

Obama Pledges to Ensure Security While Reforming Defense Contracting

John J. Kruzel

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MARCH 4, 2009)

WASHINGTON—President Barack Obama today pledged to ensure the security of the American people while trimming fat from the Defense Department budget and reforming government contracting.

Obama's remarks came a week after unveiling his proposed budget summary, which allocated \$534 billion for the Defense Department's base operating budget in fiscal 2010—a 4 percent, or \$20 billion, increase from the previous year.

"As commander in chief, I will do whatever it takes to defend the American people, which is why we've increased funding for the best military in the history of the world," he said at the Eisenhower Executive Office Building.

"We'll make new investments in 21st-century capabilities to meet new strategic challenges, and we will always give our men and women in uniform the equipment and the support that they need to get the job done," he added.

Obama cited a report last year by the Government Accountability Office, Congress' independent watchdog, that found cost overruns of \$295 billion on 95 major defense projects. He praised Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates for taking steps toward reform, and he requested that Gates work with Congress to help in shaping legislation.

Regarding Iraq, Obama said too much money has been paid for services that were never performed, buildings that were never completed, and companies that skimmed off the top. He added that too many contractors in the United States have been allowed to get away with extended delays in developing unproven weapon systems.

"It's time for this waste and inefficiency to end," the president said. "It's time for a government that only invests in what works."

The president said he rejects the "false choice" between securing the nation and wasting billions of taxpayer dollars, and he vowed to reform a government contracting system he characterized as "broken."

"In this time of great challenges, I recognize the real choice between investments that are designed to keep the American people safe and those that are designed to make a defense contractor rich," he said.

Obama signed a presidential memorandum instructing his administration to dramatically reform the way it does business on contracts across the entire government, and he tasked budget director Peter R. Orszag to produce new contracting guidelines by September.

Kruzel writes for American Forces Press Service.

Technology, Threats Accelerate Army Focus on Ground Electronic Warfare

John Ohab

SPECIAL TO AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MARCH 6, 2009)

WASHINGTON—Portable electronic devices such as iPods and cell phones have provided U.S. adversaries in Iraq and Afghanistan with lethal capabilities, the Army's chief of electronic warfare said this week.

"They may be living in rough terrain and may not have all the comforts that we do, but they have the same access to technology," said Col. Laurie Moe Buckhout, chief of the Army's electronic warfare division in the operations, readiness, and mobilization directorate. She explained the Army's efforts to increase ground electronic warfare capabilities during a March 4 "Armed with Science: Research and Applications for the Modern Military" audio Webcast on Pentagon Web Radio.

In 2006, Buckhout stood up the Army's electronic warfare division with the goal of reducing the number of casualties caused by improvised explosive devices in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"It was really the IED fight that raised our attention on it, because we had remote-controlled, radio-controlled IEDs killing soldiers and Marines," Buckhout said. "[We] had to do something about it."

The Army's first step was training soldiers to maintain and operate the Counter Remote Control Improvised Explosive Device Electronic Warfare, or CREW, systems. These systems disrupt communication between an insurgent's transmitter and the detonating device, effectively creating a protective radio frequency bubble around a vehicle or a soldier on foot. Buckhout reported that CREW systems have saved thousands of lives.

"You've seen the casualty rate and the IED rate just go down in huge numbers as a result," she said. "That's kind of the tip of the iceberg on what we're doing."

In combating future threats, the Army's electronic warfare requirements will extend beyond counter-IED measures

alone, she explained. Soldiers often face the challenges of complex urban terrain, including hills, trees, buildings, and radio signals, all of which cause electromagnetic interference. In Iraq, for instance, the ground environment includes other U.S. military forces, coalition forces, Iraqi police, civilians, and emergency response networks. In the air, U.S., coalition, and commercial aircraft use their own geo-positioning, targeting, and navigation capabilities.

Buckhout explained the importance of precisely tailored electronic warfare capabilities that can neutralize threats and protect soldiers without disrupting land and air operations.

"It makes us sort of unique in that we have to operate inside that environment, but we have to do it without knocking out our own communications, without knocking out the communications of the people we're there to protect, and without knocking out emergency response networks," she said.

The Army leverages the electronic warfare expertise of the Air Force, Navy, and Marines, training more than 2,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines to function as experts in electronic warfare and CREW technologies. In addition, they've trained more than 55,000 soldiers on the employment of CREW devices. The Army recently approved a new force structure of more than 1,600 electronic warfare specialists that includes enlisted soldiers and warrant and commissioned officers, providing the Army with the largest electronic warfare capability in the U.S. military.

"This shows, really the commitment of senior leaders to this mission, and it shows that we're ushering in a new era of technology," Buckhout said.

The Services are conducting a requirements analysis of all electronic

warfare in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as efforts globally. In April, officials expect to release a list of solutions to counter the global threat and expand future electronic warfare capabilities.

"Afghanistan and Iraq are microcosms of what could be going on globally," Buckhout said. "We need to prepare ourselves not just for that, but for what may be happening in the years ahead."

Ohab holds a doctorate in neuroscience and works for the Defense Media Activity's emerging media directorate.

New Task Force To Focus on Protective Gear

C. Todd Lopez

ARMY NEWS SERVICE (MARCH 13, 2009)

WASHINGTON—A new Army task force is focused on ensuring continuity and synchronization across the procurement process for soldier protective gear.

