

# TITLE III—OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

## OVERVIEW

Overall readiness has improved across the military services from lows experienced in the wake of fiscal year 2013 sequestration when only 2 Army non-missioned brigade combat teams were ready, the Navy could not deploy a carrier strike group, the Air Force grounded 31 squadrons, and the Marine Corps reduced its maintenance of barracks, facilities, and training ranges to roughly 16 percent of the required “bare minimum” to protect readiness for rapid deployment. However, the committee notes that recovery from these ebbs in readiness has taken time, with most military services reporting a return to pre-sequester levels of readiness only in recent months. The budget request for fiscal year 2016 calls this recovery “fragile.”

The committee is concerned that the ongoing high operational tempo being experienced by all of the military services continues to challenge this fragile readiness. Many of the military services have seen little to no change in their day-to-day mission requirements, even with the drawdown of combat forces in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. New missions, such as the response to Ebola in West Africa, advise-and-assist operations in the Republic of Iraq, air sorties in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, infantry and armor deployments to reassure and train European allies, and support to embassy evacuation in the Republic of Yemen, among others, have kept operational tempos at elevated levels, what the Department of Defense calls “severe deployment demands.”

The committee is also concerned that Department of Defense officials have begun to warn that while current force structure and readiness levels allow the military departments to meet the day-to-day demand for forces, they would be constrained in their ability to provide forces to respond to an unforeseen contingency. The committee notes that this is especially true in meeting the time-phased requirements of the most “stressful” operational plans. In some cases, due

to a lack of sufficient ready and available forces or key capabilities, the combatant commanders have assessed that they are unable to meet some wartime requirements. As a result, the risk to the U.S. military's ability to respond to unforeseen contingencies has increased.

To continue reducing areas of acute risk, and improve the readiness of the force, this Act would provide additional budget authority for multiple unfunded priorities of the military departments, to include the restoration of funding for operational tempo, flying hour programs, critical skill training, and facilities sustainment. This Act also would provide additional budget authority for readiness initiatives, such as corrosion prevention, control, and mitigation.

This Act also would make several policy changes to enhance readiness and improve oversight. Specifically, it would enhance property accountability by requiring a strategic plan for excess defense articles, require investment in technologically improved replacement parts that would significantly reduce long-term ownership costs, and improves the process for coordination between the Department of Defense and private renewable energy developers to ensure future projects are compatible with military operations.

## ITEMS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

### BUDGET REQUEST ADJUSTMENTS

#### Air Force Remotely Piloted Aircraft Training and Operations

Since 2008, the Air Force has more than tripled the number of its Active Duty pilots flying remotely piloted aircraft (RPA). The committee is aware that due to increases in demand, RPA pilots have had a significant increase in workload going back to 2007. The committee is concerned that the Air Force continues to experience critical shortfalls in RPA pilots despite historical trends indicating continued growth in demand for RPA combat air patrols (CAPs) and remains concerned about the practice of involuntarily retaining pilots from other communities to fill RPA shortages. Most concerning is the committee's belief that the Air Force still lacks a viable and comprehensive corrective action plan to address critical and growing operational and training shortfalls within the RPA community as well as the manning challenges mentioned elsewhere in this report.

The committee notes that it has, on multiple occasions, tasked the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to examine this issue, and the GAO reviews have resulted in a number of recommended corrective actions. Despite these recommendations and internal Air Force assessments, the committee believes the Air Force has not been proactive enough in correcting known deficiencies and, in some cases, has disregarded alternative recommended approaches that could help alleviate some of the most immediate and critical shortfalls. As an example, in its report, "Actions Needed to Strengthen Management of Unmanned Aerial System Pilots," published in April 2014, the GAO recommended that the Air Force evaluate using alternative personnel populations such as civilians or enlisted personnel to

conduct RPA missions; the Air Force did not concur, citing a year-and-a-half-old assessment.

The committee believes the Air Force's reluctance to properly resource the RPA community, despite clear indications that the intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and strike capability of RPA systems is likely to continue to increase, as is the scope of tasks RPA units are expected to complete, has resulted in an unsustainable operational and personnel tempo.

To ensure the Air Force is properly addressing this critical training and operational aspects of this issue, in conjunction with the plan required elsewhere in this Act, the committee directs the Secretary of the Air Force to:

(1) Assess the viability of using non-rated, civilian, contractor, or enlisted pilots to execute RPA missions;

(2) Develop a comprehensive training plan aimed at increasing the throughput of Undergraduate Remotely Piloted Aircraft Training (URT) without sacrificing quality and standards;

(3) Establish optimum and minimum crew ratios and, to the maximum extent possible, conduct missions in accordance with optimum ratios; and

(4) Identify any resource, legislative, or Departmental policy challenges impeding the corrective action needed to reach sustainable RPA operations tempo.

The Secretary shall brief the House Committee on Armed Services on these requirements by February 1, 2016.

Further, the committee recommends \$145.1 million, an increase of \$20.0 million, in Flight Training, Operation and Maintenance, Air Force, to increase URT capacity.

### Base Realignment and Closure 2017

The budget request included \$10.5 million, in Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide, to support a request to conduct a new round of Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) to align infrastructure with planned force structure changes. The requested funds would be used to develop recommendations and to manage BRAC efforts.

The committee recommends no funds to support the development of infrastructure recommendations prepared in the context of a new BRAC authorization.

### ENERGY ISSUES

#### Analysis for Additional Uses of Energy Savings Performance Contracts

The committee notes that the military departments have utilized Energy Savings Performance Contracts (ESPC) to fund energy conservation projects for military facilities with no upfront costs to the Federal government. The committee notes that these contracts have led to a reduction in energy consumption and cost savings in installation energy costs. While the committee recognizes that the

application of ESPCs is currently limited by statute to federal facilities, the committee believes there may be potential benefits to leveraging ESPCs in non-facility applications. Therefore, the committee directs the Director of Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation to provide the congressional defense committees, by March 1, 2016, a cost-benefit analysis for the potential use of Energy Savings Performance Contracts in non-facility applications. The analysis should consider a case study for each of the following categories of non-facility applications: aircraft, maritime, and ground vehicles. The analysis should evaluate whether ESPCs could be successfully utilized in these non-facility applications to achieve energy efficiency and financial savings through a decrease in fuel and maintenance costs.

### Briefing on Energy Performance Initiatives

The committee is aware that in testimony before the House Armed Services Committee on March 29, 2012, that the then-Assistant Secretary of Defense for Operational Energy Plans and Programs stated that "we are integrating energy considerations into the acquisition process by including requirements for energy performance in contracts." The Assistant Secretary included examples in testimony that included energy factors in the life cycle cost calculations, to include fuel efficiency, in the competition for the next-generation aerial refueling tanker and provisions included in the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program (LOGCAP) contract. Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense to, not later than March 1, 2016, brief the House Committee on Armed Services on energy performance and efficiency initiatives. The briefing should address the following issues:

(1) How the energy efficiency language included in the next-generation aerial refueling tanker competition and subsequent control have been incorporated into other acquisition programs, and any additional plans to include energy-efficiency requirements into future acquisition programs; and

(2) How energy performance provisions in LOGCAP contracts have been implemented and whether new LOGCAP contracts include such provisions, and if not, the reason for no longer including these provisions.

