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SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TACTICAL AIRLAND
UNITED STATES SENATE

PRESENTATION TO THE
SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AIRLAND
UNITED STATES SENATE

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SUBJECT: Air Force, Force Structure and Modernization Programs

STATEMENT OF:

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INTRODUCTION

Chairman Kelly, Ranking Member Cotton, and distinguished members of the subcommittee, thank you for having us here today to provide testimony on The Department of the Air Force's (DAF) Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) President's Budget (PB) request for Air Force modernization.

The Department of the Air Force is critical to our national defense. Our capabilities underwrite those of the Joint Force and we are uniquely suited to provide this cornerstone of the Nation's defense. This is particularly true of the long-range strike and power projection capabilities that are the purview of this subcommittee and that we will discuss today.

The Department of the Air Force's FY25 PB request reflects our commitment to developing a threat-informed, concept-driven future Air Force as framed by the National Defense Strategy (NDS), but resources have been limited by the 2023 Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA). The FRA spending caps increase risk and force difficult tradeoffs. We have made significant progress in identifying the capabilities the DAF will need to develop and field to prevail against our adversaries. However, the DAF is facing a significant, dangerous shift in the strategic security environment where our historical dominance in military operations will be challenged by adversaries intent on denying us previously assumed advantage in the air and space domains. The DAF has historically adapted to key inflection points to best compete in emerging security landscapes and our current efforts to achieve greater organizational agility by reoptimizing for Great Power Competition (GPC) once again illustrate this key trait. [REDACTED]

The Secretary of the Air Force has made clear we are out of time and must reoptimize now. We seek to anticipate and develop the capabilities to dominate emerging military competitions before would-be adversaries can master the ability to threaten our vital interests. To achieve a more competitive posture, the DAF is implementing major changes centered on how we Develop People, Generate Readiness, Project Power, and Develop Integrated Capabilities. The Operational Imperatives work highlighted the challenges of integration and the importance of tight partnerships between the operational and acquisition communities. The capability development-related GPC organizational changes we are making at the Secretariat and Major Command levels institutionalize these lessons learned. The DAF is establishing a single, authoritative entity focused on identifying and prioritizing future operational capabilities, driving

cross-platform mission systems integration and capability development, establishing focused acquisition Systems Centers for effective portfolio and lifecycle management, and standing up relevant Secretariat offices to inform senior leaders on enterprise-wide decisions. This will result in a more agile and integrated acquisition system that delivers capabilities—quickly and at scale— while demonstrating to adversaries our resolve to rapidly adapt our organization to effectively compete today and win decisively in any future conflict.

Since time is of the essence in capability development, we are thankful for Congress providing the Section 229 “Quick Start” provision in the FY24 NDAA and we look forward to providing information on the specific initiatives using this authority in the near future. While grateful for the support, we continue to be hampered by funding through Continuing Resolutions and restrictions on the retirement of outdated fighter, tanker, cargo, and command and control aircraft. Compromises that divert focus from our operational imperatives put our military’s ability to deliver decisive combat power at great risk. These short-term tradeoffs could prevent us from scaling a future force up to the numbers required to provide us with the military capabilities we need. We are conscious of the difficulties associated with these changes and are eager for continued collaboration with Congress, industry, and the communities that support our Air Bases to ensure our Nation’s security.

CONTINUING THE EVOLUTION

Global Force Generation

In line with our sister services, the Air Force has a history of evolving to meet the demands of the time. As we continue to evolve to meet the needs of the current and future strategic environment, we must optimize how we organize, train, and equip Air Force Forces and we must do so in an environment where the demands on the Joint Force continue to increase globally. We have made great strides on our journey to transform the service into task-organized units of action, with clearly defined force elements, capable of meeting the worldwide demands of this strategic environment and its associated threats – but there is more work to be done. Clarity in the structure of our force presentation and force generation models have allowed us to better articulate capability, capacity, operational readiness, and risk to ourselves and to the Joint Force. As we continue on this path, fiscal reality means we must continue to take measured risk even as we transform and modernize to meet these needs.

The Air Force Force Generation (AFFORGEN) model, in conjunction with a definable force presentation construct, has been successful in providing predictability for our service-retained forces and continued improvement in this model is allowing our Airmen to train and deploy as a team. As our force presentation model continues to evolve from the Air Expeditionary Wing construct, which was effective for the past couple of decades, to Expeditionary Air Bases (XABs), Air Task Forces (ATFs), and soon Combat Wings, we are shifting focus back to warfighting in a peer competitor environment. We will carefully balance the risk in our garrison missions, in order to prioritize installation and Airmen focus on the combat mission and warfighting effectiveness.

Readiness

While we are in the midst of this important transition from a legacy force presentation model optimized for operations with extreme overmatch from uncontested airfields, to one modernized to deter major power aggression and defeat any peer competitor, the Air Force must continue to take measured risk in current operational readiness in order to modernize our forces in line with the Department's Strategic Readiness Framework mentioned in the National Defense Strategy (NDS). We've had to make tough choices to include divestment of older systems, less relevant for the high-end fight, and we must prioritize investments in manpower, training infrastructure, Flying Hour Program (FHP), and Weapons System Sustainment (WSS), aspects critical to enabling a ready force.

DoD capabilities and those of peer, near-peer, and potential adversaries are advancing at a rate that challenges our ability to provide relevant and realistic training. In order to maintain a qualitative advantage through superior training in multi-domain, full-spectrum employment, we are modernizing our training ranges and legacy airspace to enable warfighters to train for the peer fight in an all-domain, contested environment against relevant and realistic threats. The Air Force has substantial, planned investments during the next FYDP to sustain, modernize, and add training infrastructure to achieve this capability in the 2030 timeframe. We are similarly increasing investments in virtual and synthetic training environments for the future, acknowledging that while not a replacement for flying, factors such as OPSEC, threat replication, emitters and tactics, techniques and procedures will demand more high-end training be accomplished in a synthetic or augmented environment.

Rated Force Management

The Air Force remains committed to meeting the needs of the service and its Airmen through experimentation and continuous, data-driven feedback and we appreciate all the support the committee continues to provide for our Airmen. Despite multiple meaningful initiatives and the efforts of thousands of Airmen at multiple locations, pilot production continues to remain constrained. FY23 Undergraduate Pilot Training (UPT) production graduated 1,315 pilots, which was an increase from FY22, but still below the required 1,500 pilots we need to produce each year. We have taken a holistic, ecosystem-wide approach to operational readiness and data accountability, which in turn has refined our pilot reporting information, awareness, and trust in the information to shape future initiatives. Additional efforts to improve rated force management and pilot production include the Air Mobility Fundamentals – Simulator (AMF-S) program, and improved retention initiatives supported by the committee. Until production improves, we will continue to prioritize operations, test, and training units and take risk in staffs; if that position becomes untenable, we will be forced to shift risk to those historically protected units.

