this to
7 some degree, sir. The chairman is going to set the globe
8 now and allocate the forces that way, with a dynamic force
9 employment methodology.

10 We are looking forward to seeing the results of that.
11 We are seeing a little bit of it so far where we have
12 garnered some relief for a portion of our forces, and that
13 will help us build the ROMO readiness back in the United
14 States, sir.

15 Senator Kaine: General Wilson?

16 General Wilson: I would agree with everything that has
17 been said. We talk about being strategically predictable
18 and operationally unpredictable, and how we do that on a
19 responsive force.

20 I was just at Shaw Air Force Base and talked to the F-
21 16 unit there. They are the suppression of enemy air
22 defenses unit. They are the only stateside unit that does
23 that. So they are the ones that support Korea. At the same
24 time, they have units that go out to the Middle East and
25 support operations there.

1 Because they are the only stateside unit, they are also
2 doing training at things like Red Flag or the Weapons School
3 support, as well doing Noble Eagle. So they are as
4 stretched as they can be, and we need to be able to balance
5 those demands.

6 To the point earlier, the first thing that is going to
7 help our readiness is getting more people -- the operators,
8 the maintainers, the intel folks, the space operators, the
9 cyber folks -- to help build up that capacity going forward.

10 Senator Kaine: Thank you.

11 Let me ask a question to Admiral Moran. I think there
12 are reports that there is a congressionally mandated study
13 about the naval shipyard optimization plan, and that may be
14 forthcoming later in the month. We hear that it may include
15 over \$10 billion of investments over a lengthy period of
16 time, 20 years or more. Then there is a companion plan
17 regarding private shipyards that is also in the works.

18 What can you share about the shipyard optimization
19 plans and how the Navy can better assist both our public and
20 private shipyards in completing maintenance in a more timely
21 fashion?

22 Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. That plan, I believe, has
23 been recently signed out as of yesterday, the optimization
24 plan.

25 Senator Kaine: I cannot believe my staff hasn't had me

1 read it already.

2 Admiral Moran: I am shocked. It is pretty thick.

3 It is very comprehensive. We looked at a lot of
4 aspects of the shipyards and how we can optimize both the
5 level load across our yards, both public and private, and
6 being able to invest in them in a way we know we are going
7 to have to do. The youngest yard we have is Pearl Harbor,
8 which was built in 1908, I believe, so it is a long haul.

9 A lot of those yards need to be upgraded. They need to
10 be modernized to be more efficient, to put the work on the
11 pier and reduce the idle time or the busy time that people
12 have, just going from one shop to the next.

13 So that is all laid out pretty comprehensively. It is
14 a significant investment in the out-years, over a 20-year
15 period.

16 To get after a Navy that the Nation needs that is in
17 that 350, 355 level, we are going to need to be a lot
18 smarter about how we optimize our shipyards.

19 Senator Kaine: I asked for that reason. Last year,
20 the NDAA provision going to 355, it is one thing to say
21 there is a number of ships, but it is repair, it is the
22 manpower for the ships, it is, do you have air assets on the
23 ships? I mean, there are so many downstream consequences
24 from setting a goal like that, and I have a feeling we will
25 be talking about a number of those this year as we work on

1 the NDAA.

2 Let me ask General McConville a question, and it is a
3 question that was based on an Army study, but I think it is
4 actually relevant to everybody. Maybe you can address it
5 first.

6 There were some troubling statistics presented last
7 year about the qualified military available population of
8 the 17- to 24-year-olds. There was an Army study that
9 showed that nearly two out of three in that age range are
10 disqualified because of any number of factors. It could be
11 medical, physical, mental health, aptitude, substance abuse
12 challenge.

13 Talk about this challenge, if you would start, and if
14 others would want to weigh in. I am not asking about the
15 retention side. I am about the attracting of the young
16 side. With this much of our population sort of in a
17 position where they can't currently qualify, what do we need
18 to do to build that availability in a more robust way?

19 General McConville: Yes, Senator. The Army is people,
20 so it is very, very important to us as we grow the Army.

21 Right now, we see about 27 percent of American youth in
22 that age group are not qualified to come to the Army. And
23 what we are looking for is young men and women that are
24 resilient; they are physically and mentally fit; and they
25 have the appropriate character, so they can serve in the

1 Army.

2 We have put some things in place. We did not used to
3 do any type of physical assessment before we brought the
4 young men and women into the Army. We do that right now at
5 the recruiting stations. Before they can ship off for
6 initial military training, they have to meet a certain
7 standard on an Occupational Physical Assessment Test. In
8 order to do that, they have to actually get in shape before
9 they can do that.

10 Right now, we have recruiters working with the young
11 men and women. We have only been doing it for a little less
12 than a year, but we are starting to see some effects where
13 we are having less musculoskeletal-type injuries.