### Briefing on Military Installation Readiness

The committee is aware that in 2014, the Pentagon released a report claiming that changing conditions, including expected increased water shortages and instances of wildfire with increased drought, in addition to flooding due to sea level rise and coastal erosion from storm surges, pose risks to the United States' national security. Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense to, not later than March 1, 2016, provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services on the Department's strategy and initiatives to mitigate the impact of these changes to ensure optimal military readiness. At minimum, the briefing should address the following issues:

(1) How are changing conditions affecting operations and military readiness at U.S. installations?

(2) How are best practices being disseminated and implemented across the U.S. installations?

(3) Is the Department of Defense facing any challenges in carrying out preparedness and resilience initiatives? If so, what are these obstacles and do they require congressional action to increase security on installations?

(4) What opportunities exist for effective public private partnerships or contracts with industry to address and mitigate the effects of these changing conditions?

### Collaboration on Operational Energy

The committee acknowledges that the military departments have undertaken a number of initiatives in the area of operational energy to increase combat capability, reduce energy consumption, and strengthen the energy security of deployed military forces. The committee believes the military departments should collaborate more closely on operational energy initiatives to ensure that innovative technologies, best practices, and lessons learned can be quickly and easily shared among the military departments. The committee believes that increased collaboration among the military departments will help align and advance operational energy initiatives, reduce costs, and provide greater combat capability to deployed military forces.

The committee notes that the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations, and Environment is responsible for providing leadership, facilitating communication, and coordinating activities regarding the operational energy plans and programs of the Department of Defense and the military departments. Therefore, the committee encourages the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations, and Environment to work with the military departments to implement policies and procedures to encourage additional collaboration, realize efficiencies, and prevent duplication of efforts related to operational energy.

### Progress and Savings from Net Zero Installation Initiatives

The Department of Defense requires sufficient, sustainable, and reliable supplies of energy and water to meet its mission needs. To facilitate this, the Department has assessed its energy security via increased energy efficiency and optimized use of renewable energy. Moreover, the Department has stated plans to reduce its energy and water use at its installations. To that end, the Department plans to increase the degree to which it has “net zero” installations, or installations that produce as much energy as they consume, and limit consumption of freshwater resources and return an equivalent amount of water back to the same watershed, so as not to deplete groundwater.

In 2011, the Army launched its Net Zero Initiative, which it sees as a holistic approach to energy, water, and waste management that directly supports

the Army's energy security and sustainability objectives. In fiscal year 2012, the Navy began efforts to determine which installations would have the best opportunity to cost-effectively achieve net zero goals. Ultimately, the Navy's stated goal is for half of Navy installations to be net zero for electricity consumption by 2020. Also, the Air Force plans to achieve a net zero posture for installation water, energy, and solid waste management, intending to build upon and complement other Air Force strategic sustainability policy and goals.

The committee notes that legislation has been enacted to significantly improve the federal government's energy management, water efficiency requirements, and waste management in order to save money, reduce emissions that contribute to air pollution, and enhance national security. The committee is also aware of the Department's need for energy security and reliability to support its critical missions, and is supportive of its net zero efforts that enhance mission security and effectiveness, achieve financial savings, and ensure a return on investment. To understand the degree to which the Department has identified benefits, as well as challenges, from its net zero initiatives, and any areas where improvements are needed, the committee directs the Comptroller General of the United States to provide a report to the congressional defense committees by May 15, 2016, on the following:

(1) To what extent has the Department of Defense developed an integrated net zero strategy for energy, water, and waste management at its military installations?

(2) What impact do net zero initiatives have on maintaining mission capability, if any?

(3) What challenges have installations encountered in implementing net zero initiatives or meeting net zero goals?

(4) What lessons have been learned from the military services' and Department's net zero initiatives and how, if at all, are those lessons being shared and optimized?

(5) What have been the costs and benefits of net zero initiatives and how are those costs and benefits being identified, tracked, and validated?

(6) How successful have the military departments and installations been in implementing the net zero initiative?

### Tubular Light-Emitting Diode Technology

The committee recognizes that the Department of the Navy is replacing fluorescent lightbulbs aboard U.S. Navy vessels with tubular light-emitting diodes (T-LEDs). The committee notes that these fixtures may consume less energy, realize life-cycle cost savings, and provide a return on investment. Should the Secretary of the Navy determine that further investment in this technology will lead to consistent return on investments across the fleet and ashore, the committee encourages the Secretary to fully develop an approved products list for T-LEDs that is broadly available for use in vessels and facilities. In addition, the committee

encourages the Secretary of the Navy to request updates to the Unified Facilities Criteria and other related Department of Defense regulations, to include new lighting technologies as an option for vessels and facilities.

## LOGISTICS AND SUSTAINMENT ISSUES

### Auxiliary Personnel Lighter Barracks Ships

Self-Propelled Barracks Ships, otherwise known as Auxiliary Personnel Lighters (APLs), provide housing for some of the Navy's ship companies as their ships undergo repair, maintenance, and upgrades. The oldest APL craft, built during the 1940s, have significant health, safety, and quality-of-life deficiencies. The committee believes that many of the APL berthing barges are unfit for current and future naval service because these craft have well exceeded their service life and provide substandard living conditions for naval personnel.

To help Congress better assess future courses of action to address quality-of-life, health, and safety issues associated with the continued use of aging APLs, the committee directs the Secretary of the Navy to perform a cost-benefit analysis of alternative ashore berthing options, in conjunction with, or in lieu of, the continued use of APLs, including recapitalization or replacement. The committee further directs the Secretary to report the results of this analysis to the congressional defense committees by February 1, 2016. The committee directs the Secretary to include in his report an assessment of the current and Future Year Defense Program projected APL maintenance and overhaul costs, current habitability conditions aboard APLs, and any other information he deems relevant.

### Combat Footwear for Female Service Members

The committee notes that in January 2013, the Secretary of Defense announced a new policy regarding the eligibility of female service members to serve in certain previously prohibited combat positions. The committee is concerned that despite the reality of female service members serving in combat for many years, the military services have been slow to field individual equipment that is properly sized, weighted, and designed for use by female service members.

The committee believes it is important the Department of Defense ensure that female service members have equipment and clothing tailored to the physical requirements of women in order to operate effectively and not be hampered by equipment that is ill-fitting, uncomfortable, and potentially harmful during operations in the field. The committee commends the June 2014 study conducted by the Department of Defense on Organizational Clothing and Individual Equipment for Female Military Members. The committee notes, however, that this report did not evaluate combat boots worn by female service members.

The committee directs the Secretary of Defense to provide a report to the congressional defense committees not later than February 1, 2016, detailing the availability of combat boots that are properly sized, weighted, and designed to

accommodate use by women across all of the military services. In particular, the report should include, but not be limited to, plans to provide a greater range of boot sizes and types for women service members as well as the advisability and feasibility of developing combat boots specifically designed for female service members.

### Continuous Technology Refreshment

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 (Public Law 112-239) provided expanded authority to the Department of Defense to foster use of technology-enhanced maintenance capabilities with working-capital funds. The conference report (H. Rept. 112-705) accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013 specifically discusses Continuous Technology Refreshment (CTR), which is a proven post-production sustainment acquisition strategy to acquire technologically improved replacement parts and to significantly reduce long-term ownership costs. Despite proven cost savings within the U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command, the committee is concerned that other military departments, and even other Army life-cycle management commands, have been slow or resistant to implement robust CTR programs.