Task Force Soldier Protection, announced March 12 during a media roundtable at the Pentagon, falls under Program Executive Office Soldier—an Army agency responsible for



The Advanced Combat Helmet is one of many pieces of protective gear fielded to soldiers by Program Executive Office Soldier. The agency recently stood up Task Force Soldier Protection to help ensure Army standards and policies for procurement of soldier protective gear—including such things as body armor, helmets, and eyewear—are followed across the entire chain of agencies and organizations involved in fielding such equipment.

Photo courtesy PEO Soldier

developing, procuring, fielding, and sustaining virtually all things carried and worn by soldiers. Al Dassonville heads up the new task force.

"I look forward to the challenge of running this task force—synchronizing all of our resources across the Department of Defense—to make sure we maintain the highest standards for our soldier protective equipment and to ensure we have got all the appropriate resources synchronized to bring the best world-class equipment to soldiers," Dassonville said.

The new task force will ensure that Army standards and policies for procurement of soldier protective gear—including such things as body armor, helmets, and eyewear—are followed across the entire chain of agencies and organizations involved in fielding such equipment.

"We are trying to ensure we maintain synchronized and well-communicated and well-integrated actions associated with soldier protection items," said Army Brig. Gen. Peter N. Fuller, Program Executive Officer Soldier. "We are stepping up the game."

According to Dassonville, top priorities for the task force include ensuring that contracting, testing, and quality control of protective gear are conducted appropriately and efficiently; and ensuring that quality control continues to follow Army standards across all agencies involved in procurement of protective gear.

"It is easy enough to write a standard," Dassonville said. "It is one thing to write it—it is another thing to go back and make sure everybody involved in the process understands it and does it. That is the other part that this task force is going to do."

Across the Department of Defense, there are multiple organizations involved with getting a new idea for soldier protective gear into the hands of a soldier, Fuller said. He explained that from the inception of a new piece of gear to the placing of that gear into a soldier's hands, there are agencies that develop items, write contracts, produce equipment, and test it.

Not all of those organizations are strictly Army organizations. But the goal of Task Force Soldier Protection is to ensure they all know what their mission is, and that they all are following the same set of strict Army guidelines for soldier protective gear, Fuller said.

"The point of TFSP is to synchronize and integrate all the stakeholders working on soldier protection items," said Fuller. "We want to make sure everybody is working on the

same thing and understands what the left and right are doing in relation to what they are working on. The Army wants to ensure that the highest standards are consistently applied to all processes related to soldiers' survivability equipment."

Task Force Soldier Protection is currently intended as a temporary organization. In June, the results of the task force will be reviewed, officials said. A decision to dissolve or continue the task force will be made at that time.

Lopez writes for Army News Service.

GAO Report Mischaracterizes Army Efforts on FCS

C. Todd Lopez

ARMY NEWS SERVICE (MARCH 16, 2009)

WASHINGTON—Army leaders question the findings in a report released by the U.S. Government Accountability Office concerning the Service's Future Combat Systems.

In a report dated March 12, the GAO says FCS technology has not yet reached appropriate levels of maturity, that not enough product testing has been demonstrated, and that the program is over budget. Army generals involved in the program dispute the findings.

"Inside the GAO report they mention a \$21 billion cost increase, and because the report has just been issued, I don't know how they came up with the \$21 billion," said Lt. Gen. Ross Thompson, military deputy to the assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition, logistics and technology. "One of the things we have to get addressed with GAO is the basis in which they calculated that. I can't explain their \$21 billion."

Thompson says overages are closer to about 6.5 percent of the total program cost of about \$159 billion. He cites several factors for those increases, including technology spinouts, putting the capability into the infantry brigade combat team starting in 2011, four TRL (technology readiness level) 4 program restructures, an increase in quantities of end items, adjustments based on lessons learned in theater, the impact of inflation, and increases in capability.

The general also said the Army believes the technology levels in FCS are not lagging, as the GAO report suggests.

"We think the technologies are where they need to be," Thompson said.

Of the 44 key technologies in FCS, Thompson said 35 are currently at technology readiness level 6, and that that level has been verified by independent technology experts. According to the *Defense Acquisition Guidebook*, a TRL 6 indi-

cates a technology has, among other things, been “tested in a relevant environment” and “represents a major step up in a technology’s demonstrated readiness.”

The general said five more technologies in FCS are under evaluation now, and four more will be evaluated by June.

“Our expectation [is] that all 44 of those technologies will be at the right TRL—6 or higher than 6—in order to begin to do the integration,” Thompson said.

Finally, the report claims that FCS technology has not been sufficiently demonstrated, without adequate testing.

“I think they are really mischaracterizing what we have done so far,” Thompson said. “For example, this year alone there are 203 test events in FCS. In 2008 there were 178 test events, in 2007, 217 test events. We are doing extensive testing. I have pages and pages of scheduled test events here. We’ve done an incremental approach, we are testing as we go, we do have soldiers involved in testing; that was the whole purpose of the Army standing up a brigade capabil-

ity at Fort Bliss—the Army Evaluation Task Force—that has soldiers in the loop helping us do some of the testing to get some of those lessons learned.”

The general said the GAO is not giving the Army credit for the testing it is doing leading up to the important decisions that will be made in regards to FCS.

Lopez writes for Army News Service.

Tankers Top Shopping List, Transportation Commander Says

Jim Garamone

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MARCH 17, 2009)

WASHINGTON, March 17, 2009—Acquiring a new fleet of Air Force tankers, known as KC-X until an airframe is chosen, is imperative, the commander of U.S. Transportation Command told the Senate Armed Services Committee today.

“My top priority remains the recapitalization of our aging tanker fleet,” Air Force Gen. Duncan J. McNabb told the senators. “The KC-X will be a game-changer.”