14 The other thing we are doing, as we bring them through
15 the Army, when they go to initial military training, we are
16 screening them when they get there, and if they are not
17 physically ready to go through, we are getting them in
18 shape. When they go, actually, to the units, we are
19 treating them almost professional athletes.

20 We are putting physical trainers, we are putting
21 dieticians, we are putting strength coaches inside the
22 units. We are doing that in the 82nd Airborne Division
23 right now, and we are getting much less on the
24 musculoskeletal-type injuries.

25 The return on investment is much greater than having a

1 young man or woman hurt and then them having to leave early
2 or paying them disability for a long period of time.

3 Senator Kaine: I am over time, and I may submit that
4 question to the record for others, but I will yield back,
5 Mr. Chair.

6 Senator Inhofe: Okay, good.

7 Senator Hirono?

8 Senator Hirono: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

9 Thank you all for your service and being here.

10 Admiral Moran, I am encouraged to see from the
11 President's budget request that ship depo maintenance and,
12 as you mentioned, as one of you mentioned, that Pearl Harbor
13 is a pretty mature shipyard, to say the least. So depo
14 maintenance is a top priority for the Navy to recover
15 readiness and that building the shipyard work force capacity
16 is a component of that readiness plan.

17 At our meeting last week, you described the effort it
18 has taken to begin to climb out of the readiness shortfall
19 faced by the Navy, and I look forward to additional details
20 and priorities for shipyard modernization and increases in
21 work force capacity. So I am glad that that is going ahead.

22 So after ship maintenance and aviation readiness, what
23 are the next priorities for Navy readiness recovery,
24 Admiral?

25 Admiral Moran: On the personnel front, we are bringing

1 in 4,000 new sailors this year, and we are going to continue
2 to bring in new sailors throughout the FYDP to address
3 shortfalls in the fleet, gaps at sea, in particular, that we
4 know we have. And we have been under quite a bit of
5 pressure the last 2 or 3 years to fill those billets. So we
6 are adding people to it, and we are doing a lot to try to
7 change the way we train our young men and women as they
8 come, as we call it, street-to-fleet through the boot camp
9 and into the fleet.

10 That training has often been long, too long with too
11 much information and a lot of waiting around, waiting for
12 the next school to start, because we do not have a steady
13 throughput for a variety of reasons that have occurred over
14 years, and also to deliver that training at the right time
15 at the right place for the sailors as they are progressing
16 through their careers, even in the fleet. So bringing in
17 more simulation, more capabilities to the waterfront and our
18 flight lines, so we do not have to rotate sailors back to
19 schoolhouses as often we have in the past.

20 Those efforts alone on the people front will do a great
21 deal to help us on the readiness side.

22 Senator Hirono: So do you have similar concerns that
23 only about 30 percent of high schoolers can even qualify to
24 join the military, any of the services? Do you have
25 particular issues with regard to the Navy?

1 Admiral Moran: Yes, Senator. I think we are all
2 facing that same challenge. I think one of the key
3 components of that is the fact that the vast majority, at
4 least on the Navy side, the vast majority of volunteers that
5 come in are predisposed by the fact that they have a family
6 member with some background that know what we do for a
7 living, so we have to reach out to more of the rest of
8 America and have them participate in national defense.

9 Senator Hirono: Does it help to have ROTC programs in
10 our colleges as a place where people become very interested
11 in joining?

12 Admiral Moran: Fully one-third of our new officers
13 every year come from the ROTC program, and we couldn't do it
14 without them.

15 Senator Hirono: We do not have a Navy ROTC in Hawaii.

16 Admiral Moran: I know. I was waiting for that.

17 Senator Hirono: I know. You have read my mind.

18 Admiral Moran: You stay on me, yes, ma'am.

19 Senator Hirono: We have to work on that, you know?
20 After all, if part of the goal is diversity, what could be a
21 more diverse pool than people from the State of Hawaii?

22 Now that the Navy is on its way to recovering from a
23 readiness decline, how will you ensure that the Navy is able
24 to maintain readiness at acceptable levels? And what
25 changes in business practices and what level of investment

1 will be needed to smooth out the peaks and valleys of
2 previous readiness efforts in a more steady and predictable
3 level?

4 Admiral Moran: Great question.

5 The last 2 years in our program builds, in our POM
6 cycles. We started at the front-end talking about readiness
7 as a starting point, as opposed to the very end, we try to
8 balance with it. And I think that sets a mindset. It
9 changes the culture of how you invest in readiness when you
10 try to lock in what is needed by the fleet to produce the
11 readiness they need to do at the waterfront before we put
12 all the other programs in place and then try to figure out
13 how to pay the rest off.