The original CTR concept provided a path for industry to provide an industry investment solution through a business case analysis (BCA) that included a technical description and analysis and a comparison of the existing cost of ownership with the proposed replacement unit cost, improved repair cost, and projected reliability. This BCA serves as the funding justification to use working-capital funds for all BCAs that show a savings over 10 years. The committee is concerned that a departure from this concept in favor of an approach using logistics operations surcharges or proceeds from working-capital fund investment sales has yielded limited return on investment. The committee believes that any allocation of funding from any funding account or working-capital source should face the same BCA rigors and processes and should incur progress reviews on status and results.

Accordingly, elsewhere in this Act, the committee includes a provision that would require each military department to initiate a pilot program in fiscal year 2016 for CTR product improvement under the authority provided in section 330 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181). It also would require each military department to spend at least \$5.0 million in working-capital funds in fiscal year 2016 in support of a product improvement initiative as described in section 330(b) of Public Law 110-181.

### Decision Analysis Using Readiness Cost Analysis Tool

The committee is encouraged by the Naval Aviation Enterprise's commitment to utilizing the Readiness Cost Analysis Tool (RCAT) as outlined in the 2014 Naval Air Systems Command Commander's Guidance. Given the potential value of this tool in simultaneously increasing readiness and reducing costs, the committee directs the Secretary of the Navy to present a briefing to the House

Committee on Armed Services by September 1, 2015, on progress toward those objectives through utilization of RCAT and other potential uses of this tool, particularly any progress toward understanding differences between conventional measures of readiness and combat proficiency.

### Defense Personal Property System

The committee recognizes the difficult task the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command has in managing the permanent change of station moves of thousands of military families each year. The committee notes that in 2013, representatives from the moving industry and Department of Defense met to discuss a complete redesign of the Defense Personal Property System (DPS) online module in an effort to make it easier for service members to more accurately track household goods and file claims for damaged items, as the module has for years been characterized as cumbersome and problematic.

The committee notes that a contract was awarded in 2013 to improve the functionality and usability of the Web-based DPS system. However, the committee remains concerned about the lack of progress in reforming the functionality of the system and that the DPS program management office has not issued the fiscal year 2015 development schedule to implement system enhancements and efficiencies.

The committee encourages the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command to press for greater accountability and responsiveness in the development and execution of improvements to the Defense Personal Property System.

### Defense Supply Single Point of Failure Assessment

The committee has become aware of an increasing number of single points of failure within the defense supply chain for critical parts, assemblies, and sub-assemblies. While the committee recognizes that the lack of a diverse production and supply system for specialized parts is largely driven by the cost-prohibitive nature of maintaining multiple lines of supply and the low profitability of low-volume production, it remains concerned about the fragility of the supply chain in some areas. This concern is especially acute within the lines of supply supporting the growing number of aging weapons systems in the U.S. inventory, many facing parts obsolescence challenges. To better assess the risk to these critical lines of supply and to assist with its oversight responsibilities, the committee believes a thorough analysis of single points of failure is warranted.

The committee directs the Comptroller General of the United States to assess and brief the House Committee on Armed Services, not later than April 1, 2016, on any single sources of supply in support of a major defense acquisition program. At a minimum the assessment shall include:

- (1) The identification of any single sources of supply for parts, assemblies, and sub-assemblies required for life-cycle management;

- (2) Identification of systems that are at high risk of having a single source of supply within the timeframe covered by the Future Years Defense Plan; and
- (3) Any recommended mitigation or corrective measures.

### Department of Defense Corrosion Control Efforts

The committee continues to be responsive to providing the Department of Defense the tools and resources required to address the long-term effects of corrosion on the service life of U.S. military equipment. The committee is encouraged by Department of Defense efforts to address the preventable costs of corrosion and encourages the Department to continue to pursue low-cost, commercially available items that have demonstrated an ability to significantly reduce corrosion. The committee continues to support efforts by the Department to review and standardize anti-corrosion policies in order to mitigate the negative impacts of corrosion on U.S. military equipment.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services by September 30, 2015, on efforts by the Department to make low-cost anti-corrosion solutions available to the military departments and the Department's progress in developing and integrating anti-corrosion policies, directives, and standards for all items protecting Department of Defense equipment in-use and awaiting storage from the effects of corrosion caused by exposure to the environment.

### Depot Maintenance Capability

The Department of Defense maintains many complex weapon systems, such as aircraft and ships, and equipment, such as generators and radars, that require regular and emergency maintenance by both military depots and contractors to continue being available to meet national security goals. The committee notes that Department of Defense components are in the process of assessing the critical skills and competencies needed by the depot maintenance civilian workforce to support current and future national security requirements by projecting trends in the workforce based upon expected losses due to retirement and other attrition.

The committee recognizes the growing challenge to maintain both a healthy commercial depot maintenance industrial base and meet the organic core maintenance capability in compliance with section 2464 of title 10, United States Code, which requires the Department to maintain a core maintenance capability involving a combination of personnel, facilities, equipment, processes, and technology that is government-owned and government-operated and needed to meet mobilization, contingency, and emergency requirements.

Therefore, the committee directs the Comptroller General of the United States to submit a report to the House Committee on Armed Services by June 15, 2016, that evaluates to what extent the Department of Defense:

- (1) Uses core capability requirements to manage current and future depot maintenance workloads;

(2) Is able to provide information that identifies trends in core capability workloads at selected military depots, and the effects, if any, they are having on capability;

(3) Engages in agreements such as public-private partnerships with contractors and the impact these agreements have on the Department of Defense in meeting core capability requirements;

(4) Resources core requirements; and

(5) Adequately captures core depot-level maintenance capability requirements in the biennial core report required under subsection 2464(d) of title 10, United States Code, and any changes to subsection 2464(d) the Comptroller General would recommend to increase transparency within the report.

The Comptroller General may also include other related matters as deemed appropriate in order to provide a comprehensive examination of core depot maintenance capability.

The committee further directs the Comptroller General to brief the House Committee on Armed Services not later than January 31, 2016, on preliminary findings of the Comptroller General's evaluation.

#### Humidity-Controlled Shelters and Temporary Buildings

The committee notes that greater use of semi-permanent humidity-controlled shelters by the U.S. military services, Special Operations Command, and defense agencies could reduce humidity, dust, and other environmental factors that damage military equipment, reduce operational readiness, and increase maintenance costs. While widely used by foreign militaries, the Department of Defense does not have a single, comprehensive military specification for such protective shelters.

Accordingly, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense to provide a briefing to the House Committees on Armed Services, not later than March 15, 2016, on a plan to develop specifications for semi-permanent humidity-controlled shelters that could be used by the military services, Special Operations Command, and the defense agencies to protect assets such as fixed-wing aircraft systems, missiles, radar systems, and other equipment with sensitive electronics that are vulnerable to corrosion across the range of environments in which assets could operate and be housed, from tropical climates and extremely cold weather regions to desert and extremely low-humidity areas. The plan shall include an assessment of the availability and potential use of commercially produced shelters.

In preparing the plan, the Secretary, through the Office of Corrosion Policy and Oversight and the corrosion executives of the military services, shall coordinate with the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Logistics and Materiel Readiness and the Defense Logistics Agency.