CURRENT CAPACITY AND CAPABILITY

Following NDS guidance, the DAF seeks to invest in technologies and field systems that are both lethal and survivable against tomorrow's threats. Our adversaries continue to erode our historically superior military advantages with ever-advancing capabilities specifically designed to counter traditional air power. This ultimately means transitioning away from legacy platforms to free up manpower and resources to modernize and field more credible systems. If we are to modernize to address the emerging threat, we must use resources tied to our legacy platforms and weapons systems that are decreasing in relevance today and will be irrelevant in a future peer conflict. Retaining systems that have either limited contributions, or are simply not relevant in the future fight, delays modernization and exacerbates future capability gaps while adversary advancements in the air and space domains only increase annually. If deterrence fails, our Airmen must have the training, tools, munitions, and platforms required to win. We must recognize the inherent tension between near-term and future risk to strike the right balance.

Bomber Force Structure

Our budget request supports the NDS's call for continued modernization of the nuclear triad, to ensure a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent to backstop our integrated deterrence approach. Air Force bombers anchor the air leg of the Nation's Nuclear Triad. As a unique national security capability, the B-21 represents the future of this bomber force. As modernization continues, the Air Force will gradually transition to next-generation B-21s and modernized B-52s to provide nuclear and conventional global strike options for decades to come.

B-21

The B-21 is a Special Access Program (SAP). Budget year requests at the appropriation level are unclassified, but most supporting details are classified and provided to Congress in appropriate classified forums. The FY25 PB includes \$2.8B in Research Development Test & Evaluation (RDT&E) for the continuation of Engineering and Manufacturing Development (EMD), and also includes modernization activities. Modernization includes, but is not limited to, Long Range Standoff Weapon (LRSO) integration, new conventional weapons integration, air vehicle provisioning for future capabilities, sensors, and continued nuclear certification activities. The FY25 PB includes \$2.7B in Procurement funding for the execution towards Lot 3 of Low Rate Initial Production (LRIP). In addition to aircraft costs, which includes Advance Procurement, this also provides funding for producibility improvements, approved LRIP Active Management strategies, initial spares, support equipment, Diminishing Manufacturing Sources and Material Shortages (DMSMS) or obsolescence issues, and depot standup. The FY25 PB includes \$220.3M in Main Operating Bases (MOB) Military Construction (MILCON) funding for three projects at Ellsworth Air Force Base (AFB), SD, the Addition and Alteration (ADAL) Squadron Ops facility, Environmental Protection Shelters (EPS), and Alert Apron, as well as continued Planning & Design. The FY25 PB also supports funding for two MILCON projects at Dyess AFB, TX, Refueler Parking and Fuels Admin Lab, as well as continued Planning & Design.

B-52 Squadrons

The Air Force is transitioning to a two-bomber force: B-21 and modernized B-52 aircraft. The FY25 PB request for all B-52 modifications is \$1.046B RDT&E and \$215.013M procurement. This funding enables the Air Force to advance the most comprehensive

modernization in the platform's history, executing numerous on-going modernization programs in various acquisition phases from early development phase through production and fielding phase. Major B-52 modernization efforts include the Commercial Engine Replacement Program (CERP) and the Radar Modernization Program (RMP).

The B-52J CERP has a FY25 PB request of \$785.0M RDT&E and \$2.1M for advance procurement of Common Graphics Processing Unit (GPU) cards for the display and sensor system processor (DASSP). B-52J CERP initiated as a Middle Tier Acquisition (MTA) program, selected Boeing as integrator (March 2018), selected Rolls-Royce as engine provider (September 2021), completed Preliminary Design Review (PDR) (October 2022), and delivered a virtual System Prototype (vSP) that provided residual operational capability to Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC) (October 2023). B-52J CERP has completed MTA requirements by delivering a digital prototype and has transitioned to a Major Capability Acquisition (MCA) (November 2023). The program continues to mature cost and schedule to set a program baseline at Milestone B targeted for September 2024. In FY25 the program will be in the EMD phase, and will be integrating the electronics controls, displays, electrical systems, engine support components, and advanced engine testing required for conversion to B-52J.

B-52H Radar Modernization Program (RMP) has a FY25 PB request of \$179.8M RDT&E and \$129.5M in procurement. B-52H RMP replaced the first B-52 EMD aircraft's 1980's radar system with Raytheon's advanced, modern, off-the-shelf APG-79 radar system in September 2023. The program entered EMD on June 10, 2021 and awarded a development contract to Boeing Defense on June 14, 2021. B-52H RMP completed system-level Critical Design Review (CDR) in February 2022. Boeing started modifying the first B-52H RMP test aircraft in May 2023 and USAF will begin developmental flight tests in November 2024 at Edwards AFB. Milestone C Decision Point #1 is scheduled for 2QFY25, and Milestone C Decision Point #2 is scheduled for 4QFY25.

B-2

The FY25 PB requests \$41.2M in RDT&E for B-2 to continue development and flight testing to modernize avionics, communications systems, cockpit displays, armament systems, low-observable components, aircraft supportability improvements, and support equipment development. The FY25 PB also requests \$101.5M in procurement to allow the Air Force to

purchase and install equipment for modernized avionics, communications systems, cockpit displays, low-observable components, and training systems, as well as to provide maintenance and repair capabilities for B-2 systems.

B-1

The FY25 PB requests \$17.9M in RDT&E to complete development and flight testing to modernize the B-1's secure communications systems. All of this is in preparation for transition to production in FY25, which enables fleet installations to be completed by FY27. Also, the FY25 PB requests \$13.4M for B-1 procurement to allow the Air Force to begin installation of secure communication kits and procure external Load Adaptable Modular (LAM) pylons. The external pylon integration maximizes carriage of standoff munitions on the B-1 and allows the Air Force to increase volume of fires from standoff ranges.

Fighter Force Structure

The Air Force must continue to evolve its fighter force structure to meet the pacing challenge posed by the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the acute threat posed by Russia and ensure the capability and capacity to meet worldwide demands today. Extensive gaming and analysis (using the most difficult problem-sets and scenarios) show that the Air Force must adjust the future fighter force structure mix by adjusting investment priorities to provide the capability, capacity, and affordability required to defeat any peer threat. The threat will not allow the Air Force to just retain and modernize our current fleets. Modernization programs cannot transform our current fourth-generation fighters into fifth-generation fighters, or our current fifth-generation fighters into Next Generation Air Dominance (NGAD).

