

TRANSCRIPT

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THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT AND MAY CONTAIN ERRORS. USERS ARE ADVISED TO CONSULT THEIR OWN TAPES OR NOTES OF THE SESSION IF ABSOLUTE VERIFICATION OF WORDING IS NEEDED.

Q: Admiral Roughead was in here on Tuesday and he said he is not going to share his Growlers with you. He's only got enough for his wings on the carriers. So electronic attack is the question. He says if you want a standoff jamming capability he really would like you to come up with it. So I suspect what he will then say is well, we've done all these AOA's and stuff going along, looking at that issue. But might you tell us what the most viable options are that you see for filling that void and when you might be able to do it?

A: I do see the first thing is, I think we all contribute forces to the joint force. So I'm confident that all of the services will contribute whatever is necessary inside of a concept of deployment or a concept, if you will, of operations to make the joint force successful.

I don't think it's necessarily about a point solution thing, as opposed to a system solution. I think what we want to do is make air-breathing assets survivable, and I think airborne electronic attack contributes to that.

So in terms of the system, the current investment strategy for the Air Force, including its investment strategy, and I'm not trying to rule out too much of what we have put forward to our high headquarters for the POM '10 input, looks at an investment strategy process. Do individual aircraft possess a capability and a capacity to do some autonomous jamming, some in-band from airborne electronic, if you will, scanned arrays? Do we possess the ability to deploy other expendable types of jamming capabilities? That's a good investment strategy, looking at that technology. Do you invest in systems, say like MALD, that Miniature Air-Launched Decoy, to try to stimulate integrated air defense systems to make them more targetable? Those are all examples of what you want to do inside the system. And from the lead of the combat air force and from the command of Air Combat Command, our investment is the

technologies that might enable a standoff jamming platform as well. So that's kind of a systems view of it.

But one, as an operational view I'm pretty confident that all of us will contribute to the joint force whatever assets we have. Two, I think it's probably prudent and appropriate for us to take a look at this from a systems standpoint and not just a one solution standpoint. But standoff jamming is still in the mix and still a consideration.

Q: Is it still EB-52?

A: I would say that a B-52 is potentially a platform that has value and merit. Why? Power, space, cooling, if you will, when you think about the platform. I think I find it attractive from that standpoint. It is persistent, it is long range, it is high endurance, so it can dwell. Other things about it, if you take a look at, and Pat appropriately said the preponderance of my career has been in flying an awful lot of things with F in front of them. F things oftentimes are not as persistent as are a platform like the B-52. F things historically may not persist at higher altitudes but will be able to give you, because of that higher altitude, line of sight to some of the targets you want jammed. They would also probably not possess, if you will, the effective radiated power because they don't have the electrical capacity to generate them.

So the long answer, the B-52 is a platform that could host the technologies that we continue to invest in.

Q: Might it make more sense then to do the software upgrades on the F-22 to give you that penetrating capability faster?

A: Well, here's what I would say. Again, it's back to a systems answer. Otherwise you play the whack-a-mole game in this. If you look at the entire concept of employment and the concept of operations and balance your investment strategy on what you need and how much of it that you need, can I deliver on, in a spiral, in F-22 or F-35 or other AESA-equipped radars in-band jamming? Absolutely. Is that in-band jamming, has the potential to be extremely effective? Yes, it does. Especially breaking the kill chain from an integrated air defense system. Is that the only place where you'd want to put your investment strategy? No. I like system answers, I like robust answers, so I'm going to want some of all of the above.

Q: General, I'd like to ask you about the Golden Eagles. Is that what we're calling them still?

A: Right.

Q: It's my understanding that 177 Golden Eagles are [inaudible] requirement from the 381 F-22s. You assume you're getting 381 F-22s, so that's an independent requirement. Why not just ask for another 177 F-22s? Or do the F-15s give you something that the F-

22s don't?

A: John, it's an affordability issue.

Q: Okay.

A: That's hopefully as crisp as I can make it. Would I prefer to have, to fulfill the national security strategy, national defense strategy, national military strategy, would I prefer to have 177 additional F-22s vice modifying legacy airplanes? Absolutely. I'd rather choose from Column A, but it's an affordability issue. So that's the constraint that has pushed us into I guess what I would kind of call the execution of Plan B which is to take some of the current legacy force and try to modernize. As you bring it up, John, I think modernization may be a little bit of a misnomer when we talk about it, because as I've looked across all of the fleets of airplanes that we have inside of not just Air Combat Command but the United States Air Forces in Europe and Pacific Air Force, and I look at the dollars being invested in the modernization, about 86 cents on the dollar is really about keeping them flyable and not necessarily increasing them from a viable standpoint.