#### Laser Ablation of Coatings

The committee is aware that the Air Force has been utilizing robotic laser systems such as the Laser Automated De-Coating System and the Advanced Robotic Laser Coating Removal System, to ablate coatings as part of routine weapon system sustainment. The committee notes that use of such systems has resulted in cost savings by reducing the time required to remove coatings from aircraft components such as F-16 radomes. These savings have led the Air Force to expand the use of these systems to ablation work on a wider range of components across multiple types of fighter and cargo aircraft.

Further, the committee recognizes the Navy's Metalworking Center has successfully laser ablated steel and has the laser, coatings, materials characterizations, robotics experience, and subject-matter experts to further develop laser ablation technologies and determine return on investment.

The committee encourages the Secretary of the Navy to leverage the synergy, joint technical problem solving, and learning-curve efficiencies of the Center's co-location with design test and laboratory facilities to determine if laser systems could produce cost savings at Fleet Readiness Centers, weapons depots, and shipyards similar to those experienced by the Air Force.

#### Marine Corps Systems Command Engineering Support

The committee is aware that Marine Corps Systems Command (MARCORSYSCOM) has determined that a number of engineering functions at its headquarters are inherently governmental in nature and has taken steps to in-source these previously contracted services. While the committee supports the proper alignment of functions that are inherently governmental in nature, as required by law, it is concerned that after this particular determination was made and engineering services were consolidated at the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command's (SPAWAR) Atlantic Center, these same engineering services that were deemed inherently governmental were subsequently re-outsourced by SPAWAR to contractor performance. The committee is concerned about the inconsistent classification of these positions and, if not inherently governmental in nature, the potential for inefficiencies and increased contract oversight costs associated with the geographic separation of MARCORSYSCOM and the contractors providing engineering services. The committee notes the Department of the Navy could potentially achieve greater synergy and avoid these inefficiencies by leveraging the Government's localized engineering capacities resident within the Navy's Surface Warfare Center system.

The committee directs the Commandant of the Marine Corps to brief the House Committee on Armed Services by February 1, 2016, on the status of engineering support functions, both governmental and contracted, that support MARCORSYSCOM.

Planning for Critical Organizational Clothing and Individual Equipment Innovation

The committee recognizes that modern organizational clothing and individual equipment (OCIE), including handwear, provides soldiers with a distinct combat advantage, but the Army's record of using Overseas Contingency Operations funding is not ideally suited to the innovation of next-generation soldier equipment. The committee notes that the Army currently lacks a single glove system that is effective in environments from minus-50 degrees to 100-plus degrees, and the Army's Soldier Enhancement Program is presently evaluating an integrated glove system with advanced raw materials and new manufacturing processes for the next generation of Army handwear.

As a means of providing greater visibility of programming, planning, and budgeting for critical OCIE programs such as handwear, the committee directs the Secretary of the Army to submit a report to the House Committee on Armed Services by January 15, 2016, detailing efforts to program, plan, and budget for fielding of next-generation Army handwear systems.

#### Report on Asset Tracking

The committee is in receipt of the congressionally mandated comprehensive strategy for improving asset tracking and in-transit visibility. The committee supports the Department's goal of enhancing asset visibility through item-unique identification (IUID), automatic identification (AIT), and automatic identification and data capture (AIDC) processes but is concerned that only 47 percent of contracts include the IUID Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations Supplement (DFARS) clause and only 16 percent of items across all classes of supply have been marked. Any successful asset visibility or AIT/AIDC strategy requires continuous identification, integration, and monitoring of efforts. The committee urges the Department and the services to increase their oversight of the implementation of IUID and other AIT/AIDC policies and directs the service secretaries to submit a report to the congressional defense committees by September 15, 2015, on efforts to improve asset tracking, including specific steps taken by each military service to ensure the use of the IUID DFARS clause in contracts.

#### Service Life Extension of Emergency Vehicles

The committee is aware that the Department of the Navy utilizes a depot-level maintenance strategy to extend the service life of fire, rescue, and emergency vehicles. The committee understands that the depot-level maintenance is conducted typically 8-10 years into a vehicle's life cycle and this service life extension program can extend the life of fire, rescue, and emergency vehicles by 10 years and results in significant cost savings over the purchase of new equipment. The committee is encouraged by the Navy's pursuit of greater efficiencies in the fire and emergency service vehicle maintenance process and the promise it holds for achieving savings and a higher rate of vehicle readiness across the fleet. As such, the committee encourages the other military services to pursue similar sustainment strategies to increase life-cycle savings across the Department of Defense.

## READINESS ISSUES

### Advanced Foreign Language Proficiency Training Systems

The committee believes that foreign language proficiency is an essential component of military readiness that enables U.S. military personnel to provide strategic warning and critical response capability. The committee is concerned that changes in advanced foreign language proficiency training programs may have an impact on the ability of civilian and military personnel at the Department of Defense to support combatant commanders and possibly lead to gaps in readiness. Specifically, the committee is concerned that linguists at the Department of Defense and supporting agencies may be unable to perform their job functions properly if they are unable to access advanced language and cultural training modules, as these personnel are required to interact, speak, and write in multiple dialects and social registers of a given language in order to adequately perform their varied missions.

To better understand any potential shortfalls arising from planned changes in advanced foreign language proficiency training programs, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense to brief the House Committee on Armed Services not later than October 1, 2015, on any capability gaps in advanced foreign language proficiency training within the Department of Defense. The Secretary shall also note any shortfalls that may arise within agencies that support the Department of Defense.

### Air Combat Training Range Upgrades

The committee is concerned by the proliferation of more advanced threats to U.S. Armed Forces and potential capability gaps in air combat training range instrumentation and equipment able to support newer, more advanced technologies, and concepts of operations that are being fielded to address these threats. The committee also notes the constraints on near- and long-term budgets to support high-cost live flight training. The committee recognizes, as referenced elsewhere in this report, that the Navy is seeking a new range capability to address these gaps and shortfalls and recommended full funding at the requested level to continue development and deployment of an updated system. To improve the committee's oversight of the recommended funding's execution and ensure the Department of Defense is expending resources in the most cost-effective manner, the committee directs the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics to brief the House Committee on Armed Services by September 1, 2015, on efforts to develop and employ new, updated range instrumentation systems and leverage previous investments.

### Analysis of Continuous Bomber Presence on Guam

The committee recognizes that the rotational deployment of B-52, B-2, and other bomber aircraft to Guam is an important component of U.S. Air Force strategy in the Asia-Pacific region. This continuous bomber presence since March 2004 acts as a deterrent to aggressive actions of nations in the region and serves as a reminder of the United States' commitment to its allies and a recognition of operational requirements. Given the current fiscal environment, the committee has encouraged all military services to evaluate current operational plans for potential efficiencies and greater measures of effectiveness. The committee recognizes the potential for cost savings on Guam through the permanent establishment of a squadron or detachment of bombers at Andersen Air Force Base (AAFB).

The committee directs the Secretary of the Air Force to review the feasibility of, and requirement for, establishing a permanent bomber presence on Guam and report the outcome of this review to the congressional defense committees by March 1, 2016. The review should evaluate the impact on operation and maintenance accounts and potential military construction investments for operations and increased military personnel at AAFB, to include an analysis of the cost associated with temporary duty stationing of aircraft and crews compared to the cost of permanently stationed aircraft and crews. The analysis also should consider the impact on aircraft maintenance.