The aircraft, designed to be a refueler with cargo-carrying capability, will revolutionize the mobility world the same way the C-17 did for in-theater and strategic airlift, the general said.

“It will be the ultimate mobility force multiplier,” he said.

The Air Force selected Northrop Grumman/EADS for the tanker project last year, but rival bidder Boeing protested the decision. Bidding was reopened after the Government Accountability Office found flaws with the process.

McNabb also gave the senators an overview of Transportation Command’s responsibilities and operations. All told, he said, TRANSCOM aircrews fly 900 sorties per day.

“That’s a takeoff and landing every 90 seconds—sometimes in the most austere areas like Antarctica, sometimes in the most dangerous, like a forward operating base in Afghanistan,” he said.

Army 1st Lt. Andrew Andersen, scout platoon leader with the Army Evaluation Task Force, explains the capabilities of a Tactical Unattended Ground Sensor during a Future Combat Systems demonstration at Fort Bliss, Texas. The T-UGS is one of the FCS Spinout-1 items tested for early fielding.

Photo by Army Maj. Deanna Bague

McNabb also spoke about the newly developed supply routes open to Afghanistan via the northern distribution network. The supply network uses commercial rail and boat to ship nonlethal cargo to coalition forces operating in Afghanistan. The command ships food, fuel, building materials, and other supplies from Europe and Central Asia.

But as important as equipment is to the command, McNabb said, it is TRANSCOM's 136,000 men and women, civilian and military, private and public, who are the true treasures to the nation. Success, he said, is due to the dedicated logistics professionals finding new ways to ensure warfighters have what they need.

TRANSCOM logisticians work long hours, often in dangerous conditions, McNabb said. Aircrews fly night-vision approaches to unimproved airfields or airdrop supplies to troops in Afghanistan. Air refuelers deliver 5 million pounds of fuel "flying every day and night, in the weather, extending the reach of our joint force and coalition partners," he said.

On the sea, merchant mariners and military and civilian port operators load and operate 35 ships every day in support of warfighters. Terminal operators move thousands of containers, domestic freight, and rail shipments throughout the world.

The command also provides contingency response groups and port-opening experts "to open up the flow in contingency or disaster relief operations in support of the warfighting commander," the general said. TRANSCOM also provides medical crews and critical care teams that tend to wounded warriors and quickly transport them from the battlefield to world-class care.

The command could not accomplish its mission without commercial airlift and sealift partners opening new avenues of supply into Afghanistan or supporting the nation in times of surge, McNabb said.

"The logistics team is responsible for giving the United States unrivaled global reach," the general said. "We are committed to serving our nation's warfighters by delivering the right stuff to the right place at the right time. Whether sustaining the fight, providing disaster relief, or moving six brigades simultaneously, we are there."

McNabb thanked the senators for providing the command with the equipment needed to maintain the logistics carriers. He pointed to the large medium speed, roll-on, roll-off ships and upgrades to the ready reserve fleet that were key

to the command's success over the past seven years. "The new joint high-speed vessels will give us even greater flexibility," he said.

He also praised the performance of the C-130J and C-17 airlifters. The airframes "have come of age since 9/11 and have allowed us to change how we support the combatant commanders by air," he said. "The current C-5, C-130, and KC-10 modernization programs will make an enormous difference in our capability and reliability."

Garamone writes for American Forces Press Service.

Obama Cites \$40 Billion Savings in Defense Procurement Budget

Gerry J. Gilmore

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (MARCH 24, 2009)

WASHINGTON—Upwards of \$40 billion dollars in savings could be realized by eliminating wasteful programs in the Pentagon's procurement budget, President Barack Obama said during his nationally televised news conference.

Obama said he's been working with Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates to reform the Pentagon's weapons procurement system, "so that it keeps America safe, and we're not wasting taxpayer dollars."

There's broad acknowledgement, Obama said, that the Pentagon's procurement system "doesn't work."

Consequently, "we're changing procurement practices when it comes to the Pentagon budget," the president said.

Students of the defense procurement process, Obama said, have identified "a whole range" of multi-billion dollar systems that have incurred cost overruns of 30, 40, and 50 percent.

Yet, those costly systems "still don't perform they way they're supposed to," Obama said without naming specific programs. The systems under scrutiny, he added, also don't provide U.S. troops with the right tools they need to succeed in their missions.

"What we have to do is to go through this [defense procurement] process very carefully," Obama said, and "be more disciplined."

"We've already identified potentially \$40 billion in savings, just by some of the procurement reforms that are pretty apparent to a lot of critics out there," Obama said.

Obama said he'd continue to look for savings in defense procurement programs in such a way "that allows us to put the resources where they're needed, but to make sure that we're not simply fattening defense contractors."

The president also noted that his proposed budget reflects the largest increase in military veterans' program funding in 30 years.

Supporting America's veterans who return from fighting the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan "is the right thing to do," Obama said, noting more money is being allocated to assist returning military veterans who've sustained traumatic brain injury and/or post-traumatic stress disorder.

"I don't think anybody doubts the extraordinary sacrifices that men and women in uniform have already made," Obama said. "And, when they come home, then they have earned the benefits that they receive."

Turning to Mexico, Obama cited his administration's decision today to send millions of dollars of additional U.S. equipment there to provide better surveillance to help the

Mexican government in its fight against escalating violence perpetrated by the country's drug cartels.

Additionally, the president said, hundreds of extra U.S. personnel will take up posts along the U.S.-Mexican border to control border checkpoints and manage customs issues.

Obama praised Mexican President Felipe Calderon's efforts to corral the drug cartels.