14 Senator Hirono: I hope that we can provide whatever
15 assistance we can to make sure that we do not fall back in
16 readiness for any of the services. I think that a 2-year
17 budget deal will help. And I hope that is the way that we
18 will proceed from now on, without these continual C.R.s.

19 I have a question about China and the challenges we
20 face. This is for the whole panel.

21 China has invested heavily over the past several years
22 to upgrade their military technology and systems. Whether
23 it is a fifth-generation fighter, long-range missiles, or
24 anti-satellite weapons, the Chinese have used a whole-of-
25 nation approach to quickly advance many of their

1 capabilities.

2 I would like to ask you, while we all agree that
3 readiness is very important, how do you balance the need to
4 modernize our weapons systems with readiness requirements
5 and other needs to be able to effectively counter Chinese
6 influence in the Asia Pacific arena?

7 Let's start with you.

8 General McConville: Yes, Senator. One of the reasons
9 that we have stood up our cross-functional teams and our
10 Futures Command is we are at an inflection point for the
11 Army. We have been pretty much fighting a
12 counterinsurgency, counterterrorism fight for the last 16
13 years. And now as we follow the National Defense Strategy,
14 which goes into a great power competition between
15 adversaries like China and Russia, we are going after those
16 systems that are going to deter any of those types of things
17 they want to do.

18 I was just looking at history. It was April 15, 1953,
19 the last time an American soldier was killed by enemy air on
20 a battlefield, 1953, the great Air Forces that are here. So
21 we have gotten rid of most of our air defense elements that
22 protect our units.

23 As we go into the future and we are into this more
24 contested domain warfare that we see in the future, we need
25 to develop those types of systems. And we are developing a

1 whole bunch of systems that are going to make us very
2 capable against future adversaries like that.

3 Senator Hirono: Admiral?

4 Admiral Moran: I wanted to give my friends here a
5 little bit of time.

6 Senator Hirono: Okay.

7 Would you like to respond, General Walters?

8 General Walters: Yes, ma'am.

9 So the new National Defense Strategy focuses on
10 adversaries, potential adversaries like China. For the
11 Marine Corps, it is enhanced command and control. It is
12 I.W. It is cyber. It is long-range fire. It is ground-
13 based air defense. It is ground-based counter-UAS, because
14 they have UASes. All those things are now in our plan and
15 our budget.

16 I think you are asking a question about giving up
17 readiness to get capabilities and how you balance that.

18 Senator Hirono: How do you balance?

19 General Walters: How do you balance that? I would say
20 it this way. Buying those systems, that is future
21 readiness, because you do not want to fight a conflict with
22 the old equipment, because you are, by definition, not
23 ready.

24 Senator Hirono: That is a good answer.

25 General Walters: Thank you.

1 Senator Hirono: Would you like to add something,
2 General?

3 General Wilson: I will just add the same tagline. I
4 would say today's modernization is tomorrow's readiness, and
5 we have to look at how we do that faster, because we see
6 what China is doing.

7 So as we develop capabilities, the whole how we do
8 that, everything from our requirements, to acquisition, to
9 contracting, to testing, we have to be able to do that
10 faster. All of us are doing that. We have efforts underway
11 to be able to speed capabilities to the field faster.

12 For example, we are building this light attack
13 airplane. By the authorities that you all gave us, the
14 Congress, you told us how to do this differently. How do
15 you experiment and prototype rapidly? So we are doing that.

16 This is a coalition of the core airplane. It is
17 economical. It will help our readiness. It will help build
18 capacity.

19 It will be not just an airplane, though. It is an
20 airplane. It is a sensor. It is weapons. It is a network
21 that we will share with coalition partners so that we can do
22 this smarter going forward.

23 From go to now, it has been 11 months. We have done
24 the first experiment. We will do the next experiment this
25 summer. We will start buying airplanes before 2019-2020, so

1 in a 2-year time frame. Again, thanks to your help to be
2 able to do that, to give us the authorities to do this
3 differently, because that is what we are going to need to be
4 able to do to compete.

5 But it is not just there. If I could go to another
6 area, that same thing happens in space. We have to think
7 how we do this differently in space, because today, that is
8 the one thing that every one of our joint team members use
9 is space, and space is going to be a contested domain in the
10 future. It is today.

11 So how do we build situational awareness? How do we
12 build the resilient communication, the resilient missile
13 warning? How do you build antijam capabilities for GPS to
14 be able to defend in space, if the war fight goes there?
15 And we have a lot of efforts underway in our space arena to
16 do that.

17 Senator Hirono: So I think as we think about how to
18 contend with adversaries like China and Russia, it is long-
19 term planning that this requires.

20 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

21 Senator Inhofe: Thank you.

22 Senator Hirono, I am glad you have brought up the China
23 thing. I remember so well, actually, back during the
24 Clinton administration, we had this euphoric attitude out
25 there that somehow the Cold War is over, we do not need the

1 military that strong. I remember all the bonuses they
2 talked about at that time.