#### Army Explosive Ordnance Disposal

The committee has been closely monitoring proposed changes to the Army's Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) force structure and proponentcy. The committee recognizes the importance of the Army EOD force as a unique and highly technical enabler in meeting combatant commander operational requirements and force presence for counterterrorism and irregular warfare, defense support of civilian law enforcement authorities, and support to major operations and in contingency scenarios. The committee remains concerned that the Army has not clearly identified future capacity and capability requirements for its EOD force and may eliminate too much of its EOD capacity without making needed investments in EOD capabilities to meet the enduring needs of combatant commanders. Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Army to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services by December 1, 2015, on the Army's EOD force. At a minimum, the briefing shall include:

- (1) Any proposed changes to EOD force structure planned over the Future Years Defense Plan, including any costs, efficiencies, or cost avoidance to include the active and reserve components;
- (2) An assessment of demand for Army EOD capabilities over the past 5 years, including by geographic combatant commanders, for national security special events, and in support of civilian law enforcement agencies;
- (3) A list of Army EOD systems program(s) of record, and EOD program elements and levels of funding for the Army's unique requirements for EOD in

research, development, test and evaluation; operation and maintenance; and procurement over the Future Years Defense Plan; and

(4) A cost-benefit analysis on any proposed realignment or relocation of EOD organization, force structure, training, and branch pronency.

#### Aviation Support to the Joint Readiness Training Center

The committee recognizes the importance of the training conducted at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) through U.S. Air Force Green Flag East exercises done in conjunction with U.S. Army brigade rotations. These exercises sustain critical, high-demand skill sets, such as those provided by joint terminal attack controllers, and allow both pilots and ground units to exercise in a realistic, high-threat representative environment. The committee notes that with the increasing focus on the Pacific area of operations, JRTC exercises have also incorporated maritime training to improve the integration of Air Force assets into U.S. Navy command-and-control structures, and the Army has increased the duration and complexity of unit rotations at JRTC.

While the committee commends these developments, it is concerned about the availability of air assets necessary to support the increased complexity and duration of Green Flag East and JRTC exercises. The committee is concerned that these challenges will become even more acute with the Air Force's decision to eliminate the fighter squadron at Barksdale Air Force Base that has regularly provided air support to Green Flag East and the JRTC when other air units were unavailable for training.

In order to better assess the adequacy of planning, programming, and resourcing of JRTC training activities, the committee directs the Secretary of the Air Force to assess the Air Force's ability to provide aviation support to JRTC rotations and exercises, to include an accounting of any instances in which the Air Force has been unable to support JRTC activities. The committee further directs the Secretary to report his findings to the congressional defense committees by March 1, 2016.

#### Comptroller General Assessment of Army and Air Force Training Requirements

For more than a decade, the Army and Air Force focused the training of their forces on supporting operations in the Republic of Iraq and the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan. Commanders established a range of resource-intensive training requirements deemed necessary to conduct missions in these locations and de-prioritized training in other areas. In the coming years, both the Army and Air Force will confront an increasingly complex security environment that will demand a wider range of missions, such as defeating terrorist organizations and responding to other emerging threats. To accomplish a broader set of missions, both military departments have established plans to refocus their training to conduct the full spectrum of military operations. However, they face an environment of constrained budgetary resources until at least 2021. For example, in fiscal year 2013, the

Department of Defense's operation and maintenance accounts were reduced by approximately \$20.00 billion under sequestration. Due to these reductions, the Army curtailed training for all units except those deployed, preparing to deploy, or stationed overseas; and the Air Force ceased flight operations from April through June 2013 for about one-third of Active Duty combat units and reduced the number of larger training exercises. The services face the possibility of sequestration-level funding again in fiscal year 2016.

The committee is concerned about the Army's and Air Force's ability to balance training investments with available resources and believes the services will need to fundamentally re-examine the requirements for training their forces. It further believes the military departments should explore whether they can achieve additional efficiencies or cost savings in their training approaches, such as by increasing reliance on simulator technologies to meet some training tasks. Therefore, the committee directs the Comptroller General of the United States to provide to the congressional defense committees a report, by April 1, 2016, that evaluates Army and Air Force training requirements and includes an assessment of the following:

- (1) The extent to which the Army and Air Force have established readiness goals, plans, and timeframes to train their forces for full-spectrum operations;
- (2) The extent to which the Army and Air Force have adjusted training plans and identified resource needs in light of their experiences preparing forces for contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan;
- (3) The extent to which the Army and Air Force have considered options for increasing the use of simulated training and other technologies to achieve efficiencies or other cost savings in their training programs; and
- (4) Any other issues the Comptroller General determines appropriate with respect to Army and Air Force training.

The committee also directs the Comptroller General to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services by March 1, 2016, on the Comptroller General's preliminary findings.

#### Comptroller General Assessment of Plans to Rebuild Readiness

For more than a decade the Department of Defense has maintained a high pace of operations, and supporting those operations has had a severe impact on the readiness of the overall force. Today, relatively few non-deployed forces could assemble quickly to perform their full mission should a large-scale crisis occur. In recent months, the service chiefs have begun to sound an increasingly shrill alarm about the impacts this pace has had on their units and the personnel in them. The service chiefs have raised questions about their ability to maintain the current pace and rebuild readiness, especially if budgets are reduced to sequestration levels. Steady-state combatant command demands are high and growing, with some key current demands going unmet. Looking forward, demands are not likely to recede, as forces are now needed to stabilize emerging crises in the Middle East and

Eastern Europe. According to the service chiefs, it will be at least 5 to 8 years (2020 to 2023) before their respective services can rebuild acceptable overall readiness levels.

Amid declining budgets and force structure, the committee is growing increasingly concerned about the Department's ability to rebuild readiness while meeting the persistent demands of the combatant commands. To inform its oversight, the committee directs the Comptroller General of the United States to submit a report to the congressional defense committees by April 1, 2016, that provides a comprehensive, independent assessment of the Department of Defense's efforts to rebuild readiness.

The reviews that support this assessment should consider historical readiness trends and focus on assessing the plans of the military services going forward including:

- (1) The force structure planned to meet strategic guidance;
- (2) The goals for rebuilding required readiness and the underlying assumptions and analysis behind those goals;
- (3) The departmental or military service efforts to set interim goals and assess progress toward those goals; and
- (4) The barriers, if any, facing the military services in reaching their readiness goals and plans to mitigate those barriers.

The review should consider how the Department and military services will identify and address key capability and capacity gaps across the Department for major combat units as well as low-density units and personnel who are in perennially high demand. In assessing the plans, the Comptroller General should also consider how the Department intends to balance the demands of the combatant commands in the future with the need to provide a more sustainable pace for service members.

Given the key role of the military services in rebuilding readiness, the Comptroller General should, at a minimum, provide reports that assess the plans of the Departments of the Army, Air Force, and Navy. The Comptroller General may, at his discretion and in consultation with the committee, provide additional reports that address recurrent themes across the Department, cross-cutting issues, or other issues deemed appropriate.

The committee further directs the Comptroller General to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services by February 15, 2016, on the Comptroller General's preliminary findings.

### Initial Flight Training

The committee recognizes the Air Force has implemented a cost-efficient and mission-effective Initial Flight training (IFT) program over the past 9 years for Air Force pilot and combat system operator candidates. The committee notes the value in program screening and initial training before the commencement of more expensive stages of aviation training. The committee also recognizes that the Air

Force's current approach to the IFT program has resulted in a safety record that exceeds many industry standards. However, the committee also recognizes the significant investments, which are correctly levied on industry, that must be made in aircraft, simulators, maintenance, highly experienced instructors, co-location at military installations, and student support infrastructure to enable this approach to Initial Flight Training. Given the significant investments required for the program to be successful, the committee acknowledges the need for program predictability, open competition, and the need to explore a similar approach to IFT within other military departments.

