

Army Leaders Stress Need for Ground Combat Vehicle

ARMY NEWS SERVICE (MARCH 16, 2011)

Kris Osborn

WASHINGTON—Army leaders told members of Congress March 9 that the Service needs a new, next-generation ground combat vehicle able to accommodate new technologies as they emerge, defend against a wide range of current and future threats, and deliver a full nine-man squad under armor into the full spectrum of military operations.

Speaking before the Tactical Air and Land subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee, Gen. Peter Chiarelli, vice chief of staff of the Army, said the ground combat vehicle, or GCV, will be designed with lessons learned from Iraq and Afghanistan.

"The ground combat vehicle takes into account all of the lessons we have learned over the last ten years of warfare and ensures that we have a combat vehicle that will allow us to fight in a full-spectrum environment," Chiarelli said.

Members of the subcommittee questioned Army leaders about the need for the new vehicle.

"So far the Army has justified the need for the ground combat vehicle by pointing out that they need a vehicle with increased protection and more on-board power," said Silvestre Reyes, D-Texas, who went on to ask why upgrades to the Bradley Fighting Vehicle would not be sufficient.

Army leaders underscored the need for development of a ground combat vehicle, as an upgraded Bradley does not have the capacity to deliver a nine-man infantry squad into battle—a critical requirement, they said, given how the Army conducts operations.

Army leaders also stressed that current vehicles cannot accommodate future advances in the areas of armor protection, computing, and networking technologies. The size, weight, and power considerations impose clear limits on how much current vehicles can be upgraded, they said.

Speaking before the Senate Armed Services Committee March 3, Gen. Martin Dempsey, Training and Doctrine Command commander and nominee to be chief of staff of the Army, told lawmakers that the GCV represents a process of change.

"I think the ground combat vehicle is prototypical, not only of the next generation of a ground combat vehicle, but of a process change, and that's how we should look at it. The Bradley has been a venerable part of our inventory, but it

has reached its maximum capacity in weight and energy," Dempsey said.

Also, unlike the Bradley, the ground combat vehicle will be designed to deliver a full nine-man squad under armor to the battlefield, something considered crucial to the Army's ability to conduct fire and maneuver in close-quarters fighting in complex terrain, Army officials said.

Maintaining small tactical unit integrity is consistent with the Army's operating concept, which calls for combined arms maneuver and wide area security—ideas which underscore the expectation that the Army will need to move small units across a non-linear battlefield able to conduct a full range of military operations.

Keeping the nine-man squad intact allows company commanders and platoon leaders to better focus on command of operations and not constrain their movement and positioning due to transporting squad members, Service officials said.

Furthermore, the ground combat vehicle would be of critical assistance in today's current combat environments in Iraq and Afghanistan in addition to being helpful against anticipated future threats, Chiarelli explained.

The ground combat vehicle will be built with an incremental ability to add or remove armor protections as dictated by the threat level and what becomes available by way of new technologies, he said.

"We see ground combat vehicle as a vehicle for the future and for today. A vehicle that can add capability packages and add armor as it may be needed for a firefight or shed the armor when it is not needed," said Chiarelli. "Through incremental builds, we want to put new technologies on the vehicle as they become proven and capable."

The Army is now evaluating proposals submitted by industry bidders in response to the recently released Request for Proposal, or RFP, which delineates the requirements for the vehicle.

The RFP outlines four big priorities for the ground combat vehicle:

- Force protection—to ensure the new vehicle can protect soldiers against a wide range of current and future threats;
- Capacity—the ability to transport a nine-soldier infantry squad to the battle, under armor;



Generic representation of a ground combat vehicle only. The final Army ground combat vehicle may bear little to no resemblance to this representation. There is no specification as to whether the vehicle be either tracked or wheeled. U.S. Army graphic

- Full-spectrum operations—modular armor, open architecture, and growth potential; and
- Delivery time—designed to ensure the vehicle is delivered to soldiers within seven years from the contract award.

Lt. Gen. Bill Phillips, principal military deputy to the assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition, logistics and technology, told the subcommittee that the Army re-worked the RFP in order to properly align, prioritize and “tier” the requirements, and focus on mature technologies.