So 14 cents is going to modernization like a new B-3 radar, or 14 percent is going to examine anIRST pod on a Golden Eagle fleet. But 86 cents is really going into the critical safety of flight or the critical modernization DMS issues to keep them viable or, if you will, flyable.

Would I prefer to do something else, John? Yes. It's affordability.

Q: But my question is, why not express it that way? You've got 381 F-22s has been described as that's the gaining allies [inaudible], but you really seem to be saying you want 559 F-15/F-22 like things. Is that really what your requirement is?

A: I think you've stated that pretty accurately. When I look at this from the lead at the combat Air Force, I start with what is the strategy. What is it that I've been asked to do and how best to do it. Then when I look at the full body and the complement of work, the careful assessment on that, we come up with a whole host of capabilities. The capabilities that underpin the means, means like how do you do air dominance? And by the way, in roles and missions that's a primary function that is issued to the United States Air Force. Primary function, you have to go out there and do air superiority. You need to do global attack. All of which deliver on the combat air force in's which are things like freedom of action. That's what underpins this whole strategy down to in's, down to ways, down to means, which are the capabilities.

The 381 number that has been derived over the years in a lot of independent and objective and thoughtful analysis in my mind, I've seen nothing to move me off of that, if you will. That 381 number was a floor and it was already with an assumed acceptance of risk, John.

Now I'm pleased that the Secretary of Defense has chosen not to close down that F-22 line. So we can continue to have a thoughtful debate on this. But again, I don't see any reason to move away from what we believe is the strategy responsive force structure. It's both a capability, the things, and the capacity in terms of the numbers to give you sufficiency. That's kind of where--In fact, every day I look through the reporting and there's another long range aviation penetration of the [NABIZ] in Alaska, and it's now done in concert with aerial refueling platforms, or it's another long-range aviation overflight of aircraft carriers. I look at the United States Air Force that's tasked with air dominance, I see nothing to cause me to reduce numbers. I see everything to tell me that maybe the numbers I have are somewhat insufficient. I don't know if that helps, John.

Q: I wonder if you could address the people side of your business for a moment. Could you talk to us a little bit about the affect of OpsTempo on your people? Whether the use of ILOs and the drawdown in personnel is affecting you and how.

Q: ILOs, in lieu of's.

A: Right. Number one, I think everybody in the Department of Defense should put their shoulder to the wheel and try to deal with this horrific problem that we have in [inaudible]. That is priority and Air Combat Command is going to continue to contribute people to do those tasks as the department and this nation needs. In fact if you take a look at big Air Force, Air Combat Command provides about a third of all the people that are deployed in support of OIF, Enduring Freedom and OEF. OEF, Enduring Freedom, and OIF, Iraqi Freedom. As far as the 179 day deployments, the 365 day deployments, we've got about 50 percent of those.

As far as people, we have specific skill sets that I would say are really causing us to struggle. Civil engineers, if you will. Intelligence, like my oldest daughter who's an intel officer. Transportation, security forces. Those are some of the top five, if you will, or so of the people issues where our dwell rates are at currently one to one, or they're worse. In some of those particular career fields inside of Air Combat Command, our people are gone one and home about a .75. So is it stressing on our people? Yes it is. Has the reduction in terms of the overall number of people hurt? Yes, it has. Again, that was an affordability issue that drove, I believe, my senior leadership to make those reductions.

As I look at other career fields, it's not just the deployed to OEF and OIF, but it's some of the forward deployed. I keep a continuous bomber presence supporting a security posture in Guam. I'm constantly rotating either B-52s or B-2s into Guam in support of what that specific commander, combatant commander, wants and needs from his theater security posture.

As I look across people-related issues, those are just some that come to mind. And even those that I would call deployed in place, unmanned aerial systems. I've had to not only stop the rotation and reassignment of people that are in the Predator and the Reefer

system, I've had to take them out of other weapon systems and bring them back into the system. We've had to put them in place up at Creech to continue to operate 24x7, 365. Stresses? Yes. Sufficient numbers of people? The answer is we're highly stressed, especially in the career fields that I talked about.

Q: General, I wanted to follow up, you were talking about the Predators. Now that you have pilots serving five year tours as Predator pilots, is this a prelude to creating a separate Predator/UAV pilot career field?

A: Yes.

Q: And I'm also curious, what's going to be happening to these pilots at the end of their five year tour? Do they get to go back to F-15s or whatever? Or do they stay in--

A: One, we have to treat this, Bruce, like a weapon system. You have to assess the right people with the right skill mix, you have to provide them with the appropriate amount of initial training, you have to provide them with the appropriate proficiency training, and then you have to provide a way for them to progress in their careers inside a given weapon system, punctuated with advanced academic education, professional military education, staff experience to grow them throughout our United States Air Force. We must normalize things Predator, things Reaper, things Global Hawk, things unmanned aerial systems, just like we have normalized, professionalized, other weapon systems inside of our United States Air Force. Otherwise in my mind it's not sustainable. Otherwise it winds up being ad hoc and a pickup game. And if there is a growth industry inside of our United States Air Force, I would say it's in unmanned aerial systems.