President Calderon "has taken on an extraordinarily difficult task in dealing with these drug cartels, that have gotten completely out of hand," Obama said. Drug cartel-committed violence has spilled over into some U.S. communities located along the border with Mexico.

Meanwhile, the United States will continue to monitor the situation in Mexico, Obama said.

"And, so the steps that we've taken are designed to make sure that the border communities in the United States are protected," Obama explained, "and you're not seeing a spill-over of violence and that we are helping the Mexican government deal with a very challenging situation."

Also, as Mexican authorities work to stem the flow of drugs from their country into America, Obama said, U.S. officials must do more "to ensure that illegal guns and cash aren't flowing back" from the United States to the drug cartels in Mexico.

"This is something that we take very seriously and we're going to continue to work on diligently in the months to come," Obama said.

Gilmore writes for American Forces Press Service.

Marines to Test New Expeditionary Vehicle in 2010

*Navy Lt. Jennifer Cragg
SPECIAL TO AMERICAN FORCES
PRESS SERVICE (MARCH 27, 2009)*

WASHINGTON—The Marine Corps' first expeditionary fighting vehicles—17-passenger ar-



The EFVP1, with a three-man crew, will conduct the signature mission of the United States Marine Corps, Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare from seabases, by initiating amphibious operations from 20-25 miles over-the-horizon and seamlessly transporting 17 combat-equipped Marines to inland objectives. The fully armored, tracked combat vehicles will provide lethal firepower to disembarked infantry with its own fully stabilized MK46 30 mm weapon station and 7.62mm coax machine-gun.

Photo courtesy Marine Corps Program Manager, Advanced Amphibious Assault

mored vehicles—are slated to be delivered to the Marine Corps for testing in May 2010, the vehicle's program manager said.

The Marine Corps' EFV program successfully released a critical design review in the first quarter of this fiscal year, allowing it to go into a second system development and demonstration phase.

"We're currently building seven new prototypes to that new design. Those vehicles are currently going through fabrication and machining the hulls at Joint Systems Manufacturing Center in Lima, Ohio. They'll begin assembly this summer," Marine Corps Col. Keith Moore said in a "DoDLive" bloggers roundtable March 25.

"The Marine Corps Operational Test and Evaluation Activity will run the vehicle through 10 to 12 mission-profile scenarios to assess the overall performance, as well as the reliability of the vehicle," Moore added.

An analysis of the system reliability was conducted in December 2008, and it projected 61 hours mean time between operational mission failures, which is significantly above what the requirements were to continue the program forward, Moore explained.

The reliability testing conducted in December involved an overall reassessing of the total ground vehicle structure for the Marine Corps and a critical design review for the redesigned vehicle.

"We'll go back through a reliability growth program of testing those, identifying additional failure modes, and redesigning components to get them up to the required reliability," Moore said.

A result of limited testing and redesign, the failure of the initial system design and development phase prototypes to demonstrate acceptable reliability during the 2006 operational assessment was a significant concern driving the 2007 certification and restructure of the program, officials said. This restructure allowed a second SDD-2 phase to be conducted with an updated series of newly manufactured prototypes.

Moore added that the EFV is a critical element of the national security capability.

"There is no other alternative to providing that capability for less or equal cost," Moore said.

During prototype testing in May next year, the Marine Corps will determine if the vehicle meets their expectations.

"We just need the time to get to when we had planned this next demonstration of capability, and then we can revisit, 'Did it meet the expectations?' If it doesn't meet the expectations, is it because of something that's fixable, or is it because this is just too hard to do?" Moore said.

In response to a question about the need for an amphibious capability, Moore said that from 1982 to 2006, the Marine Corps had been involved in 102 amphibious operations.

"This capability is oftentimes more effective, and serves a larger strategic and operational purpose in the employment of it, but you have to have the credible threat of being able to do it," Moore said.

Cragg serves in the Defense Media Activity's emerging media directorate.

Big Tactical Aerostat Flies for First Time

ARMY NEWS SERVICE (APRIL 2, 2009)

The Joint Land Attack Cruise Missile Defense Elevated Netted Sensor System Product Office has announced a major milestone in the design and manufacture of the JLENS System.

The event centered on the helium inflation of the world's first 74-meter aerostat. Aerostat serial 0001 lifted off the ground for the first time March 9 at the TCOM manufacturing and flight test facilities in Elizabeth City, N.C.

TCOM is a subcontractor to Raytheon's integrated defense systems division, which is the prime contractor for JLENS.

The JLENS mission is to provide elevated, persistent, over-the-horizon surveillance and fire control quality data on Army and Joint networks, enabling protection of the U.S. and coalition forces as well as critical geopolitical assets, from cruise missiles, aircraft, unmanned aerial vehicles, tactical ballistic missiles, large caliber rockets, and surface moving targets.

The aerostat uses advanced sensors and networking technologies to provide wide-area surveillance and precision tracking of land attack cruise missiles and other types of aircraft.

"An aerostat is a helium filled 'balloon' used to elevate payloads from low to medium altitudes," JLENS product manager Army Lt. Col. Stephen Willhelm said. "Small and large



The 74-meter-long aerostat, anchored to the ground by a tether and connected to a 180,000-pound mobile mooring station, covers almost the length and width of a football field. It will be able to fly a 7,000 pound communications and radar payload up to 10,000 feet.

Courtesy photo

tethered balloons have been used over time by the U.S. military for various missions. From the Civil War when they were used as observation platforms through today where small aerostats operated by Army troops are used in support of force protection missions in Iraq, Aerostats have had a long history contributing to the defense of terrain and forces on the battlefield.”