In realistic budget projections, we must balance the need for high-end technology with affordable capacity. To attain this desired fighter fleet, the Air Force must continue to right size current aircraft inventories to expedite the transition away from less capable, aging aircraft and emphasize investment in future capabilities such as NGAD and F-35 modernization. The desired Air Force fighter fleet should match capability and capacity of both platforms and weapons to mission requirements. As part of its force structure change, the Air Force must transition its fighter fleet from seven platforms (i.e., F-35, F-22, F-16, F-15E/EX, F-15C, A-10) to four (i.e., NGAD, F-35, F-15E/EX, F-16), plus Collaborative Combat Aircraft (CCA).

On the path to achieving the desired future fighter fleet, the FY25 PB continues to seek opportunities to divest systems that are not consistent with pacing challenges and focus on the key capabilities required to execute the NDS. Moving away from outdated and less capable legacy platforms allows us to redirect manpower to our newest aircraft/platforms, many of which require both experienced maintainers and pilots to maintain our competitive edge. These divestitures are critical to building a relevant future force capable of meeting the pacing challenge. Resourcing those future capabilities and modernizing our remaining force demands both money and manpower currently tied up in our legacy systems and platforms.

Fighter Force Structure Studies

Our fighters are becoming significantly more expensive to sustain as they age. The average age of the Air Force fleet is 26 years, which is significantly higher than all other Services. Weapons System Sustainment (WSS) costs have increased approximately 40% above inflation over FY16-FY27. We need new platforms and weapons to replace an aging force, but also must invest in cutting edge technology needed to confront and outpace threats.

Both internally and alongside the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the Air Force has performed a Tactical Aircraft (TACAIR) analysis to evaluate how efficiently different force mixes meet future warfighting challenges in the 2035-2040 timeframe. Specifically, this study focused on fighter force mixes and quantities that were both affordable and militarily effective. The Air Force TACAIR Study was an initial step in creating a long-term plan for our future fighter force. While this study was not published, it was used internally by the Air Force to inform both FY25 and future year programming efforts.

Fighters

F-35

The FY25 PB prioritizes investments in F-35 modernization, infrastructure, and advanced weapons, and commits \$5.9B to procurement, \$1.2B to development and \$2.8B to sustainment. The FY25 PB request for 42 F-35A aircraft represents a decrease of 6 aircraft from the FY24 PB position. Decreasing F-35A procurement was not an arbitrary decision. Reducing aircraft quantities enables the Air Force to fund unplanned increases to F-35 support costs without significant increases to the F-35 budget. Additionally, slowing the pace of procurement allows

added flexibility for Lockheed Martin to work through the issues related to Block 4 development and integration.

Propulsion and power-thermal-management-systems-development investments help ensure capability enhancements continue to be viable for the platform as demands increase, while also reducing lifetime sustainment costs. Development funds also address a critical shortfall of F-35A flight test aircraft, which alongside System Integration Lab (SIL) resources are major F-35 modernization enablers.

The F-35 is the cornerstone of our future fighter fleet, and as of April 2024, 409 F-35As are fielded. Although a formidable platform today, the Air Force must continue to smartly modernize the F-35A fleet to keep pace with potential adversaries on relevant timelines. The current program-wide focus remains on Tech Refresh-3 (TR-3) certification and maintainability, which are the foundations for Block 4 capability upgrades and are designed specifically to compete in the highly contested fight in INDOPACOM and EUCOM.

The Air Force committees commit to controlling F-35 costs for both production and sustainment, as well as maximizing mission readiness. The Lighting Sustainment Center delivers global support to U.S. Services, F-35 Partners, and Foreign Military Sales customers around the world. In response to the FY22 NDAA Section 142 mandate, the Air Force is working with the OSD, the Department of Navy (DoN), and the Joint Program Office (JPO) to assume greater management, planning, and execution roles of sustainment functions, both to improve aircraft availability and further reduce sustainment costs.

F-22

The F-22 is the Joint Force's preeminent air superiority fighter and the only operational weapon system capable of countering pacing air threats at scale into the 2030s. To date, its combination of stealth, super-cruise, maneuverability, and integrated avionics have given it "First Look, First Shot, First Kill" capabilities against adversary platforms. However, it requires an aggressive modernization strategy to ensure continued advantage against emerging threats in highly contested environments. The FY25 PB request furthers F-22 modernization with continued development and integration of sensor enhancements (SeE), communication systems (Link-16 and Mode 5 Challenge and Reply), navigation systems (EGI-M – an advanced navigation technology, known as Embedded Global Positioning System (GPS) / Inertial

Navigation System (INS) Modernization, or EGI-M, and Controlled Reception Pattern Antenna-CRPA), and other performance upgrades.

The FY25 RDT&E request of \$768.6M greatly expands survivability by beginning the Infra-Red Defensive Suite (IRDS) Gen III integration effort, while maintaining continued developments across the entire F-22 modernization portfolio. The FY25 procurement request of \$934.2M ramps up production of Mode 5 and Low-Drag Tanks and Pylons (LDT/P) kits that are essential to reduce fratricide potential and extend maximum combat sortie ranges and durations.

To resource these F-22 modernization efforts and invest in sixth-generation platforms (NGAD), the Air Force has sought to divest F-22 Block-20 Formal Training Unit (FTU) and Test aircraft in the FY23 PB, FY24 PB, and FY25 PB. However, the 2023 NDAA prohibits divestment of F-22 aircraft through FY27. F-22 Block-20 aircraft are currently in their third decade of operations, with the highest operating costs of any Air Force fighter, and do not possess the combat capabilities resident in the F-22 Block-30/35. The Air Force remains committed to delivering air superiority to the Joint Force in the highly contested environment.

F-16

The FY25 PB reduces the F-16 Total Aircraft Inventory (TAI) by 11 aircraft, to 830, and continues modernizing the post block fleet (i.e., Block 40/42/50/52) to improve survivability and offensive viability into the 2040s, filling mission roles in conjunction with fifth- and sixth-generation fighters.

The FY25 PB requests \$107M in RDT&E to continue Operational Flight Program (OFP) software updates to integrate new mission capabilities, weapons, targeting pods, and improved avionics in support of NDS priorities.

Additionally, the FY25 PB requests \$231.9M for procurement efforts to upgrade core mission computer sub-systems to realize full Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radar capabilities, replace or repair aircraft-life-limiting components, upgrade the Communications Suite to meet crypto mandates, and continue AESA radar installations. FY25 PB F-16 investments align with FY24 PB priorities and support the DAF fighter roadmap.