“We re-characterized all of the requirements—there were over 900. We came up with about 130 that were critical to make sure we had the big four capabilities inside the ground combat vehicle,” he said.

The Army plans to award up to three 24-month technology demonstration contracts.

The RFP outlines the need for mature technology and clear cost goals. The RFP states that the government intends to hit a target unit-manufacturing cost of \$9-10.5 million per vehicle with operational sustainment costs of \$200 per mile.

Carter: Acquisition Improvements Need Permanence

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MARCH 28, 2011)

Lisa Daniel

WASHINGTON—With spring coming in Afghanistan, the Defense Department is set to perform the same “remarkable” work it conducted in last year’s troop surge to get warfighters everything they need while working to institutionalize those procedures, the department’s under secretary for acquisition, technology and logistics told a congressionally established commission today.

The Pentagon’s logistics community “performed a miracle” in getting warfighters in Afghanistan everything they needed between President Barack Obama’s troop surge directive in December 2009 and the arrival of the last of the surge troops in August, Ashton B. Carter told the Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan, a bipartisan panel created as part of the fiscal 2008 National Defense Authorization Act.

Defense Department officials have worked closely with the commission in implementing Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates’ initiatives to improve the acquisition process while safeguarding taxpayer dollars, Carter said.

“We are working off the same list of challenges: to combat waste, fraud, and abuse in contingency contracting; root out corruption; get control of the particular risks of private security contractors; and, above all, to balance the effective response to warfighter needs and taxpayer dollars,” he said.

"Failure to do so not only amounts to theft from the taxpayer, but theft from those who put themselves in harm's way to protect us," Carter added.

Still, Carter said, "it's fair to say we've not done contingency contracting as well as the taxpayer and the warfighter deserve."

When he accepted his current position two years ago, Gates told him, "The troops are at war and the Pentagon is not—especially your part," Carter said.

"I took that to heart and have been trying to make that not so over the past two years," he added.

Department officials are doing everything possible to field everything troops need to make them safe and successful in Afghanistan, Carter said. That includes making permanent "the constellation of ad hoc processes" that allows the department to get around outdated, bureaucratic procedures to deliver equipment and supplies quickly, he said.

For example, Carter said, he and others have successfully appealed to Congress to "reprogram," or shift money within its appropriations, to fund needed items. The annual budget cycle, he explained, was designed to plan for war, not to conduct war.

"We have to create a fast lane for contingency acquisitions," he said. "We're constantly hotwiring and working around. That is not satisfactory. We need a better system."

Through the workarounds, the department was able to field requests for more and improved aircraft for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance as well as for improvised explosive device detectors and the all-terrain version of mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles, the under secretary said.

On his priority for saving public money, Carter said everyone connected to the Defense Department must face the reality of flattening budgets.

"We don't anticipate, and certainly we don't plan to see the defense budget go down in any way like it did in the 1990s," he said. "After all, we are a country at war, and we cannot compromise on the capabilities we now plan. At the same time, we do not expect the double-digit annual gains like we've had since 9/11.

"Flat is going to feel very different to us forever upward," he added. "The secretary wants us to begin to adjust to the new era."

To make that adjustment, Carter has directed acquisition managers to always consider what products and services should cost versus what companies say they will cost; to demand competition in all contracting; and to consider "productivity growth"—that items improve over time, while becoming less expensive.

"None of that matters if we don't have good people executing it," Carter said. "We oversteered in the past decade in downsizing the acquisition workforce."

Officials are working to add nearly 1,500 acquisition management and support positions, he added.

Pentagon Works to Tackle Cost Overruns, Official Says

*AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MARCH 30, 2011)
Karen Parrish*

WASHINGTON—Weapons and equipment that are more expensive than projected present a struggle every acquisition executive in the Defense Department has faced, a senior Pentagon acquisition official told Congress yesterday.

Testifying before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs yesterday, Frank Kendall, deputy under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics, said cost overruns have been an "intractable" problem.

Understanding the problem's root causes has to be the first step in addressing cost control, he said.