For example, the committee believes that the adoption of such a program by the Navy could provide the Navy cost efficiencies and training benefits similar to those experienced by the Air Force. The committee recognizes the Navy sent an initial cadre of naval aviator candidates through the Air Force IFT program in 2014.

Therefore, the committee urges the continuation of the IFT program within the Air Force with a continued focus on the safe production of competent pilots, and directs the Secretary of the Navy to provide the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives with a briefing by March 31, 2016, on the performance of the Navy's cadre of participants in the Air Force's IFT program and the costs and benefits associated with the adoption of a similar program by the Navy.

#### Marine Corps Search and Rescue

The committee is aware that the Marine Corps has divested its two remaining search and rescue (SAR) units at the Marine Corps Air Stations in Yuma, Arizona, and Cherry Point, North Carolina, in an effort to reduce manning and funding requirements. The committee is concerned that the divestiture and resulting transition of SAR functions to a combination of U.S. Coast Guard units and contracted SAR services has not been adequately assessed and could result in increased risk and increased cost.

The committee directs the Secretary of the Navy to brief the House Committee on Armed Services by August 1, 2015, on the Department of the Navy's divestiture plans and actions taken to ensure adequate search and rescue capability resides at Marine Corps Air Stations. The briefing shall include information on specific roles and responsibilities of Marine Corps units, Coast Guard units, and private contractors; plans for land-based search and rescue; and the cost analysis conducted that led to the decision to divest organic Marine Corps SAR capabilities.

#### Optimizing National Guard Training

The committee is concerned about the burden of temporary duty (TDY) and travel-dependent training regimes on some National Guard service members, including those Guard members requiring specialized certifications. The committee notes that many National Guard members have demanding civilian employment in addition to military service. The committee believes that the National Guard should optimize training regimes to minimize the amount of TDY and travel required to

retain certifications and currency. Increased use of virtual and constructive training, including simulation, may help alleviate some of the burden on Guard members by reducing time away from families and civilian employment. In order for the committee to better understand this issue, not later than September 30, 2015, the Chief of the National Guard Bureau shall provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services on options for better optimizing National Guard training regimes.

#### Performance and Effectiveness of Department of Defense's Joint Exercise Program

Each year, the Department of Defense's combatant commands participate in more than 120 training, exercise, and engagement events that range from small-scale, unilateral events to major joint and multilateral exercises. According to the Department, joint exercises are a means for commanders to maintain trained and ready forces, exercise contingency and theater security cooperation plans, and achieve joint and multinational training. These exercises have a primary purpose of training U.S. forces, but can also help build partner-nation capacity and strengthen alliances. Joint exercises are also designed to integrate and synchronize interdependent capabilities, such as intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, electronic warfare, and special operations forces between multiple services and commands. Further, participation in joint exercises enables the military services to build trust and relationships with one another, U.S. allies, and potential partners, while developing the skills necessary to operate in the joint environment. However, several factors, such as the availability of U.S. forces and access to host-country forces and territories, can affect the desired outcome of joint exercises.

Given current fiscal pressures and budgetary constraints facing the Department, the committee believes that the Department must improve efficiency and obtain cost savings where possible and demonstrate a return on its investment in training and exercise programs. In doing so, it is paramount that the Department balance its ongoing strategic and operational challenges with constrained resource levels and prioritize training investments, such as those in joint exercises. In order to better understand the performance and effectiveness of the Department's joint exercise program, the committee directs the Comptroller General of the United States to provide a report to the congressional defense committees, to be completed by April 30, 2016, that assesses the following:

- (1) The guidance and processes the Department of Defense uses to determine requirements for joint exercises;
- (2) The factors, if any, the Department has identified that affect the combatant commands' ability to conduct joint exercises;
- (3) The extent to which assessments of joint exercises are conducted to determine if combatant command and other departmental goals and objectives are achieved; and
- (4) Any other issues the Comptroller General determines appropriate with respect to the Department's joint exercise program.

The committee further directs the Comptroller General to provide a briefing by March 1, 2016, to the House Committee on Armed Services on the Comptroller General's preliminary findings.

### Review of the Navy's Optimized Fleet Response Plan

Over the past decade of war, high operational tempo reduced predictability of ship deployments for sailors, their families, and the industrial base that supports ship repair and maintenance. In addition, deployment lengths did not allow for the training and maintenance needed to support fleet readiness and maximize ships' operational availability to combatant commanders. Further, the Navy has not executed its ship maintenance and modernization on time or within budget.

To address these issues, the Navy began implementing in November 2014 a revised operational schedule for its carrier strike groups referred to as the Optimized Fleet Response Plan (OFRP). The OFRP seeks to provide a more sustainable force-generation model for Navy ships, as it reduces deployment lengths and injects more predictability for maintenance and training into ship schedules. The Navy also foresees that better scheduling will increase the efficiency of its deployments and increase predictability for sailors and the repair industrial base. According to Navy officials, this new force-generation model is designed to achieve a number of benefits, including driving down costs, increasing readiness, and maximizing operational availability to combatant commanders. The Navy plans eventually to roll out the schedule to all U.S. Navy assets from the amphibious ready groups to expeditionary units and submarines.

Given the persistent requirements of the combatant commanders, the committee is concerned about the viability of the OFRP, especially in light of the growing maintenance requirements being encountered as ships are brought into the public and private shipyards. Therefore, the committee directs the Comptroller General of the United States, by March 1, 2016, to review the following:

(1) To what extent has the Navy identified interim benchmarks and made progress toward implementing the Optimized Fleet Response Plan?

(2) To what extent has the Navy established outcome-related goals for the Optimized Fleet Response Plan in terms of forward presence provided to combatant commanders, personnel and operational tempo, sailor retention, training, maintenance, readiness, and ship repair costs? What other goals does the Navy have, if any?

(3) To what extent does the Optimized Fleet Response Plan provide adequate time for ships to meet ship maintenance requirements? What impact, if any, have deviations from planned maintenance schedules had on the ship-repair industrial base?

The committee further directs the Comptroller General to provide to the House Committee on Armed Services, by November 1, 2015, a briefing on the Comptroller General's preliminary findings and a final report to the congressional defense committees by March 1, 2016. The Comptroller General may also include

other related matters as deemed appropriate in order to provide a comprehensive examination of the OFRP.

### Synthetic Training for Small Arms Weapons Skills and Combat Readiness

The committee recognizes that synthetic training has become a key element in enhancing small-arms weapons skills training for U.S. military personnel, while reducing direct- and indirect-training time and costs. The committee also acknowledges that many synthetic training systems enable the collection and analysis of data and metrics that facilitate after-action reviews and can lead to improved training results while ensuring overall system reliability and success.

The committee notes that several communities, such as the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, the Navy Special Warfare Command, and the U.S. Army Special Warfare Center, have implemented synthetic small-arms weapons training systems that have proven useful in developing a wide range of individual service member skill levels. The committee also recognizes that synthetic training systems which utilize science-based human performance and cognitive agility programs of instruction and techniques can improve precision under stress, reaction time, and decisionmaking skills in complex threat scenarios.