3 All the time that we were cutting down, about 40
4 percent at that time, but not China and not Russia. At the
5 same time we were cutting back, they were increasing.

6 I remember talking about this on the floor. What if we
7 are wrong on this? And sure enough, we were wrong.

8 So I would like just to address from each of the
9 services the force structure question. As we know, the
10 Army, Marine Corps, and the Air Force have all undergone
11 strength reductions over the last 5 years.

12 Now these force structure reductions occurred at the
13 same time of increasing requirements, which we did not
14 anticipate would be the case with the Russian aggression and
15 the rise of the Islamic State and other problems. So in the
16 DOD, they intended to allow the time for forces to
17 reconstitute and reset after lengthy campaigns in Iraq and
18 Afghanistan. But as it turned out, we weren't able to do
19 that. So we have corrected the trajectory and are
20 increasing the end-strength numbers in fiscal years 2018 and
21 2019.

22 But I would ask each one of you, do you believe that
23 the force structure of your service is appropriate and
24 adequate with the changes that we have made to meet the
25 requirements of the defense strategy that we are looking at

1 now?

2 General McConville: Senator, I believe so. As you and
3 I discussed, we were in a very rapid drawdown and that
4 drawdown has stopped in the Army. We are growing the Army.
5 I think we are on the right pace to do that.

6 The way you deter great powers is with tanks,
7 artillery, and attack helicopters, and that is where our
8 modernization effort is, and that is included in the budget
9 as we go forward. And we think these are the right steps
10 forward with timely, predictable, and sustainable funding.

11 Senator Inhofe: Where are you -- and each service, I
12 could ask the same thing -- on the 1-to-2 time that you are
13 in combat to when you are back? I think you have already
14 said that it is not a rest period for 2 years. You are back
15 in training and all that.

16 Where are you on that?

17 General McConville: That is correct, Senator. Our
18 units are less than the 1-to-2 kind of dwell time that we
19 expect, and they are probably at 1-to-1.5, which is really
20 not where we want them to be.

21 Senator Inhofe: That combined with the fact that they
22 are working during that 1.5, during that time also.

23 General McConville: Yes, they are going to combat
24 training centers. They are doing home station training,
25 because when they go off to their deployments, we want to

1 make sure they are ready.

2 Senator Inhofe: How about the Navy?

3 Admiral Moran: Sir, to your original question, do we
4 have enough to support the strategy? The answer is yes.
5 But every strategy has some degree of risk to it, so the
6 bigger we get, the better we get, the less risk there is to
7 that strategy. So we really appreciate where the budget
8 agreement is going to allow us to go through the FYDP and
9 beyond, hopefully.

10 In terms of the dwell, our forces, they are not all
11 consistent. We deploy in different types, in different
12 groups, but the vast majority on the optimize fleet response
13 plan are trying to be at a 1-to-2 dwell.

14 Senator Inhofe: Yes.

15 And where do you think you are?

16 Admiral Moran: It depends on which moment in time, and
17 it depends on what the world has to say about it. It
18 fluctuates. But our operational dwell time is 1-to-2. Our
19 personnel dwell time is something less than that because of
20 the rotation.

21 Senator Inhofe: I understand that, yes. Very good.

22 General Walters?

23 General Walters: Yes, sir, much likely other services,
24 we are an aggregate of 1-to-2 dep-to-dwell. But I will say
25 this, as we go through this set to globe and where we

1 deploy, I would just offer this for consideration, that not
2 all deployments are created equal, although they all count
3 on dep-to-dwell.

4 But for example, the Marines we now have training in
5 Norway, they are actually gaining readiness there. They are
6 gaining readiness to the designed mission. So the only
7 place you lose readiness when you are deployed, generally,
8 is you are deployed to a region you are not doing your
9 designed mission.

10 So for counterterrorism, and you are supposed to be the
11 blunt force or the surge force, then you are losing that
12 readiness. But if you deploy for a training deployment,
13 say, in the Pacific, you will probably come back more ready
14 because you have operated in the environment that you might
15 be employed in.

16 I do not know if that makes sense.

17 Senator Inhofe: Okay. It does.

18 General Wilson?

19 General Wilson: Chairman, the majority of our folks
20 are on a 1-to-2 dwell or better than that. But as mentioned
21 and just like the rest of them, their pers tempo back home,
22 they are not spending that time at home. There is what I
23 call an "are you sleeping in your bed at night?" metric, and
24 we need to measure that, because that has impacts on the
25 retention of the force going forward.

1 In terms of your question about people, we think we
2 will be growing through this FYDP, as I mentioned, about
3 3,300 a year. If we do that, we get to about 95 percent of
4 our units being filled, and that is a step in the right
5 direction, and we need to continue that long term.