F-15 Divestments

In FY25, F-15C/D fleet recapitalization continues, and the Air Force plans to divest 65 F-15C/D aircraft, many of which are beyond their service life and have serious structural risks, wire chafing issues, and obsolete parts. The Air Force will also begin divesting part of the F-15E fleet, retiring 26 of the older aircraft which possess the less capable, Pratt & Whitney 220-engines. F-15 divestments make way for Air Force modernization, which includes F-15EX procurement to replace the aged F-15C/D aircraft, as well as F-15 Eagle Passive/Active Warning and Survivability System (EPAWSS) procurement, to increase the F-15 fleet's capability and operational readiness.

F-15EX

The FY25 PB includes \$1.8B to procure 18 Lot 6 aircraft and 6 pairs of Conformal Fuel Tanks (CFT). The funds also support requirements for a sixth operational location, which requires investment in spare parts, support equipment, training, and other support requirements. Finally, the procurement request includes funds to stand up organic, depot-maintenance repair capabilities. This request supports a total F-15EX fleet of 98 aircraft (6 fewer than in the FY24 PB) and would bring total CFT inventory to 18 pairs (12 pairs funded in FY24), enough for one squadron.

As of January 2024, the Air Force accepted six F-15EX test aircraft, located at Eglin AFB. The Air Force expects to begin Lot 2 aircraft acceptance by the end of 2024 and grow F-15EX inventory to 29 aircraft by the end of FY25.

The FY25 budget contains \$56.2M in RDT&E funds to continue F-15EX Non-Recurring Engineering (NRE) and integration development efforts, including incremental funding for the Automatic Ground Collision Avoidance System (AGCAS) and new Flight Control Computer (FCC).

- **Forward Fuselage Redesign.** Forward fuselage redesign challenges delayed six Lot 1 aircraft deliveries. The final two Lot 1 aircraft are projected to deliver by June 2024, eight months later than projected during the FY24 PB rollout, but still within the program baseline threshold.

- **Cartridge/Propellant Actuated Devices (CAD/PADs) Shortages.** Issues have been mitigated through Lot 3 delivery (November 2025). The Air Force and industry remain engaged to mitigate CAD/PAD risks to Lot 4 and beyond.
- **Gun System Shortages.** DAF, Boeing, and the General Dynamics have collaborated to resolve the issue. All operational aircraft will deliver with their gun system installed.

F-15 Modernization (Including F-15 Eagle Passive/Active Warning and Survivability System (EPAWSS))

The Air Force continues investments in the F-15 fleet to improve survivability and lethality within highly contested areas. The future F-15E/EX fleet will bring substantial capacity for over-sized long-range fires, sensors, and electronic warfare capabilities to complement fifth- and sixth-generation aircraft and defend critical locations.

The FY25 budget includes \$357.6M in procurement funds to order F-15 Eagle Passive/Active Warning and Survivability System (EPAWSS) kits for 21 F-15E aircraft, install EPAWSS on 14 F-15E aircraft, procure initial spares, provide for interim contractor support (repair capabilities), and support other program requirements. The procurement request also supports other F-15E system modernization, many of which are necessary to comply with National Security Agency and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) mandates. Specifically, the request funds hardware, installation, and/or interim contractor support for new or improved subsystems, which include a mission computer, tactical datalink system, radio for satellite communications, and data transfer module.

The FY25 budget includes \$178.6M in RDT&E to support F-15 annual software releases and flight test infrastructure for developmental and operational test requirements of the F-15 platform and various defense weapon systems. The annual OFP software updates integrate new hardware and weapons, counter emerging threats, and react to emerging safety of flight issues, preserving the F-15's survivability and lethality.

A-10

The FY25 PB does not include development or procurement requests, in accordance with the Air Force plan to divest the entire A-10 fleet by FY28 and constraints imposed by the "Sunset

Clause” (10 USC Sec 2244a) prohibiting the bulk of A-10 modernization and associated procurement. Although the A-10 has limited applications to higher-tier NDS priorities and limited survivability in the evolving global threat environment, the fleet is sufficiently modernized to meet operational needs over the next five years and to operate safely through platform divestment.

NGAD Family of Systems - Platform and CCA

The FY25 PB requests approximately \$3.3B to fund the development, testing, and experimentation of both NGAD and CCA, as well as CCA integration with fifth-generation crewed platforms. The CCA program will begin concept refinement for the next CCA Increment (CCA Inc 2) and explore international participation.

In April 2024, the DAF exercised two option-award contracts for CCA Increment 1 to Anduril and General Atomics to conduct detailed design, build, and test of production-representative test articles. In 2024 the Air Force plans to award an EMD contract for the NGAD crewed platform. These activities, guided by a family-of-systems acquisition approach, will continue into FY25.

Advanced Engine Development

The FY25 PB request includes \$562.3M in RDT&E for development of Next Generation Adaptive Propulsion (NGAP) prototype engines. The NGAP program builds on Adaptive Engine Transition Program prototyping to further advance adaptive cycle engine performance and size scalability key to enabling future air dominance capabilities. NGAP funding supports production and test of a prototype engine by each of two contractors, preserving competition and key engine design and manufacturing skills. The program is also driving digital transformation of the propulsion industrial base to reduce future integration risks while shortening development timelines. This continued investment in the advanced propulsion and digital transformation of the industrial base are key factors in maintaining the U.S. strategic advantages in propulsion technology and development capability over competitors and adversaries.

Munitions

Advanced Medium-Range Air-to-Air Missile (AMRAAM)

The FY25 PB request for AMRAAM continues investment in the next generation medium and long-range air-to-air missiles. AMRAAM continues to be the Air Force's premier beyond visual range, all-weather, launch and leave medium range air-to-air missile that can defend against more advanced threats in a highly contested environment. The Air Force is requesting \$447M for 462 AMRAAMs to maximize production capacity through the future years defense program.

Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM)

The FY25 PB request for JASSM continues investment in the long-range conventional air-to-surface missiles. JASSM continues to be the Air Force's premier autonomous precision guided standoff cruise missile; able to attack fixed or relocatable targets. The FY25 PB requests \$825M of missile procurement funding for 550 missiles that supports the continued multi-year procurement strategy, initiated in FY24. In the FY25 PB the Air Force also requests \$184M of RDT&E to support the development of the B-3 and D variants of the JASSM. This funding supports Software development, Weapon Data Link (WDL) development for the JASSM-D, and weapon test and evaluation. These RDT&E efforts support fielding the B-3 and the D variants in FY27. The Air Force will continue the purchase of the M-code enabled B-3 variant, and the post-launch retargetable D variant for all future lots.