Both phases of defense acquisition—planning and execution—have problems leading to increased costs, Kendall said. Planning largely is a government responsibility, he explained, and includes setting requirements for new products, setting key schedule dates, estimating total program costs, establishing budgets, and evaluating plans and industry bids.

"In each and every case, there are strong pressures on our institutions and the people in them to be optimistic," Kendall said.

The United States has been militarily dominant in the world for decades, largely based on its superior weapons systems, he said. "We almost always set out to build a product that is better than anything that has been built before," he added.

Likewise, users put constant pressure on the acquisition system to field new capabilities faster, regardless of the product's scale or complexity, he said.

"The acquisition system is frequently criticized for taking too long and being too risk-averse," he said. "One has to ask, if we are so risk-averse, why do we have so many overruns and schedule slips?"

Competition within the planning system "provides more incentives toward optimism," he said, as projected program costs affect which new systems are chosen.

While defense planners feel pressure to set high capability requirements and fast production schedules while keeping projected program costs low, industry also faces pressure to "be optimistic in bidding on new programs," Kendall said.

"A defense contractor cannot stay in business by bidding realistically or conservatively and never winning a contract," he noted.

Government can address this issue by insisting that industry justify its projections and cost elements, he said, but he added that there is pressure to accept the lowest offer, "independent of the risk that's being taken."

The challenge the defense acquisition workforce faces in planning, he said, is to recognize the pressures toward optimism while doing everything possible to push the system to deliver more and better products sooner and at lower cost.

When new systems move from planning to execution phase, they largely become industry's responsibility, Kendall said.

"If the plan is sound, then cost overruns [during] execution are a matter of management, engineering, and production capability, or more harshly, competency in these disciplines," he said.

Kendall said in the past, he would have judged that most cost overruns resulted from planning failures. "I am no longer as certain of that," he added, noting that too many indicators show that both government and industry need to improve their capacity to manage and execute programs.

"We have a lot of work to do over time to build or rebuild the capacity in our workforces," he said. Government is moving to strengthen its own capabilities, and is working to spur industry's progress, Kendall said.

"Incentives ... are the primary tool the department has to influence industry's performance, and we need to use them creatively and aggressively," he said.

The Defense Department has adopted a set of 23 initiatives for "better buying power," designed to control and reduce costs not just in major programs, but across all contracted activities, Kendall said. The department also is increasing the size, capacity, and capability of its acquisition workforce, he added.

"We fully recognize the force multiplier [effect] a quality acquisition workforce has on the ultimate success of our programs," he said.

The struggle to control defense costs will never end, Kendall said.

"It is not a short-term battle, [and] a simple policy change will not solve all our problems," he said. "It takes professionalism, tenacity, and singleness of purpose at all levels of the acquisition enterprise to make progress."

The Defense Department is "totally committed to bringing the costs of our programs under control, and reducing them wherever possible," Kendall said.

USD(AT&L) and USD(C) Sign "Should Cost/Will Cost" Memorandum

On April 22, 2011, Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Dr. Ashton Carter and Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller/Chief Financial Officer) Robert F. Hale signed an important joint memorandum on savings related to "Should Cost." The purpose of this memorandum is to establish policy regarding achieved savings as a result of successful "should-cost" program execution. Read the memorandum in its entirety at the following DAU website: www.dau.mil/homepage%20documents/USD_ATL_Memo.pdf.

Obama, Gates, Joint Chiefs to Find More Savings

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (APRIL 13, 2011)

Lisa Daniel

WASHINGTON—President Barack Obama today said he will work with Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates and the Joint Chiefs of Staff to find more savings in the Defense Department to reduce the federal deficit.

Obama made the statement as part of a speech at George Washington University here to set the framework to reduce federal borrowing over the next 12 years by \$4 trillion.



President Obama lays out his plan to reduce the deficit by \$4 trillion over the next 12 years and to ensure America's future wealth and prosperity in a speech at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., April 13, 2011.

DoD screen capture

The plan includes \$2 trillion in savings, Obama said, building on \$1 trillion in savings proposed in the administration's fiscal 2012 budget that includes \$78 billion from the Defense Department.