6 Senator Inhofe: What I want to do is I am going to go
7 ahead and shift over to you, and then come back, and I want
8 to specifically talk about, each branch represented here,
9 about the unique problems that you have. So you go ahead
10 and take over now, and I will do that.

11 Senator Kaine: Thanks, Mr. Chair.

12 I have a question for Admiral Moran, and it deals with
13 the action that the Navy is undertaking to learn from and
14 then make improvements following the collisions of the USS
15 Fitzgerald and then also the USS John McCain.

16 We have had testimony about this in the large
17 committee. But after those tragic collisions, the Navy
18 conducted the strategic readiness review, and that found
19 several, the quote was "institutional deficiencies." The
20 Navy has taken some significant steps, personnel steps and
21 otherwise, to deal with those.

22 The SRR made numerous recommendations to address the
23 root causes of the incidents. A separate study by the GAO
24 also had at least 14 readiness recommendations to the Navy
25 coming out of this.

1 Talk about the status of implementing -- I am not
2 talking about the personnel side now. I am talking about
3 just the recommended changes. Talk about the status of
4 implementing those recommendations from both the SRR and the
5 GAO's work. And then how will you kind of monitor and
6 evaluate progress on these going forward?

7 Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. Thanks for the question.

8 We stood up an oversight board that is co-chaired by
9 myself and the Under Secretary of the Navy to pull all of
10 those reviews together, to include the GAO reviews,
11 previously completed investigations of other mishaps, not
12 just the ones we saw but everything else, we are pulling all
13 that information together at once. Then seeing how the 58
14 recommendations from the C.R., the 27 recommendations from
15 the SRR, the 14 from the GAO, all of them, where do they
16 overlap and where can we make sense of them? And then
17 really rely on the fleet to tell us what prioritization
18 needs to occur. What are the things that they believe need
19 to be done immediately for safety? Those things are
20 completed. Most of them were not a financial burden. They
21 were more or less policy.

22 But we have now gone into how we are programming to
23 address things like common configuration for radars, bridge
24 configurations --

25 Senator Kaine: The bridge configuration, because in

1 these instances, some of the personnel involved were cross-
2 decked from one platform to another, and there wasn't an
3 identical configuration, and that may have been part of the
4 problem.

5 Admiral Moran: That is correct. Yes, sir.

6 So all of that is being monitored by a series of
7 working groups overseen by the Under and myself. We meet
8 monthly. Those working groups are meeting weekly. And then
9 we feed that up to the Secretary and the CNO, and they are
10 required to deliver a report quarterly to the Congress. We
11 are approaching the first quarterly report for that, which
12 will lay out all those things.

13 I am not willing to call things complete until I not
14 only see the programming but the arrival of the fixes in the
15 fleet, so we are going to track these all the way to
16 delivery in the fleet.

17 The outcome has to be that we have a safer and more
18 effective fleet at the end of the day. That is the
19 overarching goal.

20 Senator Kaine: One of the particular areas I was
21 interested in, based on some of the early hearings we had,
22 was whether there are recommendations for any changes to
23 training curriculum at Surface Warfare Officers School. Is
24 that a part of some of these recommendations? And is that
25 under implementation?

1 Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. The new leadership at SURFOR
2 out in San Diego, Admiral Brown, has only been on board a
3 month or so. We are giving him a little bit of time to
4 figure out how he wants to take this forward. He just came
5 from our Personnel Command. He was the COO of SWOS. He
6 understands this very, very well.

7 So he is coming forward through the fleet commanders to
8 the oversight board with his recommendations on how to
9 implement career path changes, manning changes, and the
10 training at SWOS.

11 Senator Kaine: All right, thank you.

12 Thanks, Mr. Chair.

13 Senator Inhofe: I am just going to do it one at a
14 time, starting with you, General McConville.

15 The Army priorities are -- and you do not have to write
16 them down, because you know them -- long-range precision
17 fire, next-generation combat vehicle -- you and I talked
18 about that at some length -- future vertical lift, network,
19 air and missile defense, and soldier lethality.

20 With the priorities identified, do you have a plan to
21 address all six of these? Or would you like to give us some
22 kind of a priority? And where do you stand in these
23 priorities?

24 General McConville: Senator, we plan and we have plans
25 to address every single one of those. What we are really

1 doing is, in those priorities, long-range precision fire is
2 the number one priority. There is a lot of great work going
3 on there, from hypersonics to extending tube artillery.
4 What we want to do is probably get down to focus on three
5 systems, work with a lot of the other organizations with
6 industry and, quite frankly, have them invest along with us
7 as we bring these systems to bear.

8 But with each of those portfolios, we see one or two
9 systems we are going to laser-focus on, and those are the
10 priorities, and those are the things we need to get done.