Long Range Anti-Ship Missile (LRASM)

The FY25 PB request for LRASM continues investment in the long-range conventional air-to-surface missiles against high-threat maritime targets. LRASM is highly leveraged on the design of JASSM-ER with over 70% hardware commonality and shares the same production assembly line. The Air Force requests \$354M of missile procurement funding for 64 C-1 and 51 C-3 missiles that supports LRASM MYP (starting with lot 9 procurement) of AGM-158C and AGM-158C-3 variants. The Air Force will continue to purchase the C-3 variant in FY26 Lot 10. The LRASM AGM-158C-3 variant will be a forward fit Engineering Change Proposal (ECP) to the AGM-158C, to enhance long-range strike and existing Offensive Anti-Surface Warfare (OASuW) capability. Beginning in FY26 through the outyears, the Air Force will be procuring

LRASM C-3 only, until the missile inventory objective is met. The DoN has oversight and primary management authority for the LRASM program, to include system development, with interest from the DAF as the lead for weapons procurement and contracting.

Stand-in Attack Weapon (SiAW)

The Air Force continues to invest in technology to counter future peer threats and continues development of the SiAW to deliver a strike capability to defeat rapidly relocatable targets, a hallmark of the highly contested environment. SiAW is the munition that gives the F-35 unique air-to-surface capabilities in the high-end fight for the Joint Force. The FY25 PB requests \$376M for SiAW development and prototyping, along with \$173M in procurement funding to field Advanced Anti-Radiation Guided Missile Extended Range (AARGM-ER) on the F-35 as an interim capability.

Air-Launched Rapid Response Weapon (ARRW)

The FY25 PB does not include a request for ARRW RDT&E or procurement funding. ARRW recently completed the final test of its All-Up Round executed under rapid prototyping authorities in March 2024. While future ARRW decisions are pending final analysis of all flight test data, the service is pleased to report that the ARRW rapid prototyping program is a categorical success.

Though specific test objectives cannot be provided in an unclassified forum, the test acquired valuable, unique data, and was intended to further a range of programs such as ARRW and Hypersonic Attack Cruise Missile (HACM). It also validated and improved the Air Force's test and evaluation capabilities for continued development of advanced hypersonic systems.

Hypersonic Attack Cruise Missile (HACM)

The FY25 PB request of \$517.0M in RDT&E for the HACM development allows the Air Force to mature HACM through ground and flight testing, continue model-based engineering and digital ecosystem, complete critical design, and increase production readiness. Funding will support finalization of design verification testing, execution of initial qualification testing, and aircraft integration activities required for the HACM flight test campaign in FY25 through FY27 and enable production article procurement by FY27.

Aerial Refueling

Near-peer competitors have made significant advancements that threaten today's tanker fleet and potentially forces them to operate farther away from their area of responsibility. The stacked demand of global operations requires a set number of air refueling tankers with specific connectivity, survivability, and agility capabilities, generating at mission capable rates to meet timelines and win the fight. The FY25 PB requests \$3.2B in RDT&E and procurement to continue uninterrupted tanker recapitalization.

KC-46A

The KC-46A continues to provide increased operational readiness, flexibility, connectivity, and survivability to the Global Reach mission. To date, 139 production aircraft are on contract and 82 KC-46As have been delivered to the warfighter.

The Air Force continues to work with Boeing to correct deficiencies with the Remote Vision System (RVS) and stiff air refueling boom. We are committed to ensuring these deficiencies are properly addressed without undue burden on the taxpayers or warfighters. The RVS 2.0 solution and start of fleet retrofit is now scheduled in FY26. In addition, the stiff boom deficiency design solution is expected to start fielding in FY26.

While the KC-46A program is addressing these challenges, Air Mobility Command (AMC) has accepted a certain level of risk and cleared the KC-46A for worldwide operations, using existing approved restrictions, operational guidance, and risk assessments for all Mobility aircraft. KC-46As must fill rotational deployments to ensure KC-135 units remain within deploy-to-dwell redlines and are afforded training opportunities to meet operational readiness requirements. The Air Force will utilize the capability the KC-46A can provide today, in order to support global operations and continue the KC-46A transition while we divest KC-10s and KC-135s. The A-10 is not cleared for operational refueling; the E-2D, C-32B, and B-21 are awaiting receiver certification. All other Joint aircraft have been cleared for operational air refueling.

The FY25 PB requests \$93.6M in RDT&E funds to support the ongoing KC-46A EMD and post-production modification efforts, to include the boom telescope actuator redesign that resolves the stiff boom deficiency, continued test and receiver aircraft certifications, development for training system required updates, and increased effort on the KC-46A Pegasus Advanced

Communications Suite (PACS) Block 1 program. In addition to PACS Block 1, AMC will accelerate the means to connect the Mobility Air Forces (MAF) via the FY25 new start MAF Connectivity to optimize operations and close logistics and kill chains. These connectivity initiatives will provide the KC-46A with increased communications reliability using high-bandwidth, multi-waveform, multi-orbit, constellation systems of systems, including accelerating commercial satellite-based internet services. Additionally, the budget requests \$3.1B to fund procurement of 15 aircraft in Production Lot 11 and the associated support costs, along with increased depot standup and transition to organic sustainment efforts. The DAF is increasing the number of KC-46A programmed aircraft from 179 to 183 aircraft, which procures 4 additional aircraft in FY27 Production Lot 13.

Tanker Recapitalization

Accelerating future tanker capability and recapitalizing the aging tanker fleet is a top priority for the DAF. Tanker Recapitalization is the second phase in replacing legacy tanker aircraft, following the KC-46A program that ensures continuous, uninterrupted tanker recapitalization. The DAF's goal is to use the Tanker Recapitalization program to replace up to 15 KC-135s per year as they retire between the completion of the KC-46A contract and an accelerated Next Generation Air-refueling System (NGAS). The program received Joint Requirements Oversight Council (JROC) validated requirements and released a draft System Requirements Document (SRD) to industry in 2023. Market research and the Business Case Analysis (BCA) re-look is complete, the DAF is using the data to inform the program's acquisition strategy, scheduled to occur in June 2024.

The FY25 PB request of \$13.7M in RDT&E funding will support FY25 acquisition activities including the Future Tanker program office stand up, release of the program's Request for Proposal (RFP) to industry, Engineering Support, and Cost Analysis.

Next Generation Air-Refueling System (NGAS)

NGAS will deliver adaptive and agile platform(s) and mission systems as part of a tanker Family of Systems by the mid -2030s. The NGAS Analysis of Alternatives (AoA) will consider a wide range of designs including clean sheet design(s) and purpose-built aircraft to address projected threats and needed capabilities and leverage benefits of full and open competition.

