

**HEARING TO RECEIVE TESTIMONY ON THE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY IN REVIEW OF  
THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST  
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2011 AND THE FUTURE  
YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM**

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**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2010**

U.S. SENATE,  
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,  
*Washington, DC.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:37 a.m. in room SDG-50, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Carl Levin (chairman) presiding.

Committee members present: Senators Levin, Lieberman, Reed, Akaka, Bill Nelson, Webb, Hagan, Begich, Burris, Inhofe, Sessions, Thune, Wicker, LeMieux, and Collins.

Committee staff members present: Richard D. DeBobes, staff director; and Leah C. Brewer, nominations and hearings clerk.

Majority staff members present: Creighton Greene, professional staff member; Jessica L. Kingston, research assistant; Peter K. Levine, general counsel; Jason W. Maroney, counsel; William G.P. Monahan, counsel; John H. Quirk V, professional staff member; and Russell L. Shaffer, counsel.

Minority staff members present: Joseph W. Bowab, Republican staff director; Michael V. Kostiw, professional staff member; Lucian L. Niemeyer, professional staff member; Christopher J. Paul, professional staff member; and Diana G. Tabler, professional staff member.

Staff assistants present: Paul J. Hubbard, Christine G. Lang, and Brian F. Sebold.

Committee members' assistants present: Christopher Griffin, assistant to Senator Lieberman; Carolyn Chuhta, assistant to Senator Reed; Nick Ikeda, assistant to Senator Akaka; Christopher Caple, assistant to Senator Bill Nelson; Juliet Beyler and Gordon Peterson, assistants to Senator Webb; Julie Holzhueter, assistant to Senator Hagan; David Ramseur, assistant to Senator Begich; Brady King, assistant to Senator Burris; Anthony J. Lazarski, assistant to Senator Inhofe; Sandra Luff, assistant to Senator Sessions; Clyde A. Taylor IV, assistant to Senator Chambliss; Jason Van Beek, assistant to Senator Thune; Erskine Wells III, assistant to Senator Wicker; Brian Walsh, assistant to Senator LeMieux; and Chip Kennett, assistant to Senator Collins.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARL LEVIN, CHAIRMAN**

Chairman LEVIN. Good morning, everybody. We welcome Secretary Mabus, Admiral Roughhead, General Conway to our committee this morning to testify on the plans and programs of the Department of the Navy in our review of the fiscal year 2011 annual budget and overseas contingency operations request. This committee is grateful to each one of you for your service to our Nation and for your valorous and truly—for the valorous and truly professional service of the men and women under your command, and we are also grateful to their families.

Since our last meeting, the Department has completed the 2009 Quadrennial Defense Review, the QDR. We look forward to the witnesses' assessments of the 2009 QDR, what it means for the Department of the Navy today and into the future and how their fiscal year 2011 budget request supports the changes which were directed.

Our witnesses this morning are faced with a number of critical issues that confront the Department of the Navy in the budget, such as balancing modernization needs against the costs of supporting ongoing operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The President's strategic review, concluded in December, called for a surge in additional U.S. Marine Corps forces to Afghanistan, including an increase to 18,500 marines in Afghanistan by March 2010, with that number rising to 19,400 by mid-April.

The recent launch of major operations in southern Afghanistan represents a critical test of the President's counterinsurgency strategy and the campaign plan developed by the International Security Assistance Force commander, General McChrystal, to implement that strategy. U.S. and ISAF forces, with the U.S. Marines playing a central role, are partnering side by side with Afghan forces in support of extending the authority of the Government of Afghanistan to the Central Helmand River Valley, including the former Taliban stronghold of Marjah.

The ratio of Afghan to U.S. troops in Marjah is almost one to two, one Afghan soldier to two coalition troops, a considerable improvement, as I've mentioned before, over the one to five ratio which was the case when a number of us visited the marines in Helmand Province last September. General Petraeus, commander of our Central Command, has called this operation the initial salvo of a 12- to 18-month military campaign. The extraordinary bravery of our soldiers and marines, as well as our allies, reminds us once again how truly heroic our men and women in uniform are.

I've argued for a long time that our principal focus in Afghanistan should be the building of the capacity of the Afghan army and police so they can take the lead in providing for their country's security. In this respect, it is difficult to understand why there has been a persistent shortfall in the number of trainers available to provide the 8-week basic training to Afghan security forces. That is a totally unacceptable situation.

As we discussed in my office, General Conway, you are looking to help out—you and the Marines are looking for ways to help out General Bill Caldwell, the head of the NATO Training Command in Afghanistan, to help him to fill the gap by deploying Marines on shorter rotation to Afghanistan to serve as trainers for the Afghan

army, and we're going to be interested in getting your update on the progress in supplying those Marines as trainers.

We have proceeded with the drawdown of Marine Corps forces in Iraq. Where these forces once averaged roughly 25,000 marines, as of last Friday there were only about 150 marines in Iraq. By spring, the marines will have completed their redeployment.

The Navy has also been contributing directly to the war effort in CENTCOM as well. In addition to normal deployments of ships and aircraft in support of these operations, the Navy currently has deployed almost 12,000 individual augmentees, or IAs, to support these missions on the ground in Afghanistan and Iraq. In total, the Navy provides approximately 15,600 sailors in the form of IAs, including 3,800 personnel in the training pipeline to fulfil mission requirements of the combatant commanders.

So we express the thanks for this committee of just how well and ably the men and women of the Department of the Navy and their families are responding to these challenges. Many of the challenges facing the Department of the Navy center on acquisition programs. We have great concerns about cost problems in the shipbuilding arena, the most notable example being the Littoral Combat Ship, or LCS, program. Since last year the Navy has decided on a winner-take-all acquisition strategy for the contract for the two LCS vessels approved in the fiscal year 2010 budget.

We also look forward to receiving all of the analytical efforts that were required by our National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2010 regarding future surface combatant production and the truncation of the DDG-1000 production line. We understand that the Navy decided to make this change for a number of reasons, including mission requirements and affordability. However, we want to ensure that whatever program we pursue has a sound basis in reasoning behind it before we launch on another vector.

If the Department of the Navy is unable to get control of its acquisition programs and cost growth, there is no way that the Navy's going to be able to afford the fleet of 313 ships that Admiral Roughead says that he needs, and it is obvious that other capabilities would suffer as well. I cannot overstress the importance that the whole Navy Department shoulders its responsibility to correct mistakes in acquisition programs because the future strength of our Navy depends on it.

General Conway, lest you feel left out of the acquisition discussion, you're pursuing the Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle program. In your prepared statement you emphasize the importance of the Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle, or the EFV, to the Marine Corps's amphibious assault mission and of the continuing relevance of that mission and capability to our Nation's defense. The Marine Corps' amphibious assault concept rests on launching an assault from a safe distance from shore, beyond where our ships can be easily observed and attacked. This concept depends on an ability to swim ashore from 20 to 30 miles out to sea with armored vehicles, which is the purpose of the EFV.

The Quadrennial Defense Review heavily emphasized the need to overcome the so-called anti-access capabilities and strategies that might be employed by potential adversaries and approved continuing the EFV program despite previous cost, schedule, and per-

formance issues with the program. So we need to understand how the Marine Corps's amphibious assault mission relates to the anti-access concerns and initiatives discussed in the QDR and what are you doing in the EFV program to correct the previous problems with the program.

The President last year signed the Weapons Systems Acquisition Reform Act. While I'm certain that this legislation is going to help correct past problems, we also know that we will succeed only through concerted efforts within the Executive Branch to implement the spirit of that legislation and improve past behavior within the Department. We in Congress cannot legislate a culture change. So we look forward to hearing how the Department of the Navy is proceeding to implement the provisions of this act.

Another concern surrounds future ship and aircraft force levels. We are facing the prospect that the current Navy program will lead to potentially large gaps between the forces that the Chief of Naval Operations, our CNO, has said that he needs and the forces that will be available to his successors. For instance, the Navy is facing a shortfall of as many as 250 tactical fighters needed to outfit our ten aircraft carrier air wings and three Marine Corps air wings in the middle of this decade. With shortfalls that large, we could be faced with drastically reducing the number of aircraft available on short notice to the combatant commanders, either because we have deployed under strength air wings or because we did not deploy the carrier at all because of these aircraft shortages.