Just take a look at where we were from what we reported in the last QDR to where we have been in the surge on top of the surge on top of the surge on top of the surge in the Predator system. So yes, we've got to normalize it. Yes, we've got to treat it like a system. Yes, we have to treat the people like that inside of that system.

Q: Does that mean if you're a pilot currently flying a Predator, say you came out of A-10s, and you're doing a Predator tour now, that when you're done in four or five years, whatever, you'll stay with Predators? You'll go back to A-10s?

A: My perception is you're going to have to carefully examine every single person inside of those career fields right now. Some of those individuals may return to their existing weapon system. Some of them may desire to have that long term involvement. We are actually seeing individuals who have been in other weapon systems, other platforms, that have gotten into our unmanned aerial systems and have decided that they want to stay in that.

Now I will tell you, Bruce, to meet the tasking, to meet the demand that has been levied on us, there's also been some people that have left the Predator system, have gone back for requalification, recurrency, in existing systems like the F-16, in fact had been

returned back over to other operational assignments such as Korea, and we've had to reach back into the system and say you're going back into the Predator. So we have pulled them back into the Predator because the demand signal has just been so high on things Predator. But we're going to in the near term, until we can stabilize the system and normalize the flow of sensor operators, maintainers, those that contribute to launch and recovery elements, those that are in the actual operations and pushing the pickle button on a daily basis, there are going to be some that return and some that are retained.

Q: General, I was wondering if I could ask you to explain to me, the F-22 has not yet done combat missions in Iraq or Afghanistan. It would seem that this is the premier system that the Air Force wants to show that, justify that you need more than 187. You would think you would put it into combat. Is it not the best system to serve in Iraq? Are you better off having two F-15s than one F-22 in Iraq? Talk to me about that.

A: It's not Hobson's choice, Julian, between which of your children you love the most. It's what you want to do and how best to do it. Let's explore some of the facts first.

The full operational capability on the F-22 I declared in December of 2007. If the F-22 had been operationally capable when we went into places like Afghanistan or Iraq, it would have been in wave one, day one, instant one, if I had been the commander of Air Combat Command.

Two. The demonstrated capabilities of the aircraft have exceeded our wildest expectation. It delivers on more and not less than what we had asked of it. In terms of lethality, survivability, supportability from the platform itself. It delivers in terms of the [inaudible], surveillance, reconnaissance contributions, if you will, and we're working to continue to enhance those, especially enhance those through networking with other systems.

Its deployability we've already demonstrated. Deployments to Alaska. Deployments across the tyranny of huge distances like across the Pacific. So could you use it? You even heard our Chief say recently that he is intending to deploy it into the AOR probably this year. But I don't want to get out in front of a combatant commander's desire. I don't want to get in front of what's best from a regional desire. But there's nothing why you could not, would not or should not use the F-22.

Q: Just to follow up. From someone who is not an expert's view. If you accept the Army view of what conflicts are going to look like in the future, and I realize the Air Force doesn't, but that low intensity conflict against insurgent-like forces, if that's what the future looks like, what why would we need more than 187 F-22s? It would seem you would want to demonstrate its applicability to the current fight.

A: Julian, we don't want to do just the trick on this one. This is not about playing a card game to prove the viability of the platform, the weapon system. It has already proven

itself. What this is about is the appropriate selection of the tool to accomplish the job or the mission that you want to do and you need to do in defense.

With regards to what is the future, gosh, I wish I knew that. I still look at this from the standpoint of what is a national military strategy and what are all the things that you have asked of me from homeland defense to irregular warfare to major combat operations in terms of theater, and what's the right both capability complement, balance, investment, strategy, with the right capacity to do all of those?

That's what drives me back to why I believe this nation can't bet it all on black, if you will. That's what drives me towards what's the right number and what's the right instrument or tool to use. It's obvious that an A-10, if you look at an A-10 which I've flown, performs a slightly different mission than does an EC-130 which I've flown, which performs a slightly different mission than what the F-22 performs which is slightly different than what the B-52 performs as well. You need all of those capabilities to deliver on the full complement of what security strategy, defense strategy, national military strategy demands of you. And then you put that forward and somebody makes a risk assessment as to where and what they're going to find to be affordable.