JLENS is in the system development and demonstration phase of the acquisition life cycle. Individual components are being manufactured, and the product office is preparing for systems integration, which will begin this fall.

JLENS product office news release.

Air Force Takes Combat Air Acquisitions Priorities to Hill

*Air Force Tech. Sgt. Amaani Lyle
AIR FORCE NEWS SERVICE (APRIL 3, 2009)*

WASHINGTON—As airpower takes on an increasingly critical role in the joint fight, Air Force and Navy officials testified

before the House Appropriations Committee March 25 to outline the Services’ top combat air acquisition priorities.

Lt. Gen. Mark D. “Shack” Shackelford, the acquisition deputy to the assistant secretary of the Air Force, and Navy Vice Adm. David Artchitzel, the principal deputy for research, development, and acquisition, discussed the futures of their respective Services’ fighter and bomber fleets.

Shackelford compared and contrasted the two fifth generation fighters, the F-22 Raptor and the F-35 Joint Strike

Fighter Lightning II. Each model possesses unique complementary and essential capabilities that together provide the necessary speed, stealth, and maneuverability to maintain superiority across the spectrum of conflict, he added.

“F-22s from today’s production line will be equipped with upgraded radar for enhanced ground mapping capability, while the F-35, through the Cooperative Avionics Test Bed, provides unprecedented risk reduction in a major weapon system not seen in any legacy program,” the general said.

F-22s can find, fix, track, and target enemy air and surface-based threats, ensuring air dominance for all joint forces. Shackelford said the F-22s are in year six of a 13-year planned two-part modernization.

The general continued that the F-35 was designed from the bottom up to be the Air Force’s premiere surface-to-air-missile killer and is “uniquely equipped for the mission with its cutting edge processing power, synthetic aperture radar integration techniques, and advanced target recognition.”

Using “smart” Joint Direct Attack Munitions and eight small-diameter bombs, the aircraft will have the capacity to find and fire upon still and moving ground targets. The system can also convey data to the pilot’s helmet visor to facilitate target detection.

“This is the timeless paradox of deterrence,” Shackelford said. “The best way to avoid war is to show your enemies, and potential enemies, that you have the ability, the will, and the resolve to defeat them.”

Shackelford said B-1B Lancers’ new technology provides the joint force commander massive firepower potential coupled with a significant loiter capability well-suited for the inconsistent tempo of today’s ongoing operations.

The general said most models will feature enhanced air-to-ground communications, critical for a combatant commander’s multifaceted air dominance strategies.

“We realized the B-1B’s potential by integrating the Advanced Targeting Pod to the platform’s sensor suite,” the general said. “This allows combatant commanders to deliver urgent and immediate combat capability.”

In 2007, the Air Force and corporate partners responded to the Air Force Central Command’s urgent operational needs with a full complement of Sniper-equipped B-1B bombers to support operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Prior to that, the B-1B modification incorporated a series of color multifunction displays that show an array of fused data at all crew stations.

“We are building a 21st century Air Force—prepared to succeed—strategically, operationally, and tactically,” Shackelford said. “Our highly capable and lethal aviation programs provide global vigilance, reach, and power—critical both today and for the future of the joint force.”

Lyle writes for Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs.

Gates Lays Out Budget Recommendations

Jim Garamone

AMERICAN FORCES PRESS SERVICE (APRIL 6, 2009)

WASHINGTON—Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates today laid out his recommendations for the 2010 budget during a Pentagon press conference.

The secretary said he included his experiences in national security to make the decisions.

To start, Gates plans to significantly restructure the Army’s Future Combat Systems program. “We will retain and accelerate the initial increment of the program to spin out technology enhancements to all combat brigades,” he said.

But he said there are unanswered questions about the program’s vehicle design strategy. “I am also concerned that, despite some adjustments, the FCS vehicles—where lower weight, higher-fuel efficiency, and greater informational awareness are expected to compensate for less armor—do not adequately reflect the lessons of counterinsurgency and close-quarters combat in Iraq and Afghanistan,” he said.

The current vehicle program, developed in fiscal 2000, does not include the recent \$25 billion investment in the mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles that have saved so many lives in Afghanistan and Iraq. Gates also noted problems with the current fee structure, which he said gives the government little leverage to promote cost efficiency.

“Because the vehicle part of the FCS program is currently estimated to cost over \$87 billion, I believe we must have more confidence in the program strategy, requirements, and maturity of the technologies before proceeding further,” he said. “Accordingly, I will recommend that we cancel the vehicle component of the current FCS program; re-evaluate the requirements, technology, and approach; and then re-launch the Army’s vehicle modernization program, including a competitive bidding process.”

The Army needs a vehicle modernization program to meet the needs of the full spectrum of conflict. “But because of its size and importance, we must get the acquisition right, even at the cost of delay,” the secretary said.

The secretary recommended halting the F-22 Raptor procurement at 187, and investing instead in the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter.

The secretary also would like to end other under-performing programs, such as the VH-71 presidential helicopter. “This program was originally designed to provide 23 helicopters to support the president at a cost of \$6.5 billion,” he said. “Today, the program is estimated to cost over \$13 billion, has fallen six years behind schedule, and runs the risk of not delivering the requested capability.”

Gates said the military will develop options in fiscal 2011 for a follow-on program.

The secretary also would like to terminate the Air Force Combat Search and Rescue X helicopter program. The

program has a troubled acquisition history and raises the question of whether this important mission can only be accomplished by yet another single-Service solution with single-purpose aircraft.