NGAS held its Materiel Development Decision (MDD) milestone in January 2024 and was approved entrance into the Material Solution Analysis (MSA) Phase. In addition, the OSD Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation approved the AoA study plan, and the 9-month AoA. It is currently underway, and will be completed in October 2024. The AoA will shape requirements and determine the technology development timeline. Finally, the DAF is standing up a Future Tanker program office to execute both the NGAS and Tanker Recapitalization programs.

The FY25 PB request of \$7.0M in RDT&E funds draft requirements development efforts, prep for the acquisition strategy for the Technology, Maturation, and Risk Reduction phase and Milestone A prep, and post AoA studies, updates to tanker models and run high-fidelity modeling and simulation to further exercise Joint warfighting concepts and plans. The DAF is constantly evaluating technology acceleration opportunities for the program and is awaiting the AoA results and post-AoA modeling and simulation data.

KC-10 and KC-135

The FY25 PB requests \$32.0M in RDT&E to continue KC-135 fleet communications suite modernization to enable digital and secure communications across the fleet. These modernization efforts include Aero-I SATCOM, Comm 2 Crypto and Data, High-Frequency Modernization, and Mobile User Objective System (MUOS). The funding will also be used for drag reduction initiatives to support DAF Climate Action Plan (CAP) initiatives in an effort to reduce fleet emissions. This funding will address critical DMSMS issues through the Center Console Refresh (CCR) program. This effort replaces the integrated fuel management panel, fuel management panel, tanker interface unit, multi-function display, and the control display unit which are all out of production and no longer able to be serviced.

The FY25 PB also requests \$161.6M in procurement to continue installation of Real-Time Information in the Cockpit (RTIC), Comm 2 Crypto and Data, High-Frequency Modernization, and the safety of flight Rudder Position Indicator (RPI) modifications. These modifications will allow the KC-135 to meet NSA-crypto mandates. The RPI modifications will allow crews enhanced situational awareness into the actual rudder position, versus what is commanded, and provide advanced visuals so crews can avoid safety of flight situations. The KC-135 will also begin the installation of MAF Connectivity enhancement; allowing the tanker

to close logistics and kill chains. The KC-135 fleet completed all Block 45 installs in FY24. The KC-10 fleet will fully divest by the end of FY24.

Executive Airlift

The Executive Airlift fleet supports the President of the United States through VC-25 and the Vice President of the United States, First Spouse of the United States, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff through five different aircraft types. Modernization and recapitalization efforts of these aircraft will continue to provide reliable operational support and keep passengers globally connected while airborne.

VC-25A

The FY25 PB request of \$11.4M in procurement is for Block Upgrade efforts (low-latency worldwide data connections, aggregated throughput bandwidth, and Multi-Role Tactical Common Data Link (MRTCDL) on one aircraft, low-cost modifications, and service bulletins.

VC-25B

The FY25 PB requests \$433.9M in RDT&E to continue EMD, aircraft modifications, developmental test and evaluation, and other product support activities.

C-32 / C-40

The FY25 PB requests \$338.7M in procurement funding to purchase one aircraft that will augment the current C-32A executive airlift fleet. The acquisition will modify a new-production, industry standard, business aircraft by integrating the military-specific modifications and Senior Leader Communications System-Airborne (SLCS-A) suite already present on the executive airlift fleet. The C-32A fleet supports the Top Five (Vice President of the United States, First Spouse of the United States, Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff). This fleet augmentation will alleviate pressure on the C-40B and C-40C fleets that currently support combatant commanders, the Cabinet, and Congress.

Strategic and Tactical Airlift

The stacked demand of global operations requires a set number of strategic and tactical airlift aircraft with specific connectivity, survivability, and agility capabilities now, generating at mission-capable rates to meet timelines and win the fight.

C-5M

The FY25 PB requests \$55.0M in procurement, predominately for Crown Skins, as well as Communications, Navigation, Surveillance/Air Traffic Management (CNS/ATM), C-5 Core Mission Computer/Weather Radar (CMC/WxR) system equipment, and Mission Systems Equipment Lavatories (MSEL). Crown Skins replacement and lavatory modifications address corrosion issues decreasing availability of aircraft and causing grounding. CNS/ATM complies with civil airspace mandates for US National Airspace System and international civil airspace. CMC/WxR upgrades computer processor modules and addresses obsolescence issues.

Additionally, the FY25 PB requests \$33.0M in RDT&E to support Replacement of the Multi-functional Controls and Display (RMCD), which mitigates the obsolescence of the current control and display units and increases capacity for future technology integration into the cockpit.

C-17A

The FY25 PB requests \$113.7M in procurement funding to continue critical modifications to the C-17 fleet to address obsolescence and flight safety issues. These include Beyond Line of Sight (BLOS), Replacement Heads-Up Display (RHUD), and Filter Fire Mitigation (FFM) for Onboard Inert Gas Generating System (OBIGGS), and Aircraft Connectivity. The BLOS communication system effort modernizes multi-channel voice and data communication subsystems to address obsolescence issues and enables compliance with FAA and NSA mandates. The RHUD modification addresses obsolescence issues with the current HUD that will become unsupported in FY26 and could cause grounding of aircraft if the current scheduled is delayed. FFM includes a redesigned shut off valve that eliminates potential filter fires, improves fuel efficiency, and incorporates a Master Caution annunciation to warn aircrews of potential filter fire risk. MAF Connectivity is a new start program that will provide capability for increased aircrew situational awareness, real-time secure command and control of

forces, and close logistics and kill chains. Additionally, the FY25 PB requests \$17.4M in RDT&E funding to address obsolescence issues. Flight Deck Replacement prevents obsolescence in 16 existing C-17 flight deck parts. Four parts will significantly impact aircraft availability in FY29 and deplete assets worldwide by FY31.

C-130H

The FY25 President's budget requests \$102.5M in procurement funding to support the C-130H fleet. The Air Force continues to modernize the C-130H fleet to ensure aircraft safety, airspace compliance, and aircraft systems modernization. Our C-130H Center Wing Box replacement program breathes new life into some of our more frequently flown aircraft, enabling them to continue to safely operate well into the future. The Avionics Modernization Program (AMP) Increment 2 program improves the C-130H fleet maintainability and reliability by providing a new digital avionics suite, mitigating obsolescence and diminishing manufacturing source challenges, and provides Crypto Modification I capabilities to include MUOS/SATURN upgrades.

C-130J

The FY25 PB requests \$34.4M in RDT&E and \$209.3M for procurement and modification efforts. The FY25 PB also requests \$24.9M in RDT&E for HC/MC-130J and \$231.9M for procurement and modification efforts for HC/MC-130J.