11 Senator Inhofe: We talked about the extension of six
12 feet and what that does to range. It kind of shows that,
13 once you make a decision on a vehicle, on a system that as
14 outside things change, they can change within.

15 Now the extreme of that is what has happened with our
16 combat vehicles, as you and I talked in my office. We
17 started with the Crusader. We spent about \$2 billion on
18 that, junked that one. Went to the Future Combat System,
19 and spent \$20 billion on that. Now we are back to our PIM
20 system that I think we are actually a little ahead of where
21 we should be on that. But I think, in that case, that is
22 something that I would hope would have a priority.

23 Do you think that system, the way it is right now, is
24 going to be able to sustain all the previous changes that
25 were made? Because sooner or later, we have to have

1 something, and it has to be something competitive. We are
2 not ahead of all our -- unlike the American people think, we
3 are not ahead in everything. We hear about what the Germans
4 are doing with artillery and what some of the others, even
5 our adversaries, are involved in.

6 So as far as that as being kind of the stock equipment
7 for the United States Army, do you think we will stick with
8 it?

9 General McConville: What we need to do is the
10 capability to incrementally improve those. In some cases,
11 on the PIM, to 10X improve them.

12 What I mean by that is, as you know, the chassis has
13 been significantly improved to give us much more capability
14 to keep up with the forces. But we are looking at projects
15 right now that can take the gun and actually give us much
16 more increased range.

17 So we want to have with all our projects the ability to
18 insert technologies. The technology comes onboard, these
19 are not disposable-type systems. We want to be able to
20 insert that technology, keep most of the rest of the system,
21 so we get a much better return on our investment.

22 Senator Inhofe: It was kind of interesting, when I was
23 watching down at Fort Sill, the 6-foot extension and what it
24 did to the range, while it increased the range from this to
25 this, I do not remember the numbers, it still left a void in

1 between. And that was something that we are addressing
2 today.

3 Okay, General Milley had identified a goal of having 66
4 percent of our BCTs ready for combat tonight, the words he
5 used. Where are we now on that?

6 General McConville: Well, right now as far as the --
7 and I can do this on a closed session on the exact numbers.

8 Senator Inhofe: Well, it wasn't closed last year when
9 it was at 33 at that time. So we are somewhere between
10 there.

11 General McConville: Right, we are at a much better
12 place than we were last year. I would be glad to go to a
13 closed hearing on the exact numbers, Senator.

14 Senator Inhofe: Good. Okay.

15 And the Air Force, we have the pilot shortage, we have
16 been talking about that, 1,500 pilots. Of those, I think we
17 said 1,300 of those are fighter pilots. That is probably
18 current right now.

19 I am concerned about the T-6 grounding. When is the
20 end of the story?

21 General Wilson: Chairman, I do not know if I can give
22 you the end of that story yet. We stopped flying, had a
23 stand-down the 1st of February. The first priority is to
24 make sure that we return to flying safely, so we are looking
25 at, holistically across, how we do that.

1 We brought in the Navy, who has had some recent
2 troubles with the OBOG, which is what we also had. We
3 brought in the NASA team. We have a full court press to be
4 able to identify the problems. We think it is partly
5 maintenance-related. We think there is partly an aircrew
6 flight equipment problem. We think there is a training
7 piece. But we have all those efforts moving forward.

8 The head of the Air Force Materiel Command and the head
9 of Air Education and Training Command are meeting daily on
10 this. I expect an update on when we will return to fly here
11 this next week.

12 But in the meantime, we are not flying about 700 T-6
13 sorties a day. So there is an impact to the pilot
14 production piece that has us all laser-focused. But we are
15 not going to return them to flying until we can safely do
16 it.

17 Senator Inhofe: Yes, of course. One of those,
18 obviously, is going to be maintenance. Any time all four
19 services have gone through what you have gone through, it is
20 O&M. It is maintenance and modernization. It is the less
21 visible thing, so that is the first thing that we have to
22 correct. So I do appreciate that.

23 What you had touched on, Air Force or Navy and Marines
24 --

25 Senator Kaine: Just one question I indicated in my

1 opening statement, the questions we are seeing in Hampton
2 Roads around sea-level rise and our Navy base.

3 As we get into the NDAA, we are always grappling with
4 readiness, but we are also grappling with MILCON. We may be
5 talking about an infrastructure bill in Congress where we
6 could be looking at resilience investments. That may not be
7 in the DOD space, but there could potentially be some
8 synergies where we could be doing some potential
9 infrastructure investments that would help.

10 Talk about how you, each in your own service branch,
11 are dealing with kind of weather-related challenges on
12 installations, whether it is drought, fire, sea-level rise.
13 How do you approach those topics? And how do you factor in
14 to your budgetary requests or other planning what we need to
15 do?