"We will take a fresh look at the requirement behind this program and develop a more sustainable approach," he said.

Gates said he is recommending an end to the \$26 billion transformational satellite program, and instead would like to purchase two more advanced, extremely high frequency satellites as alternatives.

Turning to missile defense, he recommended restructuring the program to focus on the rogue state and theater missile threat, meaning the United States will not increase the number of ground-based interceptors in Alaska.

"But we will continue to robustly fund continued research and development to improve the capability we already have to defend against long-range rogue missile threats—a threat North Korea's missile launch this past weekend reminds us is real," he said.

The secretary said he would like to cancel the second airborne laser prototype aircraft, and shift the existing aircraft and program to a research and development effort. Under his recommendation, the multiple kill vehicle program also would end "because of its significant technical challenges and the need to take a fresh look at the requirement," he said.

Overall funding at the Missile Defense Agency would drop by \$1.4 billion.

The recommendation also calls for the purchase of two destroyers in fiscal 2010. "These plans depend on being able to work out contracts to allow the Navy to efficiently build all three DDG-1000 class ships at Bath Iron Works in Maine and to smoothly restart the DDG-51 Aegis destroyer program at Northrop Grumman's Ingalls shipyard in Mississippi," Gates said.

The secretary also will delay or re-evaluate the next generation cruiser, amphibious landing, and sea-basing programs. Acquisition workforce changes also are imperative for the process to get on the right track.

"Under this budget request, we will reduce the number of support service contractors from our current 39 percent of the workforce to the pre-2001 level of 26 percent and replace them with full-time government employees," he said.

"Our goal is to hire as many as 13,000 new civil servants in fiscal 2010 to replace contract employees, and up to 30,000 new civil servants in place of contractors over the next five years," he said.

These are just a portion of the recommendations Gates will make. The secretary stressed that his recommendations reflect lessons learned in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"I know that in the coming weeks we will hear a great deal about threats, and risk and danger to our country and to our men and women in uniform associated with different budget choices," he said. "Some will say I am too focused on the wars we are in and not enough on future threats," he continued. "The allocation of dollars in this budget definitely belies that claim.

"But, it is important to remember that every defense dollar spent to over-insure against a remote or diminishing risk—or, in effect, to 'run up the score' in a capability where the United States is already dominant—is a dollar not available to take care of our people, reset the force, win the wars we are in, and improve capabilities in areas where we are underinvested and potentially vulnerable. That is a risk I will not take."

The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said he fully supports Gates' decisions.

"None of them was easy to make; all of them are vital to the future," Navy Adm. Mike Mullen said in a written statement.

In his statement, Mullen said it is imperative that the U.S. military invest more in the counterinsurgency mission. Gates' budget recommendations preserve traditional U.S. strengths while investing in this vital mission.

"The secretary presided over a comprehensive and collaborative process to arrive at his decisions," Mullen said. "Every Service chief and combatant commander had a voice, and every one of them used it. I know I speak for all of them when I say we are prepared to execute each and every one of these recommendations."

Garamone writes for American Forces Press Service.

Army IT School Adds EMR Systems to the Syllabus

By Bill Sneathen and Ray Steen, MC4 Public Affairs

They are the Geek Squad® in camouflage, without the Volkswagens and black ties. They are soldiers who comprise the Army's Combat Service Support Automation Management

Office (CSSAMO) and often work in combat support hospitals in the desert and arrive by convoy in armed vehicles.

Their expertise takes them to the frontlines where medical detachments and command and control elements require immediate assistance. The kind of help that won't tolerate users forced to navigate voicemail prompts.

Supporting more than a dozen complex, standard Army management information systems (STAMIS) in the warzone requires more than a Microsoft® certification and completion of classes advertised during daytime television. It mandates an understanding of how the military works, keeping pace with the ever-changing information security landscape and a knack for getting military computer users where they need to go on the network.

Tasked with training-up the Army's IT department, the Army Logistics Management College (ALMC) has thrown another complex system into their mix of instruction—Medical Communications for Combat Casualty Care (MC4).

As the DoD's battlefield medical recording system, MC4 canvas all combat support hospitals, clinics and battalion aid stations throughout Southwest Asia, Europe, and South Korea in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. MC4 became part of the ALMC curricula in 2007, when the institution overhauled its entire CSSAMO training with a new learning philosophy and a renewed focus on critical information systems abroad.

"Our goal is not to teach the class to be functional experts on the systems," said Martha Spurlock, CSSAMO training director at ALMC. "Initially, we spent a lot of time during the MC4 segment teaching the students how to enter patient demographics and treatment information. While those items are important for clinical personnel to perform, it is not relevant to CSSAMO staff. They need to know what to do if applications do not work properly or if the hardware is malfunctioning. So we've tweaked the class so they can best fulfill their responsibilities."

Then and Now

In 2003, ALMC held its last training class for CSSAMO personnel. The curriculum primarily focused on supply systems. By then, the course contents and materials were outdated, and leadership decided to cease the class altogether rather than overhaul it.

As a result, Spurlock picked up the torch to fill a void in Army training and developed a revamped opportunity for the CSSAMO community. She talked with STAMIS personnel

and systems administrators to help determine new course content. Spurlock also committed to making the learning hands-on.

"We've tailored the class so that it is interactive from the moment the students step into the room," Spurlock said. "This way, they have the knowledge and experience to support multiple systems when they go downrange. We offer a learning opportunity that really didn't exist before we started the class in late 2007."