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

Tactical Ultra High Frequency Radio satellite communication system to ensure we maintain key communication links anywhere in the world.

Rotary

HH-60G and HH-60W (Combat Rescue Helicopter)

The Air Force is the only Service with a dedicated force organized, trained, and equipped to execute theater-wide Personnel Recovery. The HH-60G fleet currently accomplishes this mission by conducting day, night, and marginal weather Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) operations to recover isolated personnel in hostile or permissive environments. The planned fleet of 96 HH-60W will replace the HH-60G in this role. The FY25 PB requests \$2.1M in procurement for the HH-60G and \$52.3M in RDT&E and \$193.5M in procurement for the HH-60W program.

MH-139A

In April, the Air Force notified Congress of a critical Average Procurement Unit Cost (APUC) breach of at least 31.3 percent and a Program Acquisition Unit Cost (PAUC) breach of at least 43.1 percent. The breach is largely due to the reduction of 38 air vehicles in the FY25 PB. The DAF intends to continue the orderly performance of the MH-139A program while we work with OUSD (A&S) to complete the Critical Nunn-McCurdy process and report to Congress on the Department of Defense's decision to certify or terminate the MH-139A program by mid-October, the timeline required by statute.

The MH-139A program will deliver 42 replacement helicopters, training devices, and associated support equipment to replace the legacy UH-1Ns for AFGSC. Air Force District of Washington, Fairchild AFB, WA, Kirtland AFB, NM, and Duke Field, FL, will continue to fly the UH-1Ns. The FY25 PB requests \$333.5M in procurement for the MH-139 program, which will fund LRIP for eight aircraft, training devices, and support equipment. The first six aircraft continue to be used to finalize test and development. The first LRIP lot will deliver 13 aircraft in FY25 and the second LRIP lot will deliver 7 aircraft in FY26.

CV-22

The CV-22 is the Air Force variant of the joint V-22 tilt-rotor aircraft. It allows for long-distance, terrain following, vertical lift operations with increased survivability and is the only high-speed vertical lift platform in the Air Force inventory. The Air Force lost eight Airmen in a CV-22 Osprey mishap on November 29, 2023, off the shore of Yakushima, Japan. In response, Lieutenant General Tony Bauernfeind, Air Force Special Operations Commander, convened safety and aircraft investigation boards to determine the cause of the mishap and the tragic loss of life. On December 6, 2023, Lieutenant General Bauernfeind directed an operational stand-down of the Air Force CV-22 aircraft to mitigate risk during the mishap investigation. It has been determined that a materiel failure of a component led to the mishap. Furthermore, information from the Air Force Safety Investigation Board and an evaluation of historical data from over 750,000 V-22 flight hours identified the need for additional maintenance and procedural controls to mitigate risk. Institution of these controls and a safety focused, multi-phased approach for maintainers, aircrew, and aircraft enabled a return to flight authorization on March 8, 2024. Full operational capability of the CV-22 is expected in summer 2024. The FY25 PB requests \$84.8M to continue development and modifications to increase CV-22 fleet reliability, capability, and survivability. Investments in these areas will ensure the CV-22 fleet remains ready, reliable, and relevant in the future. Notable investments include the Block 20 Mission Computer Obsolescence Initiative to replace older mission computers and upgrades several avionics systems. Additionally, investments in Nacelle Improvement include redesigned wiring and structural improvements of the nacelles designed to increase aircraft availability by over 5%.

Trainers

T-1, T-6, and T-38

The Air Force is continuing investment efforts in its legacy trainer platforms, including critical modernization programs for the T-6 and T-38 fleets. The T-1A FY25 PB request of \$0.133M in procurement funds low-cost modification efforts of the T-1A. The divestment of the T-1A fleet resumed on April 15, 2024, following SecAF certification of the Pilot Training curriculum in accordance with the FY24 NDAA. Training of future Mobility pilots and Combat

System Operators, currently being conducted in the T-1A Aircraft, will be accomplished in simulators.

The T-6 FY25 PB request of \$130.2M in procurement and \$38.6M in RDT&E supports the procurement of Crash Survivable Recorders and the continued development of Avionics Replacement Program (ARP). In FY25, the T-6 will begin a major ARP to address DMSMS for critical avionics issues.

Continued investments are also required for the modification and sustainment of the T-38 fleet until the T-7A becomes operational. Programs include avionics updates, and structural life extension programs such as Pacer Classic III, and the Talon Repair, Inspections, Maintenance program. The T-38 FY25 PB requests \$115.5M in procurement to support the procurement of kits that will update the T-38 avionics and extend the structural life of the T-38.

T-7A

The T-7A aircraft and simulators will fill training capability gaps for fourth- and fifth-generation fighter aircraft by replacing T-38C aircraft and simulators used in the advanced fighter/bomber track of Specialized Undergraduate Pilot Training, Introduction to Fighter Fundamentals, Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training, and Pilot Instructor Training. On September 27, 2018, a \$9.2B fixed price contract was awarded to the Boeing Company, providing for the anticipated delivery of 351 aircraft, 46 associated training devices, and other ancillary supplies and service. The first T-7A aircraft and simulators are scheduled to arrive at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph (JBSAR) in 2025. All undergraduate pilot training bases will eventually transition from the T-38 to the T-7A. The combination of digital engineering and early prototyping enabled the T-7A program to identify and resolve unfavorable control and handling characteristics at the early stages of development. The utilization of Boeing owned T-7 prototypes has supported the Advanced Pilot Training acquisition schedule.

The Air Force and Boeing have made significant progress in resolving the egress system and flight control law issues that led to the delay of Milestone C from FY23 to FY25. Numerous studies and redesign have led to the increased safety of the egress system and refinement of the flight control software. The program will validate the design changes by conducting a total of 22

test shots. The Air Force and Boeing will continue to work together to ensure the timely resolution of issues as the T-7A progresses through the EMD phase.

First Flight of the T-7A occurred on June 28, 2023 at the Boeing facility in St Louis, Missouri. The Air Force accepted its first EMD aircraft (APT002) on September 15, 2023 and conducted its first flight test on December 20, 2023 at Edwards AFB. Since its first flight tests, APT002 has conducted multiple flutter flight tests. Additionally, APT003 has completed initial climatic tests at Eglin AFB. Boeing has also delivered APT001 and it will conduct loads test at Edwards AFB. Finally, in mid FY24, the program will conduct critical High Angle of Attack (HAA) flight tests using Boeing-owned prototypes to validate design refinements to its flight control software. Boeing is expected to deliver the final two EMD aircraft by the end of the second quarter of FY24.