After identifying savings in domestic spending, the president said, the second step is to find additional savings in the defense budget.

"As commander in chief, I have no greater responsibility than protecting our national security, and I will never accept cuts that compromise our ability to defend our homeland or America's interests around the world," Obama said. "But as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Admiral [Mike] Mullen has said, 'The greatest long-term threat to America's national security is America's debt.'"

The federal government can make cuts in national security "while still keeping ourselves safe," the president said.

"Over the last two years, Secretary Bob Gates has courageously taken on wasteful spending, saving \$400 billion in current and future spending," Obama said. "I believe we can do that again. We need to not only eliminate waste and improve efficiency and effectiveness, but conduct a fundamental review of America's missions, capabilities, and our role in a changing world. I intend to work with Secretary Gates and the Joint Chiefs on this review, and I will make specific decisions about spending after it's complete."

Obama said the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the Medicare Prescription Drug Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003, put expenditures too high as tax cuts simultaneously reduced federal revenues in the early 2000s. Add to that the national recession and the administration's emergency bail-out funding for recovery, he said, and "that's how we got where we are." The country now has more than \$14 trillion in debt.

"We must restore the fiscal responsibility that served us well in the 1990s," the president said. "We have to live within our means."

At the same time, Obama said, he will work to preserve reasonable funding levels for Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, education, and the environment.

Reducing the debt and the deficit—the gap between spending and revenues—"will affect all Americans in potentially profound ways," Obama said. "We will all need to make sacrifices, but we do not have to sacrifice the America we believe in."

Brian Deese of the administration's National Economic Council said in a public Web chat after the president's speech that Obama believes \$400 billion more can be found in national security budgets, but he "has made clear he won't designate specific cuts" until Gates, Mullen, and others review future budget projections.

The savings identified from pulling U.S. forces out of Iraq by the end of this year and from Afghanistan by 2014 are included in the fiscal 2012 budget, and are not reflected in the additional \$400 billion, Deese said.

Carter Seeks Process To Fund Urgent Needs

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (APRIL 14, 2011)

Lisa Daniel

WASHINGTON—The Pentagon's top acquisition official yesterday asked Congress to help set up a funding system so the Defense Department can more quickly meet deployed warfighters' most urgent requests.

Ashton B. Carter, under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics, thanked the House Appropriations Committee's defense subcommittee for recently approving two department requests to reprogram appropriated funds so defense officials could quickly field requests from deployed units.

"I want you to know that I have been working hard to ensure that funds approved for transfer are being put to work immediately to get urgently needed equipment to the field," Carter said in prepared testimony. "Upon your approval of the last reprogramming request, my team went to work to energize the entire acquisition system from contracting to training to fielding, getting the funds released promptly, [and] making these programs the highest priority."

Carter said he meets almost daily with his team that coordinates urgent operational needs and ensures that every defense organization understands the urgency and the authorities provided to execute the response.

"As in any military operation, such unity of effort is a prerequisite for achieving the mission—in this case, the mission of rapid fielding," he said.

The process of defense officials asking Congress to reprogram funds earmarked for other areas to pay for urgent operational needs is one of the department's primary means of meeting urgent warfighter requests, Carter said. "But it is not ideal," he added.

"We have largely succeeded in identifying and moving billions [of dollars] within acquisition and other accounts to respond to [urgent warfighter needs]," he said, "but significant delay can occur in identifying a source of funds."

The tight fiscal climate and operating under continuing resolutions have made it increasingly difficult to find extra money, even for urgent needs, the under secretary said.

"The department would like to work with you to identify better mechanisms," he told the panel, noting that the fiscal 2012 budget request—as it has in previous years—includes creation of a joint urgent operational needs response fund. The budget request included \$200 million to start the fund, which would be equally divided between the department's base and overseas contingency operations budgets, he said.

"Although this amount is small relative to what we have routinely expended responding to [urgent needs], the value of the fund is that execution can begin before the full reprogramming process is complete," he said. "This can save months, and thus save lives and ensure mission success."