Q: Doesn't that give you an ESM capability that you haven't talked about? And intelligence gathering and electronics--

A: There are an awful lot of capabilities that the F-22 brings to the fight, brings to any fight, some of which, Dave, we are not going to talk about today. But of course you also ask yourself if you have a complement of platforms what a Predator could do, what a Rivet Joint could do, what an EC-130 could do, what other joint actors could do. EP, in terms of those aircraft. And you pick the right tool and the right force mix to accomplish the job.

Q: General Moseley spoke on the Hill earlier this month on [inaudible].

A: Right.

Q: Can you talk about [inaudible]? He said that he still had to hash this out with you. I wonder where that is [inaudible]? And what are your thoughts on [inaudible].

A: At 10:00 o'clock this morning I'm going to go talk to him about that very subject. Do not rat me out here early.

One, here's where I believe I would propose we do. I think that to restore the trust and confidence and make sure that the Department of Defense restores its focus on the nuclear enterprise, we need to look at having individuals focused in an Air Expeditionary Force rotational basis on just the nuclear mission.

For me to be able to do that, plus the other conventional deterrence missions that I have

to do with the B-52 for the Commander, US STRATCOM, the total number of aircraft required to do that is probably more like 76 than it is 56, which is where the Air Force previous position was. That would also demand more like 44 combat coded B-52s as opposed to 32 combat coded airplanes. But in fairness, I need to take this to my leadership and let them decide what is, if they accept the argument of where we are, the potential standup of another squadron, the potential addition of aircraft, if you will, to the combat coded mix, the addition in terms of number of B-52s. that's all a probably to be determined, stage number one, starting at 10:00 o'clock this morning with my Chief.

Q: And it sounds as if this is a plan you support.

A: Yes, it certainly is. The way I envision this is, to support US Commander STRATCOM I have to have a series of bombers. We've got three that flow into the conventional mix with B-1s, B-2s, and B-52s. When we look at the potential of things nuclear we have the complement of B-2s and B-52s. The B-52 number, by moving it back up to 76 total B-52s, 44 of which are combat coded, gives me the comfort that I've got the appropriate focus on the nuclear enterprise, that I've got sufficiency in terms of numbers to do the conventional deterrence in complement with my B-2s, also conventional and nuclear capable, as well as the B-1s. It allows me to work the rotational basis.

You can envision an environment where someone moves into a spin-up, solely focused on a nuclear enterprise for a period of two months, and they go into the normal AEF rotation of about four months where they're focused exclusively on only one thing, nuclear, and then they come off of that and rotate back into their conventional role. Interestingly enough, our theater security posture has about a six month rotational basis for it in terms of Guam. So by putting ourselves into this rotation I think it gets us properly postured.

Q: And you expect [additions] to this?

A: No. Again, this needs to be considered through the full gamut of what a combatant commander like Commander US STRATCOM believes is appropriate to support his needs. It needs to be brought into the complement of what combatant commanders like the Pacific combatant commander understands, what risk is assumed. It needs to be with the consideration of the total force Air Force because right now at Minot we have one squadron of B-52s, but when you look at the number of squadrons down at Barksdale you have more, some of which are in the flying training business, training coded; some of which are into our reserve component with our Air Force Reserve. So we'll have to do this across the total force to include our active and our reserve component.

Q: General, I'd like to go back to Bruce's question on unmanned aerial vehicles. The Chief was here a month or two ago and he said in '09 the Air Force is going to ask for more unmanned aircraft than manned aircraft, or uninhabited I guess is what we used to call them.

A: When you take a look at production of aircraft inside of combat Air Force, we're already there. In terms of unmanned aerial systems, as far as if you take a look at what we're buying from a fighter standpoint right now with our multi-year, we're at 20 F-22s and the number of unmanned aerial systems exceeds that already.

Q: So let's just talk about a decade from now, the NGB, the next generation bomber. There's some tension in the building, whether that should be a manned platform or not. Tell us the three reasons why it should be and the three reasons why it should not be.

A: One, let me start from a what do I need to do and how best to do it. Here are some of the worries that I have. Everybody has figured out that air power, specifically from US Air Force's, America's asymmetric advantage. They want to take that away from us. So they developed magnificent integrated air defense systems, and they're also continuing to push the envelope on other aerial airplanes themselves. So what I've got to do is try to penetrate that environment. Not only penetrate that environment, but potentially persist inside of that environment so that I can hold targets at risk and bring weapons to bear.

If it's just a fixed target, I've got a lot of standoff weapons and I've got an awful lot of other platforms including the B-2 where I can go attack fixed targets. But as I look at a pesky problem for this next generation bomber, this 2018 bomber, I need to be able to penetrate, I need to be able to persist, and I need to be able to hold targets at risk and target not just things fixed, but potentially things mobile and things moving. So that's where I find the focus needs to be on this platform.