Using feedback from students, Spurlock reshaped the material for the course to teach what mattered most to students. Topics that were less critical or required less attention fell to the back of the line and hot topic areas assumed center stage, like the Standard Army Maintenance System-Enhanced (SAM-E), the Unit Level Logistics System (ULLS), and now—MC4.

Partnering with the MC4 Product Management Office, one day in ALMC's 18-day classroom boot camp at Fort Lee, Va., is dedicated to MC4. The course prepares Army IT professionals with the skills they'll need in the combat zone to help the nation's best doctors and nurses capture critical medical information without skipping a beat. Sustaining the systems ultimately leads to improved continuity of care and a complete medical history—useful when soldiers apply for VA medical benefits.

"If an MC4 laptop does not function properly, users will call these guys to make it work again," Spurlock said. "The CSSAMO staff needs to know how to troubleshoot and repair the problems."

Paying Dividends, Creating Momentum

Maj. Iva Kimbrough, CSSAMO with the 316th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), deployed to Balad, Iraq, from June 2007 to June 2008. Prior to her arrival in theater, she did not have experience supporting STAMIS systems. She wishes she had attended the new class prior to her deployment.

"The information taught in this class is the exact assignment CSSAMO personnel have when deployed to theater," Kimbrough said. "You set up your STAMIS network and support all of the systems we learned during the past three weeks. Coming to this class provides the valuable knowledge and experience CSSAMO personnel need in order to hit the ground running."

Lucky to have had his training in the bag prior to deployment, Hayden Weekes, a support contractor for the Directorate of

Logistics at Fort Dix, N.J., says his CSSAMO class provided him with a roadmap to getting problems solved more efficiently over the past 12 months.

"Previously, I would tinker with the systems to become familiar with the equipment," Weekes said. "I would break fully functional systems and then try to make them work again. Now, I've learned some steps to help narrow my search for the source of system problems."

Spurlock and her team occasionally move the class to other locations. In addition to Fort Lee, ALMC makes the class available at Fort Bragg, N.C., and Fort Lewis, Wash. Regardless of the location, the class continues to draw eager and dedicated students. Most arrive early and stay late to get the most out of their hands-on training and practice time with the equipment. This commitment was best illustrated by students attending a class held at Fort Bragg in the spring.

"We learned that President George W. Bush planned to visit Fort Bragg and the motorcade was going to travel very close to the building where our class met," Spurlock said. "The road in front of our building was to be closed at 6:30 a.m. for security reasons. The class started daily at 8 a.m. The students didn't want to miss any of the class, so they arrived at 4:30 a.m. instead. They decided that arriving very early for class was better than being late and possibly missing some of the material."

An Extended Arm of MC4 Support Born

It is the hope of Spurlock and MC4 that the interest and fortitude CSSAMO personnel display during the new training will translate onto the battlefield. With tens of thousands of MC4 laptops, handhelds, servers and printers dispersed throughout 200 medical treatment facilities in the war zone, much of the success on documenting patient care relies heavily on technical support provided by onsite personnel.

With only 50 MC4 systems administrators in SWA, MC4 users will be relying on a coordinated support infrastructure to ensure systems deliver patient information and medical surveillance capabilities to medical leadership.

In 2008, MC4 initiated a three-tiered support agreement between deployed medical units, CSSAMO and S6 personnel and MC4 SAs in theater to ensure nothing fell between the gaps.

Now, with a new commitment to training Army support personnel on these medical systems prior to deployment, CSSAMO will prove to be an invaluable extension of MC4 support in theater.

"I really believe that we are making a difference with this class," Spurlock said. "This is the class that CSSAMO staff need and it and it is probably the closet training they receive to prepare them for their role downrange. When the CSSAMO personnel arrive, they might not have a lot of experience with all of the STAMIS systems, but when they leave, they are familiar with them and they have the tools to support them."

For more information on the AMLC CSSAMO class, contact Martha Spurlock at martha.spurlock@us.army.mil. For more information on MC4, visit www.mc4.army.mil.

Snethen and Steen work for MC4 Public Affairs.

3rd Infantry Division Adds Battlefield Medical Recording System to Stateside Aid Stations

By Bill Snethen, MC4 Public Affairs

In April 2009, the 3rd Infantry Division (ID) expanded its use of the Army's battlefield electronic medical recording (EMR) system, Medical Communications for Combat Casualty Care (MC4), to two more garrison aid stations at Fort Stewart, Ga. The 1st Battalion, 64th Armor and 26 Brigade Support Battalion joined the Special Troops Battalion Aid Station at Fort Stewart and the 603rd Aviation Support Battalion at Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, Ga., as the first group of 21 garrison aid stations led by the 3rd ID to discontinue the use of paper medical records.

The implementation of the digital medical recording system by the 3rd ID, and the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, N.C., in January, has resulted in the capturing of 3,000 electronic patient encounters in garrison to date. The use of MC4 at battalion aid stations in the U.S. not only provides an EMR capability for clinics with low-to-no connectivity, but supports a new initiative by the Army to "train as you fight" with MC4.

3rd ID Division Surgeon Lt. Col. Edward Michaud ushered in the new business process so that personnel supporting the facilities would gain valuable hands-on experience using the same equipment to electronically document patient care in garrison that is used in theater. The laptops and servers used in the stateside clinics—fielded, trained and sustained by the MC4 program—are the same used by medical personnel and supported by the technical staff of signal officers (S6) and the Combat Service Support Automation Management Office (CSSAMO) throughout Iraq, Afghanistan and 12 other countries worldwide.