Carter Outlines Military Acquisition Improvements

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (APRIL 14, 2011)

Lisa Daniel

WASHINGTON—The Defense Department has made much progress toward buying and fielding equipment smarter and faster, the Pentagon's under secretary for acquisition, technology and logistics told a congressional panel yesterday.

At a time when President Barack Obama and Congress look for ways to fix the nation's finances, Ashton B. Carter outlined progress to the House Appropriations Committee's defense subcommittee.

"I would point out that the answers to the nation's budget woes do not exist primarily in the Department of Defense, and within DoD they also do not exist solely or even primarily in acquisition," Carter said in a prepared statement.

The administration's proposed fiscal 2012 budget includes \$78 billion cut from the predicted rate of growth in DoD overhead. Of that, \$4 billion comes from acquisition, all of which resulted from restructuring the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program, Carter said.

Defense officials have made hard choices in canceling some weapons programs and restructuring others when the department was not getting a good return on investment, Carter said. The changes include:

- Issuing a stop-work order on the F136 engine for the F-35, which was costing the department roughly \$1 million per day and would require nearly \$3 billion to bring to completion; and
- Canceling the Marine Corps' expeditionary fighting vehicle and reallocating funds to existing Marine ground combat requirements. The EFV consumed more than \$3 billion, would cost another \$12 billion to complete, and if continued over two decades, would expend more than half of the Corps' procurement funds.

Carter said the department has demonstrated improved processes in the acquisition and management of several programs, including:

- The KC-46A aerial refueling tanker, which he called a model of how a solicitation process should work when the contract was awarded in February;
- The next two advanced extremely high frequency satellites, designed to reduce costs and allow for future investments that will lower risks in technology; and
- The Navy's replacement to Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines, for which engineering tradeoffs have reduced average procurement costs by 16 percent.

Such improvements are being made by new Pentagon directives to oversee programs based on what they should cost, rather than accepting only what manufacturers say they will cost, and by demonstrating affordability throughout the process, Carter said.

Moving forward, Carter has directed the department to more aggressively manage the more than \$200 billion it spends annually on services, which consumes just over half of all DoD contract dollars.

In other areas, the under secretary asked the subcommittee to support Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates' initiative to revitalize the acquisition workforce by supporting his fiscal 2012 budget request for \$734 million for new hires.

Gates' plan to grow the acquisition workforce by 10,000 workers is an exception to budget levels that freeze the remainder of department staff to fiscal 2010 levels, Carter said. The department has hired 4,200 people toward the 10,000 goal, he said.

Carter: Budget Cuts Demand More DoD Buying Power

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (APRIL 20, 2011)

Donna Miles

WASHINGTON—As the Defense Department seeks additional cost cuts to support President Barack Obama's deficit-reduction efforts, weapons systems and other major procurement programs certainly will be on the table, but won't be enough to achieve the president's goals, the Pentagon's acquisition chief said today.

DoD also must identify efficiencies in the \$400 billion it spends each year on contracted goods and services and find ways to increase its buying power, Ashton B. Carter, under secretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics, told a Heritage Foundation audience.

Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates has acknowledged that the Defense Department can't be immune from the national security budget reductions the president has called for, Carter said. As DoD prepares to launch a comprehensive review of the impact of those reductions in fiscal 2013 and beyond, Carter said, it's already clear that the days of "ever-increasing budgets of the post-9/11 decade" are gone.

"Whatever the budget levels are, this will feel very different to a group of government and industry managers and congressional overseers who have grown accustomed to a circumstance where they could always reach for more money when they encountered a managerial or technical problem or a difficult choice," he said.

And more than ever before, it's clear that everyone—from the president to the defense secretary to the taxpayer—expects DoD to make every dollar it gets count. "In short, they want better value for the defense dollar," Carter said. "This is what the country should expect, no matter what size the defense budget is."

DoD already has made big strides in improving efficiency, he noted. Over the last couple of years, the department has cancelled more than \$300 billion in acquisition programs—some that were underperforming, some that had become too costly, and some for capabilities DoD already had.

"We are getting to the point where most of the programs we now have underway or which are getting underway are military capabilities we do need and do want," Carter said, "and [we need] to get them for the money the country can afford to give us."