There's also a capability void that I've got. I need to be able to hand the President options. And the capability void window, as far as all the intelligence estimates that I'm being handed right now, say that void, the front end of it is happening about 2015 and it's really going to be at full flush by about 2020. That's why our Chief has taken us to this we've got to fill that void with a new bomber to deal with the problems and the concept of operations that I just gave you.

To be able to give you that airplane in 2018 I'm also a realist. I need to have a technology readiness level. I need to have a manufacturing readiness level. I need to have an integration readiness level that I have confidence in so that I can harvest what I learned out of 117s, F-22s, F-35s, B-2s if you will, import those technologies and those capabilities into this next generation bomber that will take us down another level in terms of survivability and the ability to persist.

To be able to do that and do that by 2018 tells me, Bruce, that I probably cannot make increment number one unmanned. It may be increment 1.3, it might be increment 1.5, but increment number one I will continue to explore it, but to deliver on those capabilities with that technology readiness level by 2018, probably means increment number one will be piloted. That doesn't mean that I'm not putting in the hooks, the

group A, the group B, the planning to make it optionally manned. Does that scratch a little bit at where we're going with this thing?

Q: What are the advantages of the unmanned?

A: Unmanned systems, if you're going to persist in an environment, can give you long dwell and long endurance. That is one of the advantages of having unmanned aerial systems. There are other potential strategic advantages. If you were to lose an asset, if that asset is lost because of some mechanical failure, if that asset is somehow detected, found and attrited and you have an individual that was operating that asset and is now not recoverable inside of hostile airspace, that could be a disadvantage in terms of the rollout of the strategy itself. So those are two potentials in terms of unmanned aerial systems that I would see.

Q: And just a quick bottom line then, you see not initially the unmanned having the advantage as we go to 2018, but over the coming decade, the advantage may shift toward it? Or you think a man in the loop on board the platform will always have an advantage?

A: Again, conjecture as far as the future. I see us with an appetite towards unmanned aerial systems that is growing, Mark. That's the vision of the future I see. I see an increase in the percentage of unmanned aerial systems. Do I ever see us across all the platforms inside the United States Air Force as becoming unmanned or optionally manned? I don't see that in the foreseeable future.

Q: Back to this issue of restoring or increasing the focus on the nuclear mission as you said on the B-52s. Why aren't you considering something similar for the B-2s that are in the AEF [for the future]. Is it simply a matter of the B-2 fleet being so much smaller, you don't have the assets to have that flexibility? Are there other considerations there?

A: I may be missing the question.

Q: Why not have some B-2s in the AEF rotation that are assigned strictly to [inaudible] nuclear mission as opposed to the nuclear and conventional, as you want to do it [inaudible]?

A: When you look at the fleet size of 20 total aircraft, to be able to partition out some of those individuals and those numbers of aircraft to solely focus on that would make it untenable and unsupportable in the long term.

Also I will tell you, one of the first places that we went to to try to have the transparency and go out and look at the full enterprise inside of the United States Air Force was the 509th. In fact the old phrase in the old Strategic Air Command days, the white top on final meant the IG team was out there on short final at your base and they were going to give you about as extensive an examination of things nuclear as you could get. The 509th was the first one to get one of those.

Q: When do you expect to get briefed on the findings of the [inaudible] investigation board [inaudible]?

A: Two things. We have both the safety investigation board ongoing and we have an accident investigation board ongoing. I would expect the results of the safety investigation board would probably be briefed sometime by about the middle of April. I would expect the accident investigation board probably to play out about 30 days after that.

Q: We've been here for 40 minutes and the F-15 hasn't come up yet.

Q: Yes, it did.

Q: That was the [inaudible] in October. You had a number of front page stories, suspended indefinitely, the sky is falling. You returned it to flight. Only a few of us actually wrote about that. Can you give us a sense of where things are? Are nine still grounded? Then I had a follow-up question.

A: Tony, yes, those nine that have cracks remain grounded. Some of those nine will be permanently retired. I need to get you a number. I would say at least four of those nine have been permanently retired. They will never see the air again. There is currently a fleet viability board examination of the entire F-15 weapon systems specifically focused on A, B, C, and D model airplanes.

Two, as you're aware, there is a JAC, and I don't know what that acronym stands for, it is an examination led by Dr. Finley in terms of OSD AT&L to do a full independent and objective examination of that F-15 weapon system to again look at its viability. To ask questions like is it appropriate to do economic service life as opposed to safe life? Is it appropriate to do damage tolerance and continue to fly airplanes that are already cracked or with parts that are below spec?