"The primary benefit of this endeavor is the training and habituation that improves through continued use," Mi-

chaud said. "Utilizing the EMR system on a daily basis in garrison reduces future training requirements and helps to eliminate any delay servicemembers may experience in receiving medical care. Also, the S6 and CSSAMO are better prepared to efficiently install and support the system, as well as troubleshoot any issues that may arise."

In addition to training, soldiers that visit the clinics on post also benefit from the use of MC4.

"The staff is able to provide enhanced care since they now have the ability to quickly access historical information and view previous illnesses and treatments," Michaud said. "Without an EMR, aid stations primarily screen patients. Today, the 3rd ID has four aid stations with the ability to electronically capture patient encounters, document notes and reorder medications. Use of the MC4 system offers a significant benefit to the soldier and the unit while in garrison that was not previously available."

Augmentation of the MC4 System to AHLTA Proving Useful

Capt. Christina Johnson, physician assistant at the 3rd ID's STB Aid Station, used the MC4 system in 2008 while deployed to Camp Buehring, Kuwait, as a professional officer filler system (PROFIS) member with the 3rd Cavalry, Fort Hood, Texas.

"MC4 was very effective when we conducted sick call in theater," Johnson said. "We supported a post with approximately 20,000 servicemembers, contactors and foreign nationals who worked on site. I saw approximately 30 patients a day and all of the information was collected in the outpatient program. If I had to hand-write the patient information onto paper forms, the process of seeing patients and charting the care would have been very slow."

Now using the MC4 system in garrison, Johnson frequently treats soldiers that report to the STB aid station for sick call. Then she relocates to a different facility, the Lloyd C. Hawks Troop Medical Clinic (TMC), to administer acute care. The combined troop medical clinic is the only facility on Fort Stewart that provides a higher level of care, other than Winn Army Community Hospital. At Hawks TMC, Johnson is able to view patient encounters in AHLTA after having initiated the records using MC4 at her aid station.

"When a patient arrives at the TMC for additional care, I can go into AHLTA and pull up their medical record and see encounters generated from the STB aid station using MC4," Johnson said. "This information allows me to quickly see the

treatments that have been performed and what medications the soldier has been prescribed."

Lessons Learned, Forecasting Technical Hurdles in Theater

Capt. Ricardo Swennes, physician at the 3rd ID STB Aid Station, deployed to Iraq in 2006. He worked in an aid station that did not use MC4. The problem was not a lack of equipment, but confusion regarding who to contact to install the systems.

"When I talked with my medics about setting up MC4, they didn't know who to go to," Swennes said. "We didn't know that the CSSAMO staff had the knowledge to help us install the system. If we had used MC4, we would have had better access to information."

Swennes recalled that connectivity was always an issue at the deployed aid station. It is also an issue for garrison aid stations. Traditionally, the buildings that house the aid stations are not wired into the local computer network. This can be a setback when trying to install an EMR system into the facility.

Connectivity is required in order to transmit patient data to the central data repository, where it comprises a soldier's longitudinal health record and becomes immediately available to other medical personnel, regardless of location.

To mitigate technical issues that may derail the implementation of EMR systems in garrison clinics, Michaud involved the 3rd ID's S6 and CSSAMO personnel from day one.

"The technical staff has worked tirelessly to hammer out technical issues, as well as uncover solutions to the networking challenge," Michaud said. "Meetings are held regularly to foster communication between the different organizations and to keep the process moving forward."

As a result of the collaboration, more garrison aid stations have connectivity to the local networks via a secure wireless channel—Combat Service Support Automated Information Systems Interface (CAISI). As the 3rd ID expands the use of MC4 to other locations, alternatives may be required.

"As we work to bring additional aid stations online with MC4, we have discovered that there is a severe lack of CAISIs and very small aperture terminals to establish network connections," Michaud said. "It is important to know this information early in the process so that we understand the hurdles that lie ahead. Many of the problems we experience in garrison are potential problems in theater. By implementing MC4



More MC4 Stateside Integration to Follow

Michaud is encouraged about the progress that has been made with the use of MC4 in the aid stations, and is looking forward to installing the EMR system into the remaining 3rd ID clinics.

“In light of the successful use of MC4 in the aid stations, I feel comfortable continuing the effort with the other facilities,” Michaud said. “We have learned so much during this process that the other sites can benefit from the trials and errors experienced while integrating the systems in the first few locations. More importantly, the use of EMRs gives us a new capability that enhances the care we can provide to our soldiers.”

Pfc. Don Pickering, Jr., medic with the 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, checks in a patient at the aviation clinic at Hunter Army Airfield, Savannah, Ga.

Photo courtesy of MC4

Michaud acknowledges

in our stateside facilities, we can mitigate similar issues when we go downrange.”

Lt. Col. Larry France, U.S. Army Medical Command, Office of the Surgeon General physician assistant consultant, recently visited the aid stations using MC4, crediting the close collaboration between the 3rd ID and others that has led to the success thus far.

“I used the MC4 system in 2006 when I worked in the palace in Baghdad, Iraq,” France said. “I know the positives and negatives with the system and the 3rd ID is working through a lot of the negatives now. By having every entity involved throughout the process, it will help make the implementation successful. It also helps prepare every level of the organization with their roles in using the system in future deployments.”

that in addition to organizational collaboration, user support has been key.

“If the providers were not happy with the system, then I would be very hesitant to move forward and continue the effort,” Michaud said. “Many are familiar with the system from previous deployments. They see the benefits and understand the importance of its use. We now have the advantage of taking better care of our soldiers in the states and during future deployments. We also benefit from having the medical staff and technical support personnel practice using the system on a daily basis. This is a win-win for everybody.”

For more information about MC4, visit <www.mc4.army.mil>.