Additional acquisition programs are likely to get the ax as the department seeks additional ways to cut costs, Carter said. And although DoD will continue to initiate new, needed programs, he said, it won't do so without a close eye on the bottom line.

"We aren't going to start anything we can't prove to ourselves will be affordable in the timeframe it will be bought," he said.

Carter used the example of the Ohio-class replacement missile submarine, now in the design stage and expected to be built between 2020 and 2030. The first design projected a unit cost of \$7 billion per sub—causing the department to send it back to the drawing board to find changes that would bring down the cost without compromising critical capabilities.

ABERDEEN PROVING GROUND, Md.—Since 2003, the Army Materiel Command has conducted the Army Greatest Inventions program to encourage and reward those fighting the war from research labs throughout the Army by developing the best technology solutions for the soldier.

This year, AMC is also proud to promote the Soldier Greatest Inventions, or SGI Awards in order to recognize soldiers for their exemplary efforts to enhance their fellow warfighters' equipment and/or performance. SGI nominations are now being accepted for practical extension, applications, and/or game-changing new products initiated by one or more active duty U.S. Army soldiers.

Winners will be selected by fellow warfighters based on the invention's impact on Army capabilities (breadth of use and magnitude of improvement over existing systems), inventiveness, and potential benefit outside the Army.

This program's unique nomination and selection process reflects the voice of the warfighter and insight into the future of Army equipment. The SGI awards are truly "Soldier Choice Awards."

Previous AGI award winners include the 40mm M320 Grenade Launcher, Counter Radio Controlled Improvised Explosive Device Electronic Warfare Duke V3 (CREW DUKE V3), and MRAP (mine-resistant, ambush-protected) Overhead Wire Mitigation Kit.

Nomination criteria:

- Nominated inventions for SGI must have been "First Fielded" during calendar year 2010: Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2011.
- The SGI "fielding" definition can include traditional and other expedited fielding methods used to put a new mission-critical product, device, or process into use by soldiers at any level.

Technology nomination criteria for each award are available through the U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command, executing on behalf of AMC. Nomination packages must be submitted by e-mail to: AGI-Awards@us.army.mil by July 1, 2011.

"We are not going to start something that is so obviously not going to happen," Carter said. The same scrutiny is going into the Air Force's new long-range strategic strike bomber, the Army's ground combat vehicle, and the Marine Corps' presidential helicopter, he added.

While eyeing acquisition savings, Carter emphasized that weapons systems procurement represents about \$100 billion—or one-seventh—of the defense budget. And of that, about 70 percent goes to sustaining systems that already have been procured. So as DoD seeks ways to cut costs, he said, it's impossible to ignore the \$400 billion DoD spends each year on contracted goods and services.

"We need to take a comprehensive look at our spending, including, but not limited to acquisition programs," he said. "And that is exactly what better buying power does."

A 23-point roadmap, already being implemented, seeks to improve that buying power, Carter said. It targets affordability and cost controls, gives industry incentives to be more productive and innovative, and promotes real competition. In addition, he said, it aims to improve the way the department does business, improving tradecraft in how it buys services and cutting through nonproductive processes and bureaucracy.

"The alternative is broken programs, cancelled programs, budget turbulence, uncertainty, erosion of the taxpayers' confidence that their tax dollar is well spent and, of course, ultimately and most damaging, foregone capability to the warfighter," Carter said.

In looking toward the future, Carter cited the fiscal 2011 budget as an example of how DoD can't continue to do business. The impact of continuing resolutions and a barely averted government shutdown caused what he called "not just inefficiency, but anti-efficiency" within the department.

"Each and every program manager in the department has had to upset carefully calibrated plans, stop or slow activities only to restart them later, defer the commencement of important new programs, and so forth," he said. "And the result of this is not only delay, it is inefficiency. It is an uneconomical way to proceed in this herky-jerky fashion with all of our programs, procurements, and activities.

"I don't know how much this has cost us—[perhaps] billions—to operate in this way," he said. "It adds a dollop of cost overhead to everything we are doing. It is like a hidden tax."