There's a third piece that's ongoing with the F-15 right now and that's under the leadership of Bruce Carlson out at AFMC where he's looking at okay, when is enough enough on a platform? What are all the factors that contribute to that? And why we're still looking at that is because as you and I have talked about before, I still have 63 F-16s with cracked bulkheads. I'm still replacing wings on 240-plus A-10s to try to at least keep them flyable at the present time.

Q: To review the bidding, of the 400-some-odd F-15s, only nine are--Most are flying now? Just a general--

A: Yes, they are. And is there acceptance of risk? Yes, there is. Are some of those that are flying right now those that have langerans that are "at risk" because they're below spec? Yes, they are.

Q: One follow-up. Have the South Korean, Singapore and Israeli Air Forces called you in terms of laying out their concerns about their airplanes? Or is this an isolated Air Force type of issue?

A: No. This issue has been discussed at length, in depth, both at the action officer level, operator and maintainer across all these other services to include engagement by our Chief of Staff, General Moseley, with the Chiefs of Staff of those other Air Forces. So yes, they pay very strict attention to them. Japan, for example.

Q: I want to follow up on the B-52 issue. The Air Force is really, when the QDR came out in the last [inaudible] fighting Congress to be able to retire some of these older planes.

A: Right.

Q: What has changed in the last couple of years that made the Air Force go back and now relook how many B-52s it must have and [inaudible]?

A: One, the Air Force, depending upon where my leadership wants to go, will still want to retire some of the B-52 aircraft. Remember, our full complement of B-52s right now is in excess of 90. So we will still look to retire some of those B-52 aircraft.

Here are a couple of things that have happened over the world. One, we've found extraordinary value in the persistence and the long range and the payload capacity in a conventional role of the B-52. As the director of the CAOC during the conduct of some portion of Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, I found great value in a platform that persisted over a target area, because when there was a necessity for delivery of a precise or an area weapon in a short time, I could depend on the B-52 to do it. I could get information on and off that platform. So there is great value in long range, and we have known this historically from an Air Force, I guess, range and payload which gives you persistence you could trade. So conventionally we found great value of it during the conduct of things OEF, as an example.

Two, we find great deterrent value in terms of theater security posture. That's what I mentioned in terms of deployments to Guam. Sometimes we have six airplanes, sometimes we have nine B-52s, sometimes we rotate that with B-2s over there. So in terms of strategic intent and deterrence inside of an AOR, you get great value in it. And by looking at the rotational basis you need a larger number of airplanes to support a rotational basis over the long run.

So again, conventional viability, range and payload and persistence, rotational basis in terms of theater security posture, and I would say the opportunity now to rotate B-52 members through that AEF construct with the sole focus on the nuclear enterprise is another reason why keeping probably 76 total airplanes of which 44 has caused us to rethink this issue.

Q: The affordability issue of this, [inaudible] the Air Force continues [inaudible] act of Congress in terms of retiring airframes is they need the money, it's too expensive to keep these things flying. Where would this money come from?

A: I think you have to look at the overall investment structures. Is it going to cost additional dollars? Yes, it will.

Q: Any idea how much?

A: No, I do not. I would suggest to you that you'll have both a cost in terms of the number of dollars to have all of the aircraft in appropriate configuration, you'll have a number of dollars to support additional manpower if my leadership was to accept a recommendation of adding an additional squadron at Minot and taking us back towards 44 combat coded or back up towards 76 total airplanes. The exact numbers on that, no I don't have those for you.

Q: I want to switch over to cyberspace. That's in your [inaudible] area. How is the Air Force doing in getting its lead in the cyberspace [inaudible] accepted and [inaudible] other services, and developing [inaudible]?

A: Rebecca, maybe if I can back up. Number one, I think there is great opportunity and great promise inside of what I believe to be a domain--cyberspace domain. I look at it just like I look at a space domain and an air domain. I think one of the first things we have to do is make sure we integrate across those domains. Otherwise I might do something inside of the air domain that steps on something I'm attempting to do inside of the cyberspace domain.

So I think the first thing is the [stand of the] traditional MAJCOM, the focus on cyber, the focus on the domain, has been very much to the benefit of not just cyberspace, but to space and air and to the United States Air Force as it tries to deliver on its set of in's, if you will.

I think that other services are also attempting to examine carefully what they need to do inside the domain of cyber. It's not unusual for other services to have complementary capabilities, not unlike the primary functions and collateral functions. So I'm an advocate of cyberspace. I'm an advocate of integrating it so that I can either achieve something non-kinetically or I can enhance the kinetic capability through cyberspace.

Q: Hi General. I'd like to talk about future UAV sensors. Army officials, Army intelligence officials actually, have said that they want technology to get to the point where they can see wider views and start tracking behavior patterns, things like that, of networks rather than just individual terrorists. Are these priorities that the Air Force is interested in? If so, what specific technologies are we looking at to get to that point?