The committee encourages other schools, commands, and military departments to adopt more cost-effective training systems, such as synthetic training programs, to the maximum extent practicable. The committee also encourages the continued exploration of neuroscience and resiliency-focused human performance training programs in addressing other areas of concern, including escalation-of-force challenges.

### U.S. Army Pacific Pathways Program

In December 2013, the commander of the U.S. Army Pacific unveiled the Pacific Pathways initiative, an effort to make the Army more flexible and expeditionary in responding to the needs of U.S. Pacific Command. Among other things, this concept envisions assigning key elements of U.S.-based infantry brigades to Asia and keeping them there for several months as they rotate from country to country, conducting training exercises and other security force assistance activities. These forces would also be available to respond to humanitarian crises or security threats in the region. Estimates indicate that executing this concept would represent a significant increase over currently planned Army spending on military exercises in the Pacific. Moreover, U.S. Pacific Command currently has other existing capabilities that are potentially similar to those envisioned for Army units under the Pacific Pathways program.

The committee would benefit from independent analysis of the utility of the Pacific Pathways initiative. Therefore, the committee directs the Comptroller General of the United States to provide a report to the congressional defense committees, by April 30, 2016, on the Pacific Pathways initiative that assesses the following:

(1) U.S. Pacific Command's plans for the use of forward-deployed Army forces under the Pacific Pathways initiative, including roles, responsibilities, goals, and objectives;

(2) The unique benefits of using Army units under the Pacific Pathways initiative in executing those roles, responsibilities, goals, and objectives;

(3) Any duplication or overlap of effort between, or among, the Pacific Pathways program and other existing capabilities in the region;

(4) The identified equipment, training, and other requirements needed to enable the execution of the Pacific Pathways initiative, including estimated costs; and

(5) Any other issues the Comptroller General determines appropriate with respect to the Pacific Pathways initiative.

The committee further directs the Comptroller General to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services by March 1, 2016, on the Comptroller General's preliminary findings.

#### Use of Service Contracts for Simulated Training and Associated Equipment

The committee supports ongoing efforts by the Department of Defense to streamline and modernize combat arms training. Further, the committee recognizes that in some cases, simulated training provided on a contract basis has the potential to offer a more cost-effective alternative to organically provided training or traditional equipment procurement. However, the committee acknowledges that contracting processes remain cumbersome and inefficient and could undermine possible financial efficiencies of contract solutions.

Therefore, the committee encourages the Department to explore the use, where appropriate, of service contracts that can reduce cost. While the use of a services contract may not always be appropriate for the acquisition of complex, military-unique simulation capability, the committee encourages the Department to examine opportunities where this approach could reduce the cost for simulated training and associated support equipment and increase training capability, especially in commercial-off-the-shelf and non-developmental simulation capability.

#### Uses of Modeling and Simulation

The committee recognizes the important contributions of the modeling and simulation industry in training warfighters. The committee believes modeling and simulation is particularly effective and efficient in providing platforms and replicating real-world challenges to prepare warfighters for decision-making at the tactical, operational, and strategic level, and inform the development of tactics, operational concepts, and the making of Defense acquisition and management decisions. The committee, therefore, encourages the Department of Defense to make greater use of modeling and simulation technology as a substitute for more expensive forms of training and directs the Secretary of Defense by March 31, 2016, to provide the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives with a

briefing on current uses of modeling and simulation and potential areas for further utilization.

## OTHER MATTERS

### Arctic Investments and Capabilities

The committee notes that as one of seven Arctic nations, the United States has a vested interest in the security and stability of the Arctic region. With the Arctic becoming increasingly accessible and more broadly transited in the coming decades by both Arctic and non-Arctic nations, it is imperative that the United States be prepared to operate in the Arctic region when needed. To that end, the committee notes that the Department of Defense released a document outlining its Arctic Strategy in November 2013 and the Department of the Navy released its updated "Arctic Roadmap" in February 2014. The committee commends the Department for its focus on the Arctic region as its activity in the region increases.

In order to meet the strategic objectives in the region, the committee believes it is important for the Department to continue to invest in training exercises, partnerships, infrastructure, and capabilities necessary to support potential operations in the Arctic region. The committee also encourages the Department to continue research efforts to develop security capabilities and strategies for the Arctic region. The committee notes that the Navy's "Arctic Roadmap" provided a plan to identify the requirements for an Arctic Center of Excellence in Fiscal Year 2015. Once the Navy has established the requirements for the Arctic Center of Excellence, the committee encourages the Navy to establish the center in a timely manner.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of the Navy to provide a report to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than February 1, 2016, that identifies the formal requirements that have been established for this center and a timeline for standing up the initial capabilities of the center. In establishing this center and determining a suitable location, the committee encourages the Navy to coordinate with other government agencies, academic institutions, and existing polar research efforts that can provide support and promote the United States security interests.

### Briefing on Retirement and Storage of Air Force One (VC-25)

Not later than April 1, 2016, the Secretary of the Air Force shall provide a briefing to the Committee on Armed Services of the House of Representatives on its plan to retire and subsequently place into storage the current fleet of Air Force One (VC-25) aircraft. The briefing should include an overview on the plan to move one of both aircraft to a museum owned by the Department of the Air Force.

### Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle

The committee notes that the coconut rhinoceros beetle is native to Southeast Asia and can cause extensive vegetation damage, primarily to coconut and other palms. The committee is aware that the coconut rhinoceros beetle was first detected in Guam in 2007 and in Hawaii in 2013, and is considered an invasive species to both of these locations. In coordination with Federal and local agencies, Joint Region Marianas and Navy Region Hawaii have developed programs focused on discovery, monitoring, controlling, and, to the extent practicable, eradicating the coconut rhinoceros beetle populations from military facilities and installations. The committee is aware that in fiscal years 2014 and 2015, the Department of the Navy contributed \$3.7 million related to coconut rhinoceros beetle response in Guam and Hawaii. In addition, other Federal agencies have contributed resources in support of the response. The committee encourages the Department of the Navy to continue supporting efforts to discover, monitor, control, and, to the extent practicable, eradicate coconut rhinoceros beetle populations.

#### Deep Water Unexploded Ordnance

The committee notes that section 314 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 (Public Law 109-364) required the Secretary of Defense to review historical records to determine the number, size, and probable locations of ocean disposal sites and the types of military munitions disposed of at the sites. Under the provision, the Secretary was also required to conduct research on the effects on the ocean environment, and those who use it, of military munitions disposed of in coastal waters. The committee is concerned that not all of the ocean disposal sites have been identified or fully studied.

Therefore, the committee directs the Secretary of Defense to provide a report to the congressional defense committees not later than February 1, 2016. The report should discuss the status of the Department of Defense's research to date with regard to the effects of ocean-disposed munitions on the ocean environment and the feasibility of removing or otherwise remediating sea disposal sites. The report should provide recommendations with regard to the need for additional research and the remediation of such ocean disposal sites, including an outline of ongoing or planned future research initiatives, a timeline for completion of such research, and efforts to remediate such sites.

#### Flame Retardant Military Uniform Safety

The committee notes with interest an increasing movement toward prohibiting halogenated flame retardants in commercial products because of health and safety concerns and believes that the men and women in the U.S. Armed Forces should be provided the same protections against potential toxic exposure as the civilian population. As such, the committee encourages the Secretary of Defense to explore the potential of utilizing non-halogenated flame retardants in military uniforms, through access to American-made products.