As he focuses on budgets, Carter said, his "Job 1" always is fixed on supporting troops involved in current operations.

"That is an area where efficiency comes in, too, but effectiveness is most of the challenge," he said. "It is a daily challenge ... to make sure that the needs of those warfighters are met very rapidly. This means understanding what they need, figuring out what to do about it, [and] getting funding."

It's critical, he said, that DoD and Congress develop more responsive "fast lane" processes that don't "steal time from the warfighter."

Carter expressed little patience with inefficiencies and red tape that bog down that support.

"It's April now in Afghanistan," he said. "And every day that something is sitting in some guy's inbox [or] some contract audit hasn't been accomplished, is a day stolen from the fight. And that is outrageous and unreasonable that we allow that to happen, and we just can't let it happen."

Air Force Officials Announce Helicopter Acquisition Strategy

SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE PUBLIC AFFAIRS (APRIL 25, 2011)
Air Force Master Sgt. Amaani Lyle

WASHINGTON—Air Force officials announced their strategy here April 25 to recapitalize the Air Force's helicopter fleet, which is critical to nuclear weapon security response, continuity of government, and combat search and rescue.

The Air Force secretary and chief of staff have directed that the Service proceed with full and open competition for both the Common Vertical Lift Support Platform (CVLSP) program and the HH-60 recapitalization program.

These two programs will hold separate competitions using their respective capability development documents approved by the Joint Requirements Oversight Council to meet the warfighter requirements.

"The Air Force ultimately benefits from competition and allows industry to fully play in these acquisition programs," said Maj. Gen. Randal D. Fullhart, the global reach programs capability director. "We anticipate, based on market research and industry response to requests for information, that a derivative of helicopters already in production will be able to meet warfighter requirements."

The CVLSP program fills identified capability gaps while replacing the current Air Force UH-1N Huey fleet, in which Ser-



Air Force acquisition officials have announced a strategy to recapitalize the HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter (shown here) and to replace the UH-1N fleet with what is being called a Common Vertical Lift Support Platform.

U.S. Air Force file photo

vice officials noted deficiencies in carrying capacity, speed, range, endurance, and survivability, Fullhart said.

The fleet will consist of 93 aircraft spread among Air Force Global Strike Command, the Air Force District of Washington, and other major commands, he added.

“For CVLSP, we’re anticipating a summer 2011 draft request for proposal release and the final RFP [Request for Proposal] early fall,” Fullhart said. “We’re proceeding toward an initial operating capability for Common Vertical Lift Support Platform program in 2015.”

HH-60 recapitalization, officials said, is the Air Force’s program to replace the 112 aging HH-60G Pave Hawks. The HH-60G is used primarily to conduct combat search and rescue, or CSAR, but is also used for emergency aeromedical evacuation, homeland security, humanitarian relief, international aid, non-combatant evacuation operations, and special operations forces support.

Air Force leaders noted that the current fleet is heavily tasked, with the Operation Enduring Freedom flying tempo being twice the standard utilization rate, and aircraft availability projected to be less than 50 percent by 2015.

The anticipated request for proposal release for this program will be in 2012, Fullhart said.

While a long-term replacement remains critical, Fullhart points out that 13 Pave Hawks have been lost to combat, training, and civil rescue missions, and 54 of the remaining 99 HH-60G aircraft are currently undergoing repairs to correct major structural cracks.

In response, Service officials have implemented a short-term solution, the operational loss replacement program, to maintain current CSAR capability.

Operational loss replacement, Fullhart said, replaces lost aircraft and addresses the immediate need to maintain the operational availability of legacy HH-60Gs.

Originally, losses were not replaced due to the anticipation of CSAR-X, a program that has since been canceled, he said.

This long- and short-term approach is the best way to deliver the required capabilities to the warfighter, Fullhart explained.

The CVLSP and HH-60 recapitalization will help ensure that the Service sustains the warfighter’s capabilities across the full spectrum of military operations, according to senior leaders.

“As in the KC-X competition, the ability of offerors to meet requirements at best value to the taxpayer will be invaluable,” Fullhart said.