A: Maybe not so much to talk about the specific technologies of what we're using on the platforms themselves, be they EO, IR, SIGINT or so, but to show that we too believe that there is benefit on both unmanned and manned platforms to deliver in terms of intelligence.

I grabbed out some of the things that we have looked at from collectors, either surveillance platforms or reconnaissance platforms, just since the time of 9/11. If I look at imagery intelligence, just off of U2 platforms and the sensors that deliver on that, I'm up 100 percent in terms of that capability. Change detection. If you want to get into technology that delivers on change detection and the effect you hopefully get from change detection, we've gone from about, interestingly enough as far as metrics, we're up over 100,000 percent just in terms of change detection, to try and look at what's going on. If we look at imagery intelligence off of Global Hawk and its use from just 9/11 forward, it's up nearly 3,000 percent. If we look at the Predator in terms of some of the things that you see more visibly on a daily basis, that's up almost 1300 percent.

So there's technology behind each of these. Each of these technologies that's delivering on an INT, an INT which we're supplying and providing to the joint warfight, and you can see the focus on this which is just extraordinary inside of combat air forces.

Q: Forgive me, what are the metrics that you're giving percent changes on?

A: If you look at a couple of things, one, I can give you stuff that's number of hours or, if you will, numbers of targets, numbers of sorties, so I'll give you a whole host of metrics that may help you.

Q: Perhaps Colonel Paradis could do that afterwards.

A: Sure, absolutely.

Q: That's fine. But when you think about future capabilities, what would you like to see? Obviously you want to be able to increase the sorties and all of your effort and capabilities, but what are some specifics that you're looking at?

A: I do like patterned, if you will, thought. And let me turn back to an earlier conflict. If you take a look at what was conducted in terms of an air war over Serbia, we began to discover that integrated air defense systems that were trying to take away our asymmetric advantage as far as aviation, were mobile, and so we would say I've got some type of INT that tells me I have this surface-to-air missile here. But by the time we would plan, generate the sorties, fly to the location to deliver the particular munition, it would no longer be there. But what we discovered is if I would get an INT cut on it at this location and then at that location and finally a third location, it began to match the pattern, so we could arrive as it was arriving to try to hook up electrical power [inaudible].

The same thing in terms of almost a nodal analysis as far as where people would either vehicle-borne or improvised explosive devices, or where, if you will, someone goes back to to try to find where they can get weapons and fuses and bring all this together. Watch the individuals on the ground, if you will.

Q: General, could you give us a quick status report back on the B-52s again, the nuclear mission? On the proposal to put operational control of those aircraft during their nuclear exercises under the control of STRATCOM. Is that still viable?

A: Sure, Elaine. Number one, Bob Elder, who you know, Lieutenant General Bob Elder, who's the 8th Air Force Commander and also the Commander of Task Force 204, is the operational commander and presents forces to Kevin Chilton at US STRATCOM. There is no skip echelon. That line is direct. So Bob is the one that actually presents forces to Chilly in that regard.

Q: There is something, a proposal that came out [inaudible] task force report going back to the August incident, but envisioned a potential shift in the way in which we do that. Is that something--

A: There is current, ongoing debate as far as organizationally whether or not you should consider all things global. Global effects, and how you would organize around global effects. Would you want to merge all things nuclear inside of one, if you will, command chain? At the present time if you take a look at ICBMs and their current reporting back to their OT&E MAJCOM it's Air Force Space Command presenting forces to Kevin Chilton. If you take a look at the nuclear bomber force, B-2s, B-52s, it's back through from an organize, train and equip, it's back through Air Combat Command into US STRATCOM. So there is an ongoing debate as to organizationally is that the right construct to do that.

Q: You don't have the answer yet?

A: No. In fact that debate is ongoing at the present time.

Q: Any sort of target date for when--

A: Elaine, in my mind milestones that oftentimes happen in the Air Force are usually associated around Coronas. So my best guess is there will be debate and discussion and that it will be tabled probably at the next Corona which will be sometime in June of this year. I can't promise that, but that would be a logical view as far as schedule.

Q: The use of airstrikes in Iraq and Afghanistan has gone up dramatically from '06 to '07. Do you feel like the United States waited too long to take advantage of the air power capabilities there? And how do you see this going forward? I mean there's been a shift in strategy to integrate airstrikes and what's going on. Do you see it continuing?

A: Josh, I can only say that we've been responsive to the joint force commander's needs. The statement of fact is yes, there has been a substantive increase in terms of the use of US Air Force air power inside of both OIF and OEF. As far as the future look, I think in my mind we might be seeing a little bit of that rolled out right now in terms of what's going on inside of Basra. As you notice, the preponderance of assets on the ground has been Iraqi and it's been enabled and supported by the use of US air power with some, of course, embedded US forces.