Since the last time we saw a future years defense program, our FYDP, we've actually had a slight net loss of production of new strike fighter aircraft over comparable years in the FYDP, a result that cannot help this situation.

Turning to naval readiness, currently the Navy is operating with a 1-year backlog in aircraft and ship depot maintenance. When asked for your unfunded priorities in the fiscal 2010 budget request, Admiral Roughead, you only had two unfunded items on your list, aircraft and ship depot maintenance in the amount of \$395 million. Both sides of the aisle on this committee, as well as our House counterparts, authorized that critical funding, but, unfortunately, that addition was not supported by the appropriators. As a result, over \$188 million in deferred maintenance was not executed last year.

In the fiscal year 2011 presidential budget request, again we have a very short list from the Navy of unfunded requirements, including aircraft and ship depot maintenance and aircraft spares to meet the Navy's maintenance requirements. While we encourage the Navy's commitment to these vital readiness accounts, we're very interested in hearing from the witnesses today specifically why this funding is critical to the Navy's mission, what were the effects of not receiving last year's maintenance funding, and what are the potential ramifications of not receiving additional fiscal year 2011 funds to support these needs.

Readiness rates need to be restored rather than delayed. Additionally, I believe it is essential that the Navy not rely on overseas contingency operations funding to make up for maintenance shortfalls. Such an approach does not contribute to long-term

sustainment and risks degrading the expected service life of the fleet.

We look forward to hearing your testimony. Again, we are grateful to you and your supporting families for supporting your service and of course the men and women that you command.

Senator McCain is not here. Senator Inhofe is the ranking member this morning.

#### **STATEMENT OF SENATOR JAMES M. INHOFE**

Senator INHOFE. Mr. Chairman, I'm going to go ahead and just submit his statement for an opening statement. But I'd like to make an observation. When we have these Navy posture hearings, I look around and I see a very heavy representation from coastal States, and I'm not sure why. But I'd like to remind my colleagues up here of something that may surprise them a little bit: We in my State of Oklahoma are in fact navigable. We have a navigation way that we put in many years ago.

In fact, when I was in the State senate many years ago a World War Two—the head of the World War Two submarine veterans came to me and he said: You know—he told me the story of the submarine veterans, about how half of them died in World War Two and the other half took care of those, the families of those others. He said: I'd like to do a memorial; I'd like to bring a World War Two submarine all the way up to Oklahoma.

We studied it and it could be done. So we went down to Orange, Texas, and got the USS BATFISH and we took it all the way, all 300 yards of this thing, all the way up the channel. It had to go down under some of the bridges and have flotation and all that. And all my adversaries were saying: We're going to sink Inhofe with his submarine. But we made it, so we have a submarine in my State of Oklahoma.

We also have quite a presence, which surprises people, of Navy and Marines, at TACAMO Operations with E-2Cs at Tinker Air Force Base, a very large presence of Navy there. At Vance we're doing primary training of not just Air Force, but also Navy and Marines. Then down at Fort Sill we do most of the artillery training, General Conway, as you know, for Marines there at Fort Sill in my State of Oklahoma. So we have a great personal interest in this hearing today.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Senator Inhofe follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Inhofe.  
Secretary Mabus.

#### **STATEMENT OF HON. RAYMOND E. MABUS, JR., SECRETARY OF THE NAVY**

Mr. MABUS. Mr. Chairman, Senator Inhofe, and distinguished members of this committee: It's a real pleasure to be here today with you. The CNO, the Commandant and I are grateful for the commitment that the members of this committee have shown to the men and women in uniform in the Navy and Marine Corps. We are exceptionally proud to be here today representing our sailors, marines, civilians, and their families.

The Navy and Marine Corps remain the most formidable expeditionary fighting force in the world, capable of operations across the entire spectrum of warfare. Today 40 percent of our forces are deployed and over half our fleet is at sea. In Helmand Province, Afghanistan, more than 15,000 marines are engaged in major combat, counterinsurgency, and engagement operations, including, as the chairman pointed out, the effort to clear the Taliban from their stronghold in Marjah. They're supported by naval aircraft flying close air support from the *Eisenhower* and our forward-deployed expeditionary aviation assets.

A total of 12,000 sailors are on the ground in Iraq, Afghanistan, and across the broader Middle East and another 9,000 sailors and marines are embarked on our ships at sea. Off the coast of Africa, ships are protecting international commerce off Somalia, and ships are operating as partnership stations with our regional allies. Off the coast of South America, more ships are stemming the flow of illegal drugs into the United States.

Our ballistic missile defense forces are ready to defend against any threat to international peace in Europe, the Middle East, and the Pacific Rim, where our forward-deployed forces continue their role as a strategic buffer and deterrent against rogue states and potential competitors alike. Today in Haiti, 9 ships and 1,900 marines from the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit continue to provide humanitarian aid, medical assistance, and disaster relief.

The Navy and Marine Corps are flexible, responsive, and everywhere our Nation's interests are at stake. Our global presence reduces instability, deters aggression, and allows us to respond rapidly to any crisis.

I believe that the President's fiscal year 2011 budget for the Department of the Navy is a very carefully considered request that gives us the resources we need to conduct effective operations and meet all the missions we have been assigned. Our shipbuilding and aviation requests concur with the findings of the QDR and its objectives of prevailing in today's wars, preventing conflict, preparing for future wars, and preserving the force.

With this budget, the Navy and Marine Corps will continue to maintain the maritime superiority of our forces, sustain a strong American shipbuilding base, and ensure our capacity for rapid global response.

Across the future years defense plan, we have requested the funds to build an average of 10 ships a year, including 1 carrier, 1 big-deck amphibious ship, 10 *Virginia*-class submarines, and 17 Littoral Combat Ships. We'll leverage the technologies captured from the canceled Future Cruiser Program and truncated DDG-1000 program into what will become our Flight 3 *Burke*-class guided missile destroyers. These technologies include the SPY-3 and air and missile defense radar.

Through the submitted shipbuilding plan, we will increase the size of our fleet to approximately 320 ships by 2024. In our shipbuilding program, I believe we have made the most cost effective decisions to achieve the most capable force, one that achieves equal flexibility to confront missions across the spectrum of conflict from the technically complex, like ballistic missile defense and inte-

grated air defense, to low intensity, humanitarian response, and regional engagement.

In aircraft procurement, we have requested just over 1,000 al Qaeda across the FYDP, including both fixed and rotary wing. Over the next year, the Navy and the Marine Corps will continue to move ahead with changes to our acquisitions process. In compliance with the Weapons Systems Acquisition Reform Act, we are aggressively developing our acquisition strategies to ensure that on-time and on-budget becomes the standard for the Navy and Marine Corps.

I'm grateful for the support of this committee for the decision to recompet the OCS program when it failed to meet program standards, and I can assure you that we will not hesitate to recompet or cancel other programs whenever substandard performance demands such a change.

Change is also required to address the way in which the Navy and Marine Corps use and produce energy. Energy reform is an issue of national security and it's essential to maintaining our strategic advantage, warfighting readiness, and tactical edge. By 2020, I've committed the Navy to generate half of all the energy we use from alternative sources.

40 years ago, I stood watch on the deck of the USS *Little Rock* as a young junior officer. Today I have the great and solemn privilege of standing watch on behalf of our Navy and Marine Corps in a time of war and national challenge. I'm honored by the trust that the President and Congress have placed in me and fully recognize the solemn obligation I have to those who defend us.

I along with the CNO and the Commandant look forward to hearing your thoughts, answering your questions about our budget request, our specific programs, and our policies. I also look forward to working closely with you as we move forward to sustain the Navy and Marine Corps as the most formidable expeditionary fighting force in the world.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Mabus follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Admiral ROUGHEAD.

#### **STATEMENT OF ADMIRAL GARY ROUGHEAD, CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS**

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Thank you, sir. Chairman Levin, Senator Inhofe, members of the committee: It is my honor to appear before you again representing more than 600,000 sailors and Navy civilians. 65,000 of them are deployed, 12,000 on land in the Central Command area of operations, and 56 percent of our fleet is under way carrying out our maritime strategy, a prescient precursor to the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review.

They are projecting power into Afghanistan, building partnerships in Africa, delivering relief in Haiti, silently patrolling under the sea in every ocean, and providing ballistic missile defense in the Arabian Gulf, the Western Pacific, and the Eastern Mediterranean with pride and determination.