## United States Special Operations Command Global Inform and Influence Activities

The budget request included \$24.7 million in Operation and Maintenance, Defense-Wide, for U.S. Special Operations Command global inform and influence activities. The committee notes that this program will resource the geographic combatant commanders military information support operations, as well as inform and influence activities. The budget request includes increases that are directly attributed to military information operational gaps.

Elsewhere in this report, the committee expresses concern with the information operations being conducted by the Federation of Russia in Ukraine and Eastern Europe, and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), and provides additional authority for a pilot program to support information operations and strategic communications capabilities. The committee urges U.S. Special Operations Command to leverage this authority to enhance information-related and strategic communications capabilities to support the tactical, operational, and strategic requirements of the various combatant commanders, including urgent and emergent operational needs, and the operational and theater security cooperation plans of the geographic and functional combatant commanders.

Therefore, the committee recommends \$54.7 million, an increase of \$30.0 million, for U.S. Special Operations Command global inform and influence activities to expand activities against the Russian Federation and ISIL. The committee further directs the Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict to provide a briefing to the House Committee on Armed Services not later than July 30, 2015, on global inform and influence activities, with an emphasis on efforts to counter Russian and ISIL propaganda.

### Weather and Geographic Impacts on Aerospace Control Alert Missions

The committee recognizes the importance of the Aerospace Control Alert (ACA) mission and its role in protecting the homeland. The committee also believes that ensuring ACA assets can respond rapidly is essential to mission effectiveness. The committee encourages the Secretary of the Air Force, when making decisions affecting the ACA mission, to consider both geographic and meteorological limitations on ACA operations. The committee believes such considerations should include weather impacts on safety of flight, launch and recovery of aircraft, mission degradation, and the impact geographical location of aircraft has on alert response times.

## LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

### SUBTITLE A—AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS

#### Section 301—Authorization of Appropriations

This section would authorize appropriations for operation and maintenance activities at the levels identified in section 4301 of division D of this Act.

#### SUBTITLE B—ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

##### Section 311—Limitation on Procurement of Drop-In Fuels

This section would amend subchapter II of chapter 173 of title 10, United States Code, to prohibit Department of Defense funds to be used for bulk purchases of drop-in fuel for operational purposes, unless the cost of that drop-in fuel is cost-competitive with traditional fuel, subject to a national security waiver.

##### Section 312—Southern Sea Otter Military Readiness Areas

The section would add a new section to chapter 631 of title 10, United States Code, to provide for the conservation needs of the Southern Sea Otter while continuing the protections for military readiness activities at important offshore islands in the Southern California Bight.

##### Section 313—Revision to Scope of Statutorily Required Review of Projects Relating to Potential Obstructions to Aviation so as to Apply Only to Energy Projects

This section would amend section 358 of the Ike Skelton National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2011 (Public Law 111-383) to expand coverage of the Siting Clearinghouse to requests for informal reviews by Indian tribes and landowners, clarify that information received from private entities is not publicly releasable, eliminate categories of adverse risk, and limit applicability of section to only energy projects.

##### Section 314—Exclusions from Definition of "Chemical Substance" under Toxic Substances Control Act

This section would modify section 2602(2)(B) of title 15, United States Code, to add to the exclusions any component of any article, including shot, bullets and other projectiles, propellants when manufactured for or used in such an article, and primers.

##### Section 315—Exemption of Department of Defense from Alternative Fuel Procurement Requirement

This section would amend section 526 of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (Public Law 110-140) to exempt the Department of Defense from the requirements related to contracts for alternative or synthetic fuel in that section.

## Section 316—Limitation on Plan, Design, Refurbishing, or Construction of Biofuels Refineries

This section would require the Department of Defense to obtain a congressional authorization before entering into a contract for the planning, design, refurbishing, or construction of a biofuels refinery.

### SUBTITLE C—LOGISTICS AND SUSTAINMENT

## Section 321—Assignment of Certain New Requirements Based on Determinations of Cost-Efficiency

This section would amend Chapter 146 of title 10, United States Code, by adding a section that would require the Department of Defense to assign performance of new requirements to member of the Armed Forces, civilian employees, or contracts based on a determination of which sector of the Department's workforce can perform the new requirement in the most cost-efficient manner, based on an analysis of the costs to the Federal Government in accordance with Department of Defense Instruction 7041.04 or successor guidance.

## Section 322—Inclusion in Annual Technology and Industrial Capability Assessments of a Determination about Defense Acquisition Program Requirements

This section would amend section 2505 of title 10, United States Code, to include in the required periodic assessment of defense capability an additional requirement for the Secretary of Defense to also determine the extent to which the requirements associated with defense acquisition programs can be satisfied by the present and projected performance capacities of industries supporting the sectors or capabilities in the assessment and evaluate the reasons for any variance from applicable preceding determinations.

## Section 323—Amendment to Limitation on Authority to Enter into a Contract for the Sustainment, Maintenance, Repair, or Other Overhaul of the F117 Engine

This section would amend section 341 of the Carl Levin and Howard P. “Buck” McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015 (Public Law 113-291) to require the senior acquisition executive of the Air Force to make a determination that the Air Force has obtained sufficient data to establish that the Air Force is paying a fair and reasonable price for F117 engine sustainment, maintenance, repair, or overhaul.

The committee notes that section 341 was not intended to affect any existing contract or options under an existing contract that was concluded prior to the date of enactment of Public Law 113-291.

## Section 324—Pilot Programs for Availability of Working-Capital Funds for Product Improvements

This section would require each of the service acquisition executives of the military departments to initiate a pilot program in fiscal year 2016 for product improvement under the authority provided in section 330 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181). It also would require each military department to spend at least \$5.0 million in working-capital funds in fiscal year 2016 in support of a product improvement initiative as described in section 330(b) of Public Law 110-181.

## Section 325—Report on Equipment Purchased from Foreign Entities that Could be Manufactured in United States Arsenal or Depots

This section would require the Secretary of Defense to deliver, concurrent with the budget request for fiscal year 2017, a report to the congressional defense committees on equipment purchased from foreign entities that could be manufactured in U.S. arsenals or depots.

### SUBTITLE D—OTHER MATTERS

## Section 333—Improvements to Department of Defense Excess Property Disposal

This section would require the Secretary of Defense to provide a plan for improved management and oversight of the systems, processes, and controls involved in the disposition of excess non-mission essential equipment and materiel by the Defense Logistics Agency Disposition Services.

The committee remains concerned about the improper disposition of excess equipment, especially equipment returning from the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) area of responsibility. Despite 14 separate reports in 5 years by the Government Accountability Office, the Army Audit Agency, and the Department of Defense Inspector General (DODIG) on retrograde and disposition operations in CENTCOM, the DODIG in November 2014 again found improper disposition of usable equipment and a lack of proper guidance and adherence to policy. In the unclassified findings of Report Number DODIG-2015-012, "The DOD Retrograde Process in Afghanistan Needed Improvement," the DODIG noted that the Department lacks "additional controls [needed] to improve procedures governing the disposal of services items" and "as a result, serviceable items were disposed of that could be re-utilized." The DODIG noted in the report that of the 134 improperly disposed items, 10 items were subsequently repurchased by the Department of Defense. Further, the DODIG noted that improper disposition occurred at sorting facilities that were staffed with seven times the number of personnel "needed to accomplish the retrograde mission."