I can envision where we may return to a posture where there's fewer, if you will, forces on the ground and will continue to take advantage of that asymmetric advantage that you get from air. Whether it's air from unmanned aerial systems that possess both intel surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities, plus striking, or whether it will be from manned platforms in concert with some that are on the ground. But that's about where I see it going.

Q: Do you expect to have to bring those assets to bear as the shift occurs to Iraqi forces? I mean they don't really have much capabilities from an indigenous standpoint.

A: I think we're going to have to very carefully explore that in terms of the reliance on who it is that would be placing that demand to deliver something kinetically with the lethal effects that it has. Who is that entity and how is that chain, if you will, almost like a chain of custody in terms of the delivery of it, because of what could occur on the ground.

Q: I just wanted to clarify something. When you were talking about keeping a larger number of B-52s and the reason for it, you mentioned the desirability of being able to sustain the rotations in I think conventional forces [inaudible]. But can you talk about to what extent this has been in response to the lapses in nuclear security that--

A: I can't give you a percentage as far as--

Q: I'm not looking for a percentage, but is this something that was in response to [inaudible]? Is this idea something that's in response to the incident in Minot?

A: I certainly think it does consider it. When we took a look at what is capacity needed, the number of B-52s, to give you the sufficiency to do what it is you think we need to do, some of that was driven in response to the issue of unauthorized weapons transfer from Minot to Barksdale.

Q: Specifically having a unit that focuses purely on [inaudible].

A: You see we gained benefit from this in doing it in a rotational basis. We could carve out one squadron, for example, let's just pick a squadron as an entity. We can say you will only do things nuclear. I could attain that kind of focus but I get that focus only inside of one squadron and I wouldn't share that focus across the entire nuclear

enterprise of all things B-52. And it might wind up without the ability to ever move an individual out of that squadron. And that individual would be suboptimal in terms of other capabilities like things conventional.

Remember, as you take a look at supporting US Commander Strategic Command, he has both a desire and a need for a deterrence conventionally as well as nuclear.

Q: Would this be a step towards the center of debate that you're talking about, sort of consolidating the nuclear [inaudible]?

A: I think the focus of a rotational

AEF-like construct on things nuke is to restore the nuclear enterprise. I think it is potentially a contributor towards an organizational construct where you would want to bring other elements together if you thought global effects, if you will a strategic vice a theater look was an appropriate organizational construct. We don't know how that debate will roll off, but they are connected.

Q: Your F-15 problem is exacerbated by the continuing Noble Eagle [inaudible]. Is there any consideration within the Air Force NORTHCOM and command authority on reducing the actual air components of Noble Eagle? Standing down some of that--

A: It's probably a great question for Gene Renuart. I still consider homeland defense mission number one, and in terms of number of aircraft and assets, it must remain both on alert and at the appropriate air sovereignty level posture. That's one where you probably have to go to Gene.

Q: You have to supply the force--

A: Correct.

Q: Are you stressed with your 15's off-line?

A: Yes. And again, it's stresses on older systems. Of course as you saw when we had that fleet of older systems grounded, then we defaulted to other older systems which are also stressed or tasked to perform other missions. F-16s, F-15Es, F-22s.

Q: I wanted to ask [inaudible]. First, there's been a shift [inaudible]. Any [inaudible]?

A: I think affordability is the issue in terms of the second engine. My Secretary, as you heard in testimony, said the business case for the second engine doesn't, in his mind, show payoff as far as the analysis he's been providing.

From an airman's perspective do I like the thought process of having a second engine? A second source to go to? Of course. Because it buys down risk from my standpoint. If I

discover tomorrow that a single engine type has some embedded technological problem or some bad part that was inserted and I only have one engine to go to, that would result in the grounding of a fleet of airplanes.

Now that has happened extremely rarely. And if it did happen you would also have ways to deal with it. You might just accept risk and go ahead and fly the airplanes. Or you might put some operational limits on the use of those engines. But from an issue of can we afford one, the answer is no. Do I accept fewer airplanes to buy an alternate engine? That's the real debate and the discussion.

Q: With the second engine, keeping [inaudible] open and [inaudible], what kind of affordability challenges are you going to have down the road? And does this shift the [inaudible] years? Does that shift the number higher?

A: It's huge challenges. The challenges of trying to maintain these older fleets is really what's driving us. If the airplanes are breaking at twice the frequency, if they're requiring two to three times the number of maintenance man hours per flight hours, if 86 cents on every dollar to modernize them is just to replace a part so they can continue to fly, those numbers are staggering. That is not a viable, long term strategy from an investment standpoint in my mind.

Q: We're out of time. Thank you very much, General.

END TEXT