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral, if you could withhold.

If somebody could try to check out that echo for us. I don't think it's anything you're doing. It sounds like it's in the equipment somehow.

Sorry for the interruption.

Admiral ROUGHEAD. They are even deployed on the first Littoral Combat Ship, 2 years ahead of schedule, and I think it's noteworthy that in the first week of that ship's deployment it seized over a quarter of a ton of cocaine.

It is our sailors and Navy civilians who make all things possible, and thanks to your support we made important progress in building tomorrow's Navy, remaining ready to fight today, and supporting our sailors, Navy civilians, and families last year. This year's budget submission will take us even further.

As the high demand for our Navy continues apace, we have stabilized end strength and the tone of the force remains positive. We will continue to aggressively improve wellness programs and medical and social services for our wounded warriors, indeed for all who serve. For our fleet as a continuously deployed force, we must continue to reset in stride. Conducting regular maintenance and training so that our ships and aircraft reach their expected service lives is extremely important.

This year's budget aligns our baseline budget for operations and maintenance accordingly and reflects a significant shift away from supplemental funding. I strongly request your support for this important change.

While we reset, we must also procure ships and aircraft to reach our requirement of more than 313 ships. Last year we commissioned nine ships and over the next decade our plan procures an average of ten ships per year, significant growth for the near term.

For aviation, we remain committed to bringing new capabilities on line, the Joint Strike Fighter and unmanned aircraft, and to maintaining the readiness of our current naval air force, all of which give our Nation flexibility in response unencumbered by overseas basing.

Affordability for all our plans will remain fundamental to our decisions. The effectiveness of our unmanned systems, ships, and aircraft is a feature of the systems which connect them. Last year I brought information capabilities and resources under a single Information Dominance Directorate within the Navy staff and commissioned Fleet Cyber Command Tenth Fleet. I see benefits of that already.

I am proud of our Navy's accomplishments last year and I am confident we can achieve more with this year's budget submission. Our risk continues to trend towards significant and achieving the right balance within and across my priorities remains critical to mitigating it. But I remain optimistic because of our outstanding sailors and Navy civilians and the spirit of our Nation. We have seen more challenging times and emerged prosperous, secure, and free.

I ask you to support our 2011 budget request and thank you for all you do to make the United States Navy a global force for good today and into the future. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Roughead follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, Admiral Roughead.

General Conway.

**STATEMENT OF GEN. JAMES T. CONWAY, COMMANDANT OF  
THE MARINE CORPS**

General CONWAY. Mr. Chairman, Senator Inhofe, and distinguished members of the committee: Thank you for the opportunity to report to you on the posture of your Marine Corps. My pledge, as it has been over the years, is to provide you with a candid and honest assessment.

Having recently returned from a trip to theater, I'm pleased to report to you on the magnificent performance of your Marines and sailors in combat. If you count a 4-year enlistment as a generation of Marines, we are now experiencing our third generation of great young patriots since our Nation was provoked on September 11. The first generation broke trail, leading strikes into Afghanistan and Iraq. The second generation quelled a once-violent province of Anbar. Today there are less than 150 marines in Iraq. But our third generation has more than 15,000 serving in Afghanistan.

Your marines are fighting a skilled and determined enemy, but, with the Afghan Security Forces, they are once again proving they are the strongest tribe in the Taliban stronghold of Helmand. Let me assure you from what the Sergeant Major and I witnessed firsthand, the highest morale in the Corps resides in those units that are posted to Afghanistan.

My written statement to the committee provides a snapshot of the Corps and describes our near-term focus, long-term priorities, and our vision of the future. That vision matches closely the results of the Quadrennial Defense Review. The Secretary of Defense seeks to create a U.S. military more closely focused on hybrid threats, yet capable of responding to a major-level contingency. That combination essentially describes the Marine Corps that we have built today, a Corps that we call a two-fisted fighter, able to perform equally well in a counterinsurgency or in a high-intensity combined arms fight.

Our resource expenditures, moreover, reflect our dual, or swing, capacity. That is to say that 100 percent of Marine Corps equipment can be used in a hybrid conflict or in a major fight. Equipment procurement is indeed our primary concern as we look at the fiscal year 2011 budget and beyond. Our requirements for equipment density in Afghanistan and our resolve to reestablish our maritime prepositioned squadrons have driven equipment stocks to an all-time low in our operating forces at home station. The ability to perform and train for deployment and certainly the ability to respond to an unexpected contingency is at significant risk based on this increasing shortfall.

Congress has promised us resources for reset and reconstitution, but increasingly we cannot wait for the guns to fall silent in Afghanistan for such an effort to begin. We ask for your help in this critical area.

Our military construction accounts in the fiscal year 2011 budget and the FYDP are sufficient to help maintain the promise we made to our marines that they'll have quality living spaces while they're home between deployments. One need only visit some of our major

bases and stations to realize that we waited too long to begin the effort.

Similarly, we believe that even in wartime we must continue a heavy emphasis on education of our officers and senior staff NCOs. A strong reservoir of strategic and operational thinkers is a must on a sophisticated joint and combined battlefield. Therefore, a quality Marine Corps University with facilities to match our already world class student body, faculty, and curriculum is a major priority. We trust we will receive your fully support on our MILCON investments that will pay huge investments in the years to come.

Ladies and gentlemen of the committee, I must admit my own surprise that our Corps of Marines and their families have remained so resilient over these 9 years of conflict. They have been incredibly determined, loyal, and courageous in an effort to see these two wars to a successful close. Much of the credit goes to you in the Congress for providing them with the finest in terms of equipment, warrior care, quality of life for families, and compensation.

The number one question in the minds of our troops is always: Is the country behind us? The members of Congress have answered that question in spades, both by your apportionment of the Nation's precious resources and also through personal efforts to visit both the troops in theater and our wounded at Bethesda and Walter Reed.

As a result of the above and the natural tendency of Marines to stick around for a fight, our recruitment and retention are at all-time highs. I predict that for the second year in a row we will close out reenlistment opportunities for first-term and career force halfway through the fiscal year. Clearly, such a phenomenon would not be possible if Marines and their families were not happy in the service of their country.

One day this long war with terrorists and Islamic extremists will be over. Your Marine Corps will cease being a second land army and will gladly rejoin our Navy brothers aboard amphibious ships in order to project American global presence, demonstrate American good will, and if need be protect America's vital interests. Until that day comes, however, your Corps will continue, as we say, to do windows. That is, we'll continue to take aboard the indomitable youth of America and make them Marines, with the absolute conviction that as a result they will one day be better citizens. We will be trained and as equally prepared to route Taliban fighters in Marjah as we are to feed beleaguered Haitians outside Port au Prince.

With your continued support and that of our loyal countrymen, we will do whatever the Nation asks us to do and do it exceedingly well.

Thank you, and I look forward to your questions, sir.

[The prepared statement of General Conway follows:]

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you so much, General. We can't thank you and your Marines enough for what they are doing in Afghanistan and other places around the world. It was an eloquent statement. We're appreciative.

I want to talk to you, not just about our Marines, but also about the Afghan forces that they're fighting with, how well that's work-

ing out. We heard from ISAF the other day that there are five brigades of Afghan Security Forces that are part of Operation Moshtarak, and we want to know from you if you can tell us, based on what you understand, just what your assessment is as to whether or not the Afghan army particularly is in the fight.

We heard from Marine General Nicholson that the Afghan forces are not cosmetic, but what is your assessment?

General CONWAY. Sir, first of all, it's in their blood to fight. They have a warrior culture and so that gives you good raw material to draw from. There are issues with regard to educated young men in Afghanistan to lead. But our experience is, at least at this point, at the lower levels when you join an Afghan infantry unit you've got fighters at your flank.

That has been our experience now in the early days of the assault onto Marjah. Not as many as we would like, but more than perhaps we saw when Marine forces were first introduced, before the President's decision on the 30,000.

I am concerned, as you noted in your opening statement, sir, about the number of trainers and the ability to raise the Afghan forces that will be needed to one day turn the country over to them and walk away. But I'm also optimistic that as we help to bridge that effort and as the Army trainers and perhaps NATO trainers become more available to us that that will be something that we will be able to accomplish.

Chairman LEVIN. I forgot to announce, we'll have an 8-minute first round.

Are the Afghan forces and the Marines jointly coordinating planning and conducting the operations?