16 General McConville: We look at some of the hazards
17 that have happened over the last couple -- I mean, the
18 hurricane, we had three major hurricanes. We have
19 installations, camp posts and installations really in all
20 those type areas, so they certainly affect us. We have
21 fires in certain parts of the country. That certainly
22 affects where our post is. The flooding is certainly there.

23 We are building some resilience. An example right now,
24 we are building in partnership at Schofield Barracks a power
25 plant in conjunction with the local area. So it will be

1 used. We do not necessarily need it, but if there is a
2 situation where the power goes out, we will have that
3 capability, resilience. It is a private-public partnership,
4 which I think is a good way to get after, and they seem very
5 excited about that partnership that is going on there.

6 Senator Kaine: Excellent. So that is a shared
7 investment that is being done by both DOD and the local
8 community.

9 General McConville: It is actually the community that
10 is actually paying, but we are allowing them to use the
11 land. Then if something happens where we lose power, we
12 have first dibs on the power. It is on the grid right now,
13 but if something happened serious, we have the opportunity
14 to use it.

15 Senator Kaine: Smart contracting. Thanks.

16 Admiral Moran?

17 Admiral Moran: I attended a briefing by the Naval
18 Academy here recently, and they are looking out 30 years at
19 the flood plains and the seawall associated with the
20 Chesapeake Bay and the Severn River. It was a pretty stark
21 demonstration of what could happen, if we do not take some
22 action in the next 30 years to address that rise in water
23 level. And as you know, General Walters and I, we share
24 bases of pretty much waterfront property all over the world,
25 so if the ocean is going to rise, we are going to be

1 impacted everywhere.

2 So it does demand kind of a comprehensive look at all
3 of our bases, especially in those areas that you already
4 cited in Hampton Roads, Florida, on the West Coast in San
5 Diego, et cetera. So we are going to look at that very hard
6 in the next --

7 Senator Kaine: I had not really thought about it until
8 you were using flood plains, so we are talking not just
9 about ocean but about tidal rivers. So Quantico is on a
10 tidal river. NAVSEA Dahlgren is on a tidal river, and the
11 Potomac. So we are talking about a lot of installations
12 either right on the ocean, on the bay, or on tidal rivers
13 that could be affected.

14 Admiral Moran: Yes, sir.

15 Senator Kaine: General Walters?

16 General Walters: Yes, sir. We are a waterfront
17 organization also. We have come to the conclusion that we
18 are not going to turn the tide, but we are looking at it
19 closely.

20 In this job that I am in right now, I have taken two
21 briefs in the last 8 months on what I consider our most
22 critical vulnerability, and that is Parris Island, South
23 Carolina. Our logistics folks, the Deputy Commandant for
24 I&L, has done extensive work and studies. They have
25 projected out what is the best case, what is the worst case.

1 Obviously, there is a big variance in there.

2 But what I do know is that we will eventually have to
3 bolster that. I have come to the conclusion in my own mind
4 that it is not today. We do not have to build a seawall
5 today, but we have to consider one. And we are monitoring
6 it every day as we watch that, because, remember, that
7 started out as a marsh with a little bit of an island, so
8 marshes turn into seawater and land turns into marsh.

9 Senator Kaine: I am amazed at how expensive seawalls
10 and projects like that are. And so I know how much MILCON
11 doesn't get done. I mean, we will do a MILCON budget
12 through approps or work here in the NDAA authorizing
13 projects, but I do not know how many don't get done because
14 of the absence of budgetary resources. You start to add in
15 significant resilience investments and things like seawalls,
16 et cetera, you are really going to have a traffic jam of
17 projects looking for scarce dollars.

18 Admiral Moran: I guess my message, Senator, is, I do
19 not believe it is a crisis today, but it is something that I
20 think we as a Nation have to watch over time. And we will
21 have to make an adjustment, because we are not going to -- I
22 do not think we can --

23 Senator Kaine: Pretend it is going away.

24 Admiral Moran: That is right.

25 Senator Kaine: Yes.

1 Yes, General Wilson?

2 General Wilson: This last year was a great example.
3 So we were fighting fires in California and using our C-130s
4 to help fight those. We did the floods here or the
5 hurricanes, both in Texas as well as Florida, and as the
6 ones came up the East Coast affecting bases like Langley.

7 So everything we look at in terms of infrastructure, we
8 have to look at through the lens of, how would I build and
9 design infrastructure that would support changes in climate?

10 I think that and energy resiliency across our bases, as
11 the Army just talked about, to be able to partner with local
12 communities because our bases are power projection
13 platforms, so we have to make sure they are energy-
14 resilient.