The FY25 PB request of \$83.8M in RDT&E funds the testing and development of the EMD aircrafts and Ground Based Training Systems (GBTS). Additionally, the FY25 PB request of \$277.8M in procurement funds the first seven LRIP aircraft, associated spares and GBTS devices. The Air Force remains focused on working with Boeing to enable the T-7A program to achieve Milestone C.

Command and Control

E-7A Wedgetail

FY25 PB includes \$418.5M to continue rapid prototyping of the first 2 E-7 aircraft in support of a production decision in FY26. To support Joint and coalition forces, the Air Force must provide a mix of space and airborne sensors and decision support capabilities for Command and Control (C2) and Airborne Moving Target Indicator (AMTI) in the air domain. AMTI investment is essential to countering advanced and emerging air threats fielded or in development by adversaries. While the E-3 lacks the capability to support high end operations and cannot be modified to close existing Airborne C2 and AMTI capability gaps, the Air Force is committed to sustaining and maintaining the remaining 16 AWACS to be operationally ready.

Boeing's proposal for the Rapid Prototyping Program (RPP) was much higher than expected, so the Air Force is evaluating courses of action to determine the best way forward.

At this time, Air Force's primary focus is working with Boeing to get the E-7 platform to a level of affordability the Service can prudently pursue and to successfully demonstrate the Rapid Prototyping phase of the program. OSD and the Air Force have worked to rephase planned production decisions and funding to support RPP contract negotiations and definitization efforts.

The United States Air Force, the Royal Air Force, and the Royal Australian Air Force are committed to collaborating on E-7 programs for mutual benefit through cooperative capability development, evaluation and testing, interoperability, sustainment, operations, training, and safety.

E-3 AWACS

The E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft continues to be a worldwide integrated battle management command and control (BMC2) surveillance, target detection, and tracking platform. The aircraft has been in service since the mid-1970s. Due to its age and sustainability issues, the E-3 AWACS has become increasingly expensive to support. It also lacks sufficient capability and capacity to operate in a near-peer conflict to meet Combatant Commander needs. Divesting part of the fleet will temporarily improve sustainability by adding high demand-low availability parts back into the supply chain. As part of the previous FY23 and FY24 PBs, the Air Force divested a total of 15 AWACS aircraft, leaving a total of 16 aircraft to remain operational until its replacement, the E-7 Wedgetail, is delivered to the warfighter.

The FY25 PB requests \$68.2M in procurement to complete final modifications necessary to meet system operational mandates and address diminishing manufacturing sources as part of our commitment to ensuring E-3 AWACS mission readiness.

Electronic Warfare

EA-37B Compass Call

Compass Call is the DAF's only wide-area, standoff, Airborne Electromagnetic Attack (AEA) Command and Control Warfare/Information Operations weapon system. The Compass Call program is currently undergoing a re-host effort to transition the capability from the EC-130H to the EA-37B in order to maintain U.S. Electromagnetic Spectrum (EMS) superiority in

future conflicts. The EC-37B was redesignated to become the EA-37B, which better identifies the platform's mission of offensive electromagnetic attack. The Air Force greatly appreciates the ongoing Congressional support to the Compass Call program. To date, ten EA-37B aircraft have been procured and are at various stages of modification, with limited fielding for training only in mid-FY25, and initial operational fielding in late FY25.

With the FY25 PB, the Air Force will be focused on completing Developmental and Operational Test for the rehosted EA-37B capability, as well as furthering development of the mission system upgrade for fielding System Wide Open Reconfigurable Dynamic Architecture (SWORD-A) capabilities. The open and agile architecture of SWORD-A will enable a more rapid response capability against emerging threats and will be the foundation for future baseline upgrades.

Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance

MQ-9

The FY25 PB of \$19.5M aimed at providing needed capabilities to the Combatant Commands. To date, the MQ-9 fleet has flown over 3 million hours, with the vast majority of those hours supporting combat operations.

The Air Force will finalize the transfer of the remaining 6 of 10 Block 5 aircraft to the Marine Corps. The Air Force will remove high time Block 5 aircraft in FY27. The AF has enough Block 5 aircraft to maintain current operations through the end of the FYDP.

RQ-4 Global Hawk

FY25 PB request focuses on maintaining the nine-airplane fleet, Multi-Platform Radar Technology Insertion Program (MP-RTIP) sensor, and ground systems at a minimum viable level until divestment. The Global Hawk will divest when replacement capabilities are available, a change from the FY24 PB request in which divestiture was scheduled for FY27.

The FY25 PB requests \$9.5M in RDT&E to support ongoing engineering and logistics effort for all Global Hawk projects required for sustainment.

DAF BATTLE NETWORK

DAF Program Executive Officer for Command, Control, Communications, and Battle Management (DAF PEO C3BM) is the acquisition lead alongside the Advanced Battle Management System (ABMS) Cross-Functional Team which is the operational lead for the development of the DAF BATTLE NETWORK, which aligns USAF and USSF command, control, and communications (C3) capabilities across 50+ core programs to fuse sensors, effectors, and sustainment grids for decisional advantage. The Advanced Battle Management System (ABMS) is the budget Program Element which funds key architecture development, software and applications, digital infrastructure, and aerial networking capabilities to the integration of C2 capabilities as part of DAF BATTLE NETWORK.

The FY25 PB requests \$743.8M within the ABMS PE to support the continued development of the DAF BATTLE NETWORK architecture and enabling infrastructure. It allows for the additional development of a DAF architecture and analysis for relevant contested air, space and maritime mission threads. It also enables the design, testing and initial deployment of digital infrastructure to U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, U.S. European Command, and U.S. Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) delivered through five programs of record spanning the development of a software-defined wide area network, deployable, mobile and fixed digital infrastructure, and deployable systems.

Additionally, the FY25 PB request supports the continued development of key Command and Control (C2) software programs, including Cloud-Based C2 (CBC2) which is currently delivering capability for homeland defense to North American Aerospace Defense Command/USNORTHCOM, and two additional programs focused on the development of a common user interface for battle management command and control (BMC2) and sensor orchestration.

Finally, the FY25 PB request supports continued development of aerial networking capabilities through the Phalanx Griffon program, which will develop the technical framework to expand airborne edge networking capabilities to deliver both data and internet protocol routing between tactical aircraft and the DAF BATTLE NETWORK. These investments in FY25 will enable broader fielding of C3 capabilities in FY26 and beyond.

Conclusion

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify. We look forward to working with this subcommittee to ensure the Department of the Air Force maintains the necessary military advantage to secure our vital national interests and support our allies and partners in 2025 and beyond.