General CONWAY. We are, sir. There's an Afghan brigadier general who's quite a charismatic character, who has brought his officers into the planning sessions, and we've been very I think satisfied with their tactical acumen and their ability to lead their forces.

Actually, we have taken partnering to a new level, to the degree that we have actually integrated Afghan units into our company and platoon formations. As the Sergeant Major and I arrived at Dwyer, we witnessed some of the sort of rehearsal activity that was taking place with both Afghan and U.S. units for the helicopter-borne assaults that kicked off the first day of Marjah, and they were knitted closely together.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

Mr. Secretary and Admiral, I want to hear a little bit more detail about the readiness and maintenance concerns. We added some funding last year. It was not appropriated, and so I want to ask you about the impact of not receiving last year's unfunded maintenance requirements. What would be the effects—let me start with you, Secretary, but please, Admiral, add your words here. What would be the effects on naval readiness if you do not receive support for the unfunded aircraft and ship depot maintenance requirements that you've identified in the fiscal year 2011 budget?

Mr. MABUS. As the CNO pointed out in his opening statement, the Navy resets in stride. Our O&M budget is essentially our reset budget and it allows the Navy to make sure that our ships reach the end of their operational life, that they are ready for any eventuality that comes along.

We have requested a fairly substantial increase in operational maintenance funds for this year and we think that they are crucial to keeping Navy readiness at the place it should be. If we receive the funds that we have requested, we will have 99 percent of our depot maintenance for ships, 100 percent for deployed aircraft, and 96 percent for non-deployed aircraft.

The unfunded requirements that you talk about, we would be unable to do nine ship depot availabilities totaling about \$35 million. For the aircraft, we'd be unable to do about 21 aircraft and 240 engines, the overhaul and upgrade. So that would be the result of not receiving that

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir. To follow on with the Secretary, it is ensuring the current readiness of today, that the systems are up, that the necessary repairs have been done, so that we can stay in the deployment cycles that are part of what we do as a Navy. It's also about getting those ships to the end of their service lives so that we can realize the force structure that we need. If we're not doing the maintenance on them today, they're not going to live as long as they normally would.

But it's also—it also gets to the ability to train in the way that we've planned to train. If the ships aren't ready to go, we can't get out and do the training. Similarly with the aircraft. So that it begins to have an effect on the competencies of our people. So it all adds together, and that's why we made the move to increase the percentage as we did this year.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

We're going to be facing the issue of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law and what actions, if any, should be taken in this year's authorization bill or otherwise. Secretary Gates testified earlier this month along with Admiral Mullen. Secretary Gates said that he'd appointed a high-level working group to review the issues associated with properly implementing a repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law and policy, and Admiral Mullen testified that he's in complete support of Secretary Gates's position, both professionally as our top military officer, but also personally.

Secretary Mabus, let me first ask you and then I'll ask your colleagues: What is your—what are your views on "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"? Should we repeal it and, if so, what process should we follow in any event?

Mr. MABUS. Since "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" is the law, whatever happens resides in Congress. I support the repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." I do think the President has come up with a very practical and workable way to do that, to work through the working group that the Secretary of Defense has set up to make sure that we implement any change in the law that Congress makes in a very professional and very smooth manner and without any negative impacts on the force.

Chairman LEVIN. Has that working group been appointed?

Mr. MABUS. Yes, sir. It's headed by Jay Johnson, the General Counsel for the Department of Defense, and General Ham, the head of U.S. Army Europe.

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral Roughead?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir. The “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” is the law and that will be a matter for Congress to change or not change, and clearly we will abide by all of—by that law.

I think the path that has been laid out is extremely important to be able to perform the assessment that the Secretary has called for, because there are comparisons made to other navies, there are comparisons made to other forces, there is a lot of anecdotal information, none of which really addresses the current force that we serve in today. I believe it is important to assess that force, the opinions of that force, and also the families, because we as a Navy, as a military, have made our families part of who we are in ways that other services have not, other countries have not. The assessment is extremely important and we are fully supportive of that, and we have our very best people assigned to that group that is being led by General Ham and Jay Johnson.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you.

General Conway?

General CONWAY. Sir, my professional perspective, first of all, is that our Commander in Chief has spoken and the Secretary of Defense has a way to examine, I think based on data and gathering of perspectives from the force, just how we should proceed. My personal opinion is that, unless we can strip away the emotion, the agendas, and the politics and ask, at least in my case, do we somehow enhance the war-fighting capabilities of the United States Marine Corps by allowing homosexuals to openly serve, then we haven’t addressed it from the correct perspective. At this point, I think that the current policy works. At this point, notwithstanding the results that the study will bring forward, my best military advice to this committee, to the Secretary, to the President, would be to keep the law such as it is.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much.

Senator Inhofe.

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate that answer very much.

You know, just for a minute here, in your opening statement—and this goes both for the Navy and the Marines—right now you have some 30,000 marines deployed, less than 20,000 in the theater of Iraq and Afghanistan. At a time when the Navy and the Marines are being called on to project presence in more parts of the world than ever before, I see an unacceptable growth in the risk of the force.

When you take into consideration what’s happening right now—and I could read the whole list of the strike fighter shortfall that’s going to reach a peak of 263 aircraft by 2017. We’re looking at a lot of the resources dropping down. Would you want to talk about a risk assessment? I would say both to Admiral Roughead and General Conway: What would the risk assessment be right now in light of the OPTEMPO and the lack of resources that are out there?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. With regard to our risk, as I said in our opening statement, Senator, we are trending towards significant. It’s not that the total force is at risk, but that we have some pockets where it would be a challenge for us to swing those capabilities.

For example, our Seabees are heavily engaged, our EOD is heavily engaged, our SEALs are heavily engaged.

We have taken our maritime patrol aircraft that normally are optimized for anti-submarine warfare, but because of the systems that we have on them they are extremely effective in the over-land fight and the intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance mission, and so we essentially have that fleet committed to the fight, appropriately so.

So there is risk should there become a maritime campaign of being able to swing those types of assets. But the fleet response plan that we have in place makes us as flexible, more flexible than we ever have been. But there are some pockets where we do have some risk.

Senator INHOFE. The reason I bring this up, General Conway—I've talked to you about this before. One of the problems I have in these posture hearings when they come to Washington, you hear a lot rosier of a scenario than you do when you go out in the field and you talk to people in the field. I guess a lot of that's because when we—and I'm talking about everyone up here—when we go out to Iraq or Afghanistan, Djibouti or any of the other areas, you hear more about the problems than how good things are.

So I always appreciate it if you can be as open as possible. That's why I think using the term, what would the risk assessment be, high, low, and so forth, that's a good thing, a way to approach it during these hearings, I think. Any thoughts on that, General Conway, as far as your feelings?

General CONWAY. Sir, as I tried to provide in my opening statement, we do have serious concerns actually. Our priority, the Secretary of the Navy's priority, is that Marines at the front of the spear increasingly in Afghanistan will have everything they need in order to be able to win that fight. But in the process, we're taking away from our capabilities elsewhere.

At this point, we're at about a 60 percent readiness factor with regard to equipment in our home station forces. Should there be a requirement for Marines to flow elsewhere, we could be in some serious straits. We would hold what we've got in Afghanistan, perhaps call on our Reserves, use our MPS equipment, and all those things. So we could get the job done, but it would not be nearly as elegant, perhaps—

Senator INHOFE. Yes. Aren't you using a lot of your resources, though, over there that otherwise you'd use in training?

General CONWAY. Absolutely, sir. 100 percent of what is required in theater, 60 percent of what's available in home station. That's an imbalance I'm uncomfortable with.

Senator INHOFE. I think that's significant. You know, the Marines are famous for not complaining about anything. They're the only service that has retreads. Is that still true now?

General CONWAY. [Nods affirmatively.]

Senator INHOFE. And you're not complaining, right?

Let me just ask on another line. I've been active in Africa for many years in things not even related to defense. But when we made a decision to go and become active in Africa right after 9-11, I think that was the right thing to do. We're working on brigades there to help train or have the Africans train the Africans

and we're assisting, so that as the squeeze takes place in terrorism and some of this terrorist activity goes down through the Horn of Africa and Djibouti that they'll be ready to do a lot of things.

I noticed—and I was also one that was very active in pursuing the idea of taking the continent of Africa, that was in three commands, and putting it in one command, AFRICOM. I think that was good. I only wish that we were actually down in Ethiopia or someplace instead of up in Germany for the headquarters, but that's a political problem in Africa and I understand that.

Would you, the two of you, kind of—start with you, Admiral. Because of the piracy and all these problems that are going on, not just in the area in East Africa, but what's happening in the Gulf of Guinea and around there, what your activity is and what contribution you're making to some of those coastal African nations?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir. Thank you, and Africa has been an area of focus for us. We are the only service that has a four-star component commander that addresses Africa.

Senator INHOFE. Yes. I was over there and I visited with them just recently.

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir, and I think that has paid great dividends.

Clearly, we're working with several other navies on the counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden and off the coast of Somalia, and that has had some additional benefits of bringing many people together that otherwise normally wouldn't be—Russia, China, us, EU, NATO. But we've also very aggressively taken on this idea of Africa partnership stations. Initially we began in the Gulf of Guinea and on the west coast of Africa, but we now are operating an Africa partnership station on the east coast of Africa.

Most recently, the GUNSTON HALL, the ship that was on its way over to be the West Africa partnership station, we sent to Haiti. The staff was already embarked, African officers who participated directly, actively and effectively in that Haiti relief operation. So that actually enhances how they're able to come along.

We've also reached out to South Africa. I'm the first Chief of Naval Operations to have visited there. We have had an aircraft carrier visit there for the first time and also one of our nuclear submarines was welcomed there.

So we're looking at the west coast. We're working with the navies there, maritime strategic, humanitarian assistance, but also just bringing the navies of Africa together in a constructive and a very focused way so that we can get to some of the issues that are going to be important for their development.

Senator INHOFE. Yes, because I know that on the west side around the Sea of Guinea some of the finds and the oil activity and all of that, that's increased your activity and I know it's draining a lot of resources.

General Conway, I visited your Marines in Djibouti and other areas down there. What's your activity down there?

General CONWAY. Sir, we think that Africa is going to be tremendously important to our country in the long term, and so at this point I think it's fair to say we're doing what we can. My agreement with General Ward, the commander of AFRICOM, is that we substantially are going to take a rain check at this point. We will

work with our brothers in the Navy and we'll go inside the continent where we need to try to accomplish some of his smaller-scaled engagement opportunities.

I would at this point like to tout our Reserves, because they are carrying the preponderance of that load. They are stepping up and volunteering, coming on duty to do some of these things at a time when our active forces are simply engaged in the transition to go back now to Afghanistan.

So I would say at this point, sir, we appreciate the importance. We want to be players in the long term and we're doing what we can.

Senator INHOFE. Well, I appreciate that. It's kind of the forgotten continent. People talk about other areas and they don't talk about Africa as much. But you guys are doing a great job there.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

Senator Lieberman.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, Admiral, General, thank you very much for your extraordinary service to our country.

I don't have any questions about "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," but I do really want to respond to the answers that you gave Senator Levin, which I appreciate and thought were—I think were thoughtful and honest. I want to make two comments about them. The first: General Conway, I agree with you that ultimately the question of what we do about "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" has to be held to the standard of military readiness. I think repealing—I'm supportive of repealing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." I believe it's the fair and right thing to do. But in the end, because we are fulfilling our constitutional responsibility to provide for the common defense, as you are and those who serve with you are, this has to pass the test of military readiness.

I believe it will, based on my knowledge of what's happened in other militaries, including those like the Brits and the Canadians that we serve alongside today in Afghanistan and Iraq. I visited Afghanistan in January. There is a British general, General Carter, who our forces serve under the direction of, and it seems to work very well.

But I want to say that I agree with that and I think it's important that all of us go forward in that way. This has to pass the test of military readiness. In fact, I hope that we will conclude repealing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" will enhance military readiness, but that's yet to be determined as the study goes on.

The second thing that gives me confidence about this, and it's a factor that's hard to weigh prospectively, but we can acknowledge it retrospectively, which is exactly the sense of duty and honor that characterized your answers. This is the law. If the law changes, the military will follow it. If the Commander in Chief takes a position, the military will make it work.

That's been the history of the military, taking us through some transitions within the military that seemed very hard when they were first mentioned. That too, which I wanted to express my appreciation for, is what gives me confidence that on the day this happens and the repeal occurs that there's an intangible factor

here that will make it work, which is that the leadership will say that, these are our orders now from the Congress, from the Commander in Chief, and now we've got to make it work and make it work for the benefit of our military, our country, and every individual who serves in our military.

So I thank you for what you said. I look forward to working with you on that.

I want to go back now to the Navy, Mr. Secretary and Admiral, and to say that I'm glad to see that this year's budget and the 30-year shipbuilding plan includes an SSBN-X, the new generation of strategic deterrence submarine. This is the program that will provide a replacement for the *Ohio*-class submarines that have so ably defended our Nation since 1981.

Admiral, I note that the 30-year shipbuilding plan states that the requirement for SSBNs will be reassessed in the nuclear posture review. I understand that the requirements-building process for our strategic deterrence submarines is classified, but I think it is also important, to the extent that we can in an open setting, that we explain to the public that they're not made of whole cloth. In that sense, I want to ask you the specific question: Could you describe, to the degree you can in public session, the significance of having a fully operational SSBN force and what risks could result from a reduction in that force?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Thank you very much, Senator. For fear of being a little parochial on that line, there's no question that as we look at our strategic triad, all important to be sure, but that the true stealth of our SSBN force in my opinion makes it the most survivable leg of the triad. It is also a leg that we can move, that we can protect through its stealth and through its movement in ways that the other legs don't enjoy.

The SSBN-X that we are in the process of designing, its last patrol will be in 2080.

Senator LIEBERMAN. 2080.

Admiral ROUGHEAD. 2080. So the importance of getting the design done properly and thoroughly and thoughtfully is absolutely key to ensuring that that very survivable leg of the triad remains almost to the end of the century. Extremely important and it would—if that capability were not to exist, it would not be in the best security interest of the Nation.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Is it fair to say, Admiral, that assuming we make progress in some of the nuclear reduction negotiations we're in with the Russians and perhaps more broadly and the number of our nuclear warheads goes down, that the importance of the strategic nuclear fleet goes up because of its survivability?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. I do believe that the importance does increase. I also think it is important to understand that the numbers that we need are not solely a number—the numbers of submarines that we need are not strictly based on the number of warheads, but rather where you want the submarines to be to provide that continuous coverage, and that also is a driver of the number. It's where you put them and the rotation that they're on. So those two things come into play and it's not simply about the number of weapons.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Well said.

Secretary, do you want to add anything to that?

Mr. MABUS. Just that in order for us to field the SSBN-X on schedule to replace the OHIO-class that now is when we have to do the design work, the engineering work, and we have to begin building the first of those boats in 2019. We tried this year in the 30-year shipbuilding plan to be very realistic in terms of costs of each ship and in terms of historically what Congress has appropriated for our total shipbuilding budget and putting the SSBN-X in our core budget was part of that realism.

Senator LIEBERMAN. Thank you for that answer.

Admiral Roughead, I want to go back—we have a perennial favorite here that seems to blossom for our committee every year and that's the question about the alternate engine for the Joint Strike Fighter. When you were asked about an earmark to develop an alternate engine for the Joint Strike Fighter last July, you said that space on an aircraft carrier is “at a premium.”

I note that in your prepared statement which you gave to the committee for this hearing you say that continued development of an alternate engine would “increase our risk in the underlying Joint Strike Fighter program.”

Could you draw out those two statements and tell us what your feeling is today as we go forward with this battle again?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir. My position on the alternate engine is based on the operational needs that we have in the Navy and the constraints that we face, not just on our aircraft carriers, but Joint Strike Fighter will also be in our large-deck amphibious ships and they are even more challenged space-wise than our carriers are.

One can look at a carrier and see a very large ship, but when that ship is deployed we have things packed in almost every nook and cranny in order to provide that reliability and responsiveness. So having to stock two different types of engines is just not practical for us.

The costs associated with the alternate engine in my opinion would simply continue to pressurize a program that is already being pressurized for a variety of reasons. So from the perspective of the Navy and the support that I render to the Marine Corps and their Joint Strike Fighter, the best course of action for us and my recommendation has been and will continue to be one engine, because that's what serves us the best.

Senator LIEBERMAN. I appreciate it. Thank you.

My time is up. I just want to say finally, General, that when I went to Afghanistan in January and had the time to spend some time with General Larry Nicholson and the Marines—and I just want to validate what you said. The morale is very high. The interactions with the Afghan forces are exemplary. It's really inspiring to see, and I thank them and thank you.

General CONWAY. Thank you, sir. I'll pass your comments along.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Lieberman.

Senator SESSIONS.

Senator SESSIONS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I thank each of you for your service.

I'm disappointed to have to raise the subject I'm going to raise with you, Mr. Secretary, but I just feel no alternative to it. Some might say you're worrying about a parochial interest, but the Lit-

toral Combat Ship is a part of our Navy's future, as Admiral Roughead and his predecessors have all committed to. 55 of those ships are expected to be built and we're getting close to having a bid on it.

You would agree, I assume, that when you draft a request for proposal it should be fair, give each party a fair opportunity to succeed, and properly set standards that serve the interest of the Navy and the warfighter. I guess you do. So I would take that as a yes.

And I'm concerned about it. In October 2009 you wrote—you made a speech at a Naval Energy Forum in which you said that: "We've got to change the way we award contracts. The lifetime energy costs of a building or a system and the fully-burdened costs of fuel in powering those will be a mandatory evaluation factor when awarding contracts." That makes sense to me.

Then later, at the Press Club in September 2009 you say: "We no longer have the luxury to say this is a good deal today, let's buy it. We have to get our arms around the life cycle."

In your testimony today you talk about having half the Navy's fuel from alternative sources by 2020. I will just say, that's a costly decision. I don't know that that's necessary as a policy decision for the Navy. It's just going to deny other money for other areas. But I would note that you're correct to focus on energy costs, and one way to save energy is not use so much, to use less.

So you said in your remarks today: "I have also committed the Navy and Marine Corps to consider energy as a mandatory evaluation factor in contracting and to consider as an additional factor in our business dealings the energy footprint of the companies that sells to the Navy and Marine Corps."

As you and I have discussed, I have to ask you publicly: How is it that in this combat ship, this new transformational littoral ship, that we have a factor capping the life cycle costs, apparently all life cycle costs, not just fuel use, at 3 percent? And isn't that too, too small? Could it be a mistake and will you reevaluate it?

Mr. MABUS. Thank you, Senator. As we discussed, the whole idea behind the Littoral Combat Ship was a total ownership cost for the lifetime of the ship—the crew size, the type of weapons, the maintenance costs that would be involved. All these things for both variants are an important determinant for deciding to build the LCS in the first place.

And we believe that the way the RFP is written is an absolutely level playing field, absolutely fair way to pick the down-select. The only reason we—

Senator SESSIONS. Are you sure—does it meet your standard that you announced last October that the lifetime energy cost will be a mandatory factor? You have to fully and fairly evaluate the lifetime energy costs, do you not?

Mr. MABUS. Sir, we believe that the way the RFP is written, that the lifetime energy cost will be fully and fairly—

Senator SESSIONS. All right. What if it becomes clear that the 3 percent factor for total lifetime cost that you've apparently capped in this RFP is not fair evaluation of the lifetime energy cost? Would you be willing to reevaluate it?

Mr. MABUS. Well, I believe that, based on everything we know today, that the way the RFP is written and the only reason we down-selected or made the decision to down-select the one variant was because the bids came in at an unsustainable level for each variant prior, that we are considering everything that involves total ownership costs for each of those variants.

Senator SESSIONS. Well, I know the cost was high, and I think you've gotten the bidders', all the bidders' attention. If they can't submit a competitive bid, then they don't need to be selected. But when you set up the criteria for the bid, don't you think it should adequately reflect the lifetime fuel consumption costs of the vessels involved?

Mr. MABUS. Senator, I believe—

Senator SESSIONS. Yes or no?

Mr. MABUS. I believe that the RFP that we did does do that, yes.

Senator SESSIONS. And so the answer is yes. Now, I have to say that—would you not agree that cost should not be the only factor, that value for the warfighter, capability, should be also adequately considered in the bid process?

Mr. MABUS. Our major concern is for capability and value to the warfighter. However, we have determined through the first two ships of each of these variants that either will give us the capability that we need and will give us high value for the warfighter.

Senator SESSIONS. Well, that worries me, because you say these are the only things we care about. For example, the ship that would be built in Alabama can accommodate two helicopters, they can land without a tether. The other ship can only account for one and that has to be tethered to bring the helicopter down. It has substantially more cargo space. It uses less fuel. It cruises, I think we'll establish, with greater stability.

So if the prices came in exactly the same and one ship had greater potential or even if one was slightly more expensive than the other one, should you not be sure to give some credit for that, rather than just say both meet minimum requirements?

Mr. MABUS. I think both meet far more than minimum requirements. They meet all our requirements, each one of the variants do.

Senator SESSIONS. Well, are you saying that you should or should not give credit for what might be a substantial additional capability?

Mr. MABUS. I think that both variants have shown that they meet not only minimum requirements, but all the requirements that the Navy has established for these ships. Both are excellent competitors. And, as you pointed out, we have not received any bids yet.

Senator SESSIONS. Well, you can have two good automobiles, but if you want to carry some cargo and one's got a larger luggage compartment and it costs \$50 more and it has other capabilities that you need like cruise control or some things, I think you should give credit for that.

But regardless of that, I want to ask you again: Are you saying that even if there is shown to be an RFP that fails to meet your stated goal and the logical goal—this is a good goal; you're correct to say this—that the lifetime energy cost must be a mandatory

evaluation factor, and if this RFP fails to adequately do that would you consider changing it?

Mr. MABUS. Well, I do believe that the RFP does do it.

Senator SESSIONS. I know you said that, but if there's some rare possibility that there was an incorrect accounting and maybe a slip of the typewriter and it wasn't written quite right, would you be willing to change that?

Mr. MABUS. At this point in the RFP process, Senator, we're expecting bids in. And based on our view or the analysis that we have done previous on the two, the two ships that we have, and on the projected use of those ships, frankly, it's unclear if either has an advantage on energy consumption over the lifetime.

Senator SESSIONS. Well, I think you should fairly evaluate it. I certainly agree with that, and you should rigorously analyze and compare the fuel savings that each claim to have.

I would just note that the Air Force tanker aircraft in their second RFP changed the lifetime fuel costs, which they calculated rigorously, from 25 years to 40 years, raising it even to a greater level. And you count the entire lifetime cost of this ship at 3 percent and I think that's so far beyond the actual relevant factors that it really needs to be evaluated. I'm disappointed to have to spend this time raising that, but you want the best ship for the Navy and we don't want to have an RFP that does not get you that, along with a competitive price.

Thank all of you. General Conway, appreciate your Marines. They're doing such a fabulous job. Admiral Roughead, I appreciate your service. You know this Navy so well and I appreciate that. And I thank you, Governor Mabus.

Mr. MABUS. Thank you, Senator.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Sessions.

Senator Reed.

Senator REED. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, gentlemen, for your testimony.

Mr. Secretary and Admiral Roughead, the Secretary of Defense announced that women will be allowed to serve on submarines. Can you give us an idea of when that will happen? How long will it take to do the preparation, and what significant steps do you feel we have to make to accommodate that decision, Mr. Secretary?

Mr. MABUS. The time line that we have set forth, the preliminary time line, shows that if we get women into the pipeline to serve on two of our classes of submarines, SSBNs and SSGNs, coming out of this year's class at the Academy and ROTC, because we're going to do officers first, followed by enlisted, on submarines, and we take them through the normal nuclear power training and normal submarine training, that the first women will be on submarines late in fiscal year 2011.

We think that we've learned a lot from integrating women into our surface ships almost 20 years ago and that those lessons are very applicable today. Some of those lessons are that you need a critical mass of women on a crew, and for that reason we want to put enough women on each submarine. It also is important to have more senior women or a more senior woman officer on each submarine to act as mentors for the new people coming in, and so we're looking at bringing supply corps officers as department heads

on these first tours. Once these first tours are completed, the women that came into the submarine force as ensigns will have the experience to be those department heads.

Finally, the reason for choosing the SSGNs and SSBNs to be the lead ships that we integrate women into is that neither would require any modification, any structural modification, to allow those women officers to be integrated into the force.

Finally, one of the lessons that we learned and one of the things that we are going to do in this integration is to make sure that any questions are answered by the force, any questions are answered by the families, and that we are very open and transparent about exactly how we're doing this.

But we think this is a great idea and that it will be done very smoothly and very professionally and that it will enhance our warfighting capabilities.

Senator REED. Admiral Roughead, any comments?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. We have a very good plan. We have great interest. We're ready to go. The first young women will come aboard at the end of 2011.

Senator REED. Thank you.

General Conway, let me also join my colleagues in commending your Marines who are fighting so aggressively and effectively today and doing a remarkable job, as they always do. Let me look at another issue, though. In the fiscal year budget you're restructuring the Maritime Prepositioned Force for the future. In that restructuring, will that still allow you to move to an offshore location, conduct operations, without any intermediate land base or adjacent land base?

General CONWAY. Yes, sir, it will. We still have as sort of the core element of the Maritime Prepositioned Force three brigades of equipment that are embarked aboard the collective of ships. The Maritime Prepositioned Force Future, which will allow us to do sea basing in the aggregate, is still under development and that will take some years to bring to pass.

But in the mean time, we have a steady and resilient capability at about 44 percent these days of supply availability, and we consider that in some ways very much a national Reserve.

Senator REED. Going forward, are your plans taking into consideration what's become typically more heavy and larger vehicles that the Marine Corps is using, because of the limitations on some of the ships?

General CONWAY. Yes, sir, we are. Frankly, some of those vehicles won't fit aboard our ships, and so it is a cause for concern. We don't want the Marine Corps of the future to be the Marine Corps that we have today, for instance in Afghanistan or that we saw in Iraq. We need to cut it back. We need to shed weight. We need modular kinds of concepts so that if we do go static we can add armor protection for our troops or those types of things that a requirement might cite.

But in the mean time, our definition of expeditionary is fast and austere, and those things call for us to be much lighter than we are today.

Senator REED. Is there a parallel discussion of different types of equipment in the future that would make you lighter?

General CONWAY. Yes, sir. The Joint Light Tactical Vehicle is a classic example of that. We emphasize the light. Our partner in it is the Army. They're not quite as concerned about it as we are. We are concerned about the additional weight of the helicopters that we're going to see and what it does to center of gravity on our L-class ships, those manner of things.

So it's something that we keep a constant eye on, sir, and try to keep curtailed again to the degree that industry can support us.

Senator REED. Thank you.

Admiral Roughead, I want to associate myself with the comments of Senator Lieberman about the wisdom of including the SSBN development. But also in that area of undersea warfare, there is a renewed emphasis on unmanned sub-surface vehicles and sub-surface operations. Can you give us an idea of the development of some of those systems, where you stand and where you're going?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir. I mentioned in my opening remarks that we've done a reorganization within my headquarters that has given us a much better focus and effort into unmanneds. Unlike the other services, we in the Navy are the only ones that will be exploring the underwater effort. We have some very interesting concepts. We've made a prototype deployment of some of those systems. It's clear to me that the area that we have to spend most of our effort in is in power. A lot of folks will want to hang a new sensor of some kind on these vehicles, but we have to get to the power issue. That's where we are focusing ourselves. That's where we are encouraging our labs to look, to get into that. We have run some experiments out in the Pacific with some unmanned concepts that I find not only very exciting, but I'm very optimistic as to where we can take those. And it has my full attention.

Senator REED. Thank you.

The QDR called for a new air-sea operational concept for the Pacific theater of operations, beginning with the review obviously. Can you give us some indication of how you propose to conduct that review and who will the participants be, and in general terms how do you go forward?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir. That review is already under way. We began bringing the group together from the Air Force and the Navy, and the Marine Corps is also included because of the air power that they also generate. The groups have been formed and we are working our way through the various scenarios.

I'll be getting an update here from them very shortly. But I think it's a great opportunity for us to look, not only at the airborne systems, but the networks that are involved, and we are well under way. We started before the QDR was published.

Senator REED. So we can assume there's a cyber dimension in this review of significance?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. It is—my direction to my team was if you're not talking about networks it's not going to pass the test.

Senator REED. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Reed.

Senator WICKER.

Senator WICKER. Thank you very much.

I appreciate the testimony of all three witnesses. Secretary Mabus, I think you will agree with the members of this committee that you are well served by the two gentlemen on your right and left.

Mr. MABUS. It gives me an incredible feeling of comfort and security to be surrounded by the CNO and the Commandant.

Senator WICKER. Right. And the committee is well served by them and the country.

Let me just follow up on the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" questions. Secretary Mabus, I understand your position. It's very straightforward. Yesterday with Secretary McHugh Secretary McCain asked a question about whether there was any discussion pending the survey of attitudes that's being done of a moratorium on the current "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" enforcement. Have you been a part of any discussion that enforcement actions might be suspended pending a final decision?

Mr. MABUS. No.

Senator WICKER. Secretary McHugh, in the Navy are there some discharges and actions pending at this time?

Mr. MABUS. Senator, I don't know—

Senator WICKER. To your knowledge?

Mr. MABUS.—how many are pending. There's usually a small number each year. I don't know what's pending today.

Senator WICKER. But from the information that you have, the law as it currently is is going to be enforced until such time as the survey is completed and the law is changed; is that your understanding?

Mr. MABUS. Until such time that the law is changed, we will follow the law.

Senator WICKER. All right. Then let me ask you, Admiral Roughead. You said something about comparisons to other navies and anecdotal information. I wonder if you could just briefly explain what you were getting to there?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir. The surveying and the attitudes of the United States Navy have never been formally sensed or assessed. There is often discussion about how other services and other countries have implemented homosexual service into their navy, army, air force, whatever it may be. But our forces, while I have high regard for those other services, are not us. They do not come from our culture. They do not come from the beliefs that the young men and women bring into the service. We have to be able to assess our force and judge what our force believes and what the attitudes within our force are. That's why this assessment is so important, and not use surveys from other militaries and other countries.

Senator WICKER. I thank you for clarifying that statement.

I want to ask about the cost as it relates to changing requirements. I'll ask that question with regard to our amphibious ships. I think I've had the conversation with both the General and the Admiral about the well deck aspect. For those within the sound of my voice who don't know, a well deck is a hangar-like deck located on the waterline on the back of some amphibious assault ships, and by taking on water the ship can lower its stern, flooding the well

deck and allowing boats and amphibious landing craft to dock with ships.

We just completed at Northrop Grumman the LHD-8. That ship has a well deck. Now, the next two ships will not have a well deck, the LHA-6 and, as I learned at last year's hearing, most emphatically the LH-7 will not have a well deck. I think it's fair to say that General Conway wishes that we had—that those did have a well deck. Then the follow-on ship, the LHA, will indeed have a well deck again.

Now, we're told that on the two ships where it was eliminated, that the decision was made to enlarge the hangar space to accommodate the F-35 and the V-22 Osprey, so the well deck was eliminated.

Well, if the design continues to change, gentlemen, isn't it fair to say that this is a significant cost driver? We're interested in commonality and the use of common hulls, and I would simply submit that this is going to be a cost driver and it's regrettable. Would either one of you like to comment on this?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir. In fact, the Marine Corps and the Navy had—we have periodic what we call warfighter talks. This was one of the topics that we discussed just last week. And there were decisions made in years past about the configuration of the big-deck amphibs and, as was pointed out, the weight, the volume of the equipment has changed, and the interest in going back to the well deck design is something that was the topic.

In order to get into looking in that redesign, there is a cost associated with it, and then the cost of redesign. Depending on when we do it, that cost can change, and I have committed to the Commandant that we're going to take a very hard look at this as we go into our '12 budget to see how that can best be done to support the needs of the Marine Corps.

General CONWAY. And I would only complement the CNO's answer, sir, to say that since we're operating at risk with the numbers for amphibs that we have, it's our view that those that are at sea ought to have the maximum flexibility possible for whatever the mission might require. Ergo, our desire to have well decks on ships after the two that you referenced.

We also would like to have that ship in the '16 budget because we will need it for purposes of putting MEUs to sea and that type of thing. So as the CNO said, we're going to look at it from a business case perspective, analyze the costs against the time line, and hopefully make a very good decision.

Senator WICKER. Then quickly, let me ask you about the requirement for 38 amphibious ships, as opposed to the QDR recommendation for an amphibious fleet of 29 to 33. It is the testimony of both the CNO and the Commandant that 33 ship—a 33-ship amphibious fleet represents the limit of acceptable risk. So let me ask you this: What is the risk of going below 33 and are you taking issue, willing to take issue publicly, with the possibility in the QDR of 29, 30, 31, or 32? What are your major concerns about going below 33?

General CONWAY. Sir, I think what the QDR reflects is the 5-year program on out, and the numbers are below 33 at that point. There is then obviously additional risk. I think, to give it perspective, though, you did acknowledge the agreement that we have

with the CNO on what we actually see as the requirement, what that risk number is in and around 33.

If you look at the 30-year shipbuilding plan, it sort of runs a sine wave. At one point we build to as many as 36. So I think you have to look at it perhaps from a larger perspective, realize that we also want a strong and balanced fleet out there supporting our amphibs and that there are cost drivers.

So would we like more? Of course. Are we fiscally realistic at this point? I'd like to think we're also that.

Senator WICKER. Admiral, is the 31 an acceptable risk? What is the risk?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Well, I think the Commandant and I are in agreement 33 is a risk that we believe is acceptable now, because if you don't have that number then the speed and the amount which you can flow becomes questionable. So as the Commandant mentioned, it is a question of balancing the many shipbuilding demands that we have and building the fleet that is balanced and gives us the broadest capability, and 33 is acceptable.

Senator WICKER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Wicker.

Senator Akaka.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I want to say aloha to our esteemed panel of leaders that we have today. First I would like to thank each of you for your dedicated service to our country. I also want to commend the military and civilian men and women of the Navy and Marine Corps for their outstanding service and thank their families for the support of their loved ones.

The proposed fiscal year 2011 budget highlights the Department's priorities of prevailing in today's war, preparing for a wide range of contingencies, and managing its most precious resource, its people.

I was pleased to hear the Department of the Navy has agreed to fund a study that will address the health concerns from drinking water contamination at Camp Lejeune. I look forward to the results. I see this as a positive step to help determine the true scope of the problem and the number of people affected. I will include questions for the record on this matter.

Secretary Mabus, I'm very interested in collaboration between the services and the Department of Veterans Affairs. Of note, the Department has worked with the VA on the physical disability evaluation system pilot program and the virtual lifetime electronic records system. Mr. Secretary, how are you addressing the challenges of creating a virtual lifetime electronic record system?

Mr. MABUS. Thank you, Senator. I think it goes without saying, but I want to repeat, that our care for our veterans, and particularly our wounded warriors, is the most important thing that we do. We have an obligation to those who have borne the battle and who have come back to us wounded, to do everything that we can to make whatever transition they have to make whatever transition they have to make as smooth as possible.

The things that we are doing on the subject that you talked about, in Chicago, for example, we're putting together VA and

Navy medicine in one place, so that there's one stop for everyone to go to, Navy, Marine, and veterans.

You talked about the single physical and mental evaluation. That pilot program is ongoing at our six largest personnel installations. We are ready to extend that and make it permanent, and we're working very closely with the VA to do that.

Similarly, on the lifetime electronic records we're moving forward to make sure that every service member and everyone who has served will have that, so that there will be a seamless transition between service and back to the community or service and back to the unit.

When you go to Bethesda—and I've been with the Commandant to Bethesda, and the Commandant makes one statement and that is, to every Marine: If you want to stay a Marine, regardless of your wounds, we'll find a place for you in the Marine Corps. And while there are a lot of different decisions made by our wounded warriors as they progress through rehabilitation as to whether to continue in the Marines or the Navy or to go back to their community, the idea that they are welcome as a Marine has a very powerful impact, I think, on those young men and women who have been wounded.

Finally, in terms of employment, one of the things that we are working very hard on and that we're proud of is we just had an employer conference for our wounded warriors to allow those who have decided to rejoin their communities, go back to the civilian world, that they'll have a job when they get there. We should be able to help them make sure that they have a good job waiting for them when they finish their rehabilitation process.

I will end as I began, which is there is no more important thing that we do than to care for our veterans, and particularly our wounded warriors.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you for your response.

Admiral Roughead, to ensure mission success the Navy must have shipyards that are modern, flexible, and safe. The Navy's public shipyards play a vital role in keeping the fleet operating to meet the significant challenges posed all over the world. In June 2009, the Navy reported a shortfall of \$1.3 billion in sustainment, restoration, and modernization projects at its four public shipyards.

Admiral, how is this shortfall affecting current and future Navy readiness and how is the Navy addressing this situation?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Sir, when we look at our accounts for our public shipyards, which are extraordinarily important to us as a Navy, but also for all of our shore infrastructure, and we set what the shortfalls are, that is a figure that we use to take us to the very highest level of everything that is there. Obviously, as we work our way through the budgets and deal with the many issues that we have there will be a difference between absolute perfection and that which we bring our facilities to. But I can assure you that the mission capability and the safety, especially the safety aspects of our shipyards and our facilities, are provided for, and we value that capability and we ensure that we have funded to deliver on that safety and mission capability.

Senator AKAKA. Admiral, I'm glad to hear that the Naval Academy's current freshman class is the most diverse in the history of

the great institution. I believe that diversity is a real strength. Organizations that are diverse are able to use to their advantage many different views and perspectives. I understand that diversity is a very important issue for you.

Can you share with us your views in this area and how you're approaching diversity in the senior levels of the officer, enlisted, and civilian ranks?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Sir, thank you, Senator. I would also add that not only did we achieve the most diverse class at the Naval Academy, but our Reserve Officer Training Corps class was also the most diverse, simply because we have had a much more aggressive outreach program and have really attracted many, many bright young men and women to the Navy, and I'm very proud of what we've done.

But it's more than just those who are coming in, and it's looking at the leadership that we have currently. What I do periodically with the leaders of the various specialty areas within the Navy is to sit down with them individually leader to leader, not a staff function, and go through where their underrepresented minorities are serving, the types of jobs that they have, the types of opportunities, educational and experiential opportunities, that we're providing them, because we know that in order to be selected for promotion there are certain experiences that are valued.

This is not a quota system. This is not a goal, but rather are we bringing the bright young leaders of the future along and putting them in positions and giving them the experiences that they need? We do that routinely. As I mentioned, we've just recently created an Information Dominance Corps. Last week I did my first review of that group, and it allows us to look at how we're developing that leadership. You're right, sir; it's a very high priority for me.

Senator AKAKA. Let me ask General Conway for any further comments on this.

General CONWAY. Sir, my answers again are significantly the same. It starts with a strong young cadre of diverse officers that can go through the traditional assignments that will allow them to prosper and grow, and we're seeing that. We have two battalions attacking in Marjah. One of them is commanded, for instance, by a very capable young black officer who just is representative of what we're seeing increasingly in our Corps all the way through the general officer ranks. So the process works.

Senator AKAKA. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Akaka.

Senator Collins.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, each of you, for your service. I was pleased that my friend and colleague Jack Reed has raised the issue of women serving on subs. Actually, I wasn't pleased, because I wanted to be the first to raise that issue. But it was good to hear your testimony that you do not see significant costs in reconfiguring submarines to allow women to serve. I view this as creating more opportunity for women in the Navy to go through the ranks. I just want to start by commending you for that decision.

Admiral Roughead, in your testimony you indicated that the DDG-1000 program has recently triggered a Nunn-McCurdy breach. For the record, I just want to clarify my understanding that this breach is solely due to the decrease in quantity from ten to three DDG-1000s, as opposed to any dissatisfaction with the performance of Bath Iron Works, which is slated to build all three of the DDG-1000s. Is that correct?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. That's correct, Senator. It's pure mathematics. Fewer ships and the math triggers the breach. We're in the process of complying with the requirement to make the certifications that are necessary. But it's a mathematical issue and, as I've been able to say on many occasions over the last couple of years, the program is extremely well run by very, very fine people. Of course, we know the great work that comes out of Bath and look forward to that.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Secretary Mabus, that's your assessment as well?

Mr. MABUS. Yes, it is.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Secretary Mabus, Congress has previously strongly supported the Navy's two previous uses of multi-year procurements for the DDG-51 shipbuilding program. What we found is that multi-year procurements have tended to reduce acquisition costs, they have led to more stability in the workforce among our dual-source shipbuilding industrial base, and that too has contributed to reduced acquisition costs.

The Navy is proposing in its future years defense plan to procure a total