15 Senator Kaine: The last thing I will say before I hand
16 it back over to the chair is, I am asking about sort of
17 readiness, MILCON, resilience investments, but the other
18 thing that we are seeing around the world is really the
19 persistence and acceleration of refugees and migrants.
20 Often, they are driven by civil war. They are driven by
21 corruption and governance challenges. But they are often
22 driven by big weather emergencies, by long-term, persistent
23 droughts.

24 We probably think of migrants and refugees as kind of
25 episodic emergency, but anymore, it is getting to be kind of

1 a permanent reality, and we have seen how destabilizing
2 migrant flows can be coming into other nations, like Syrian
3 refugees in Jordan. Jordan doesn't have enough water for
4 its own population, much less millions of refugees.

5 So I think these weather-related effects, whether you
6 are planning for resilience on bases or whether you are
7 thinking about the national security challenges that they
8 could cause by pushing people across borders, we will be
9 dealing with this and having to factor this into our
10 planning for a very long time.

11 Thank you for your testimony on this.

12 Senator Inhofe: Thank you, Senator Kaine.

13 Admiral, I was going to go into this, I think Senator
14 Kaine already did, on the Fitzgerald and McCain, and where
15 we are now and what could have been contributing factors to
16 that. I think we all know pretty much what is happening
17 there.

18 But in the area of the Marines, General, last year, I
19 guess it was, I was trying to find it. Last year, you
20 testified our F-18s operationally were down around 40
21 percent, is that right, if my memory serves me?

22 Admiral Moran: It was about 50 percent last year, sir.

23 Senator Inhofe: Yes. What kind of progress have we
24 made on that?

25 Admiral Moran: So we have increased by about 44

1 aircraft. That is good. With what happened in 2017, and I
2 am looking forward to -- so the contracts in the RAA have
3 been let. The increase in flight hours per pilot is getting
4 up to not quite at the level we wanted.

5 Senator Inhofe: Yes, you are a little higher than the
6 Air Force, aren't you?

7 Admiral Moran: Yes, sir. We are getting somewhere
8 between 14 and 16 hours per pilot per month.

9 Senator Inhofe: Which I think, General Wilson, you are
10 down close to 9 or 10.

11 General Wilson: Senator, I think we got a little bit
12 more than that. We are trying to increase it about an hour
13 per month going forward this year, and that is what we put
14 forward in our budget, an increase in flying hours to
15 support --

16 Senator Inhofe: Why do you think the Marines are ahead
17 of you on this?

18 General Wilson: I do not have a good reason why they
19 are ahead of us. I know that we are trying to increase not
20 only our production capability, our infrastructure, our
21 instructor pilots, our flying hours, our weapons system
22 supports, our ranges and capacity to be able to do that.
23 And right now, I would just say we were too small for all
24 the missions we have been asked to do. And going to the
25 people part will be very helpful to be able to turn that

1 tide and get us moving in the right direction.

2 Senator Inhofe: I have had a lot of conversations with
3 a lot of pilots, both Air Force and Marines, and I am more
4 and more convinced every time I talk to them, it is not so
5 much bonuses as it is flying hours. They want to fly.

6 And when I stop and think, Senator Kaine, our
7 calculation was it costs about \$16 million to take someone
8 off the street and get them qualified in an F-22, for
9 example. So the money, that is an easy response, but that
10 doesn't solve the problem.

11 I am convinced of this, and I think we need to get
12 those up. I know you are working hard to get that done.
13 That is a complaint that I hear all the time, because I have
14 a background in that.

15 General Wilson: Senator, we have talked about this.
16 You know exactly that our pilots want to fly. So trying to
17 let them do their job, to get the right work-life balance in
18 their life so that they can fly but be able to spend the
19 right amount of time at home, because just as you said, if
20 it takes \$10 million to make a fighter pilot and we are over
21 a thousand short, then that is a \$10 billion capital
22 investment lost, and it takes 10 years to make up.

23 So we are working all three efforts. On production,
24 how do we get that right work-like balance in the middle to
25 be able to season them, to make sure that they are proud and

1 confident in what they are doing, and then retain them on
2 the back side. And I hear the same thing that you hear,
3 that money, certainly, the compensation is a piece of it,
4 but it is not the big piece of it.

5 Senator Inhofe: Yes, I think you are right. Tony just
6 handed me a note saying that all four of the vices are
7 aviators, which is probably a first, right?

8 Do you all agree with our comments about the source of
9 that problem, that it is not flying hours?

10 General McConville: Yes, sir.

11 Senator Inhofe: It is not so much bonuses.

12 General McConville: They did not come in to get rich,
13 sir. They came in to fly.

14 Senator Inhofe: Yes, I know that.

15 All right, you guys, on our side, we do not have anyone
16 else coming. Do you know of any? Okay, we are going to go
17 ahead and adjourn the meeting.

18 I appreciate your time very much. And we are on the
19 mend. That is the message for today.

20 [Whereupon, at 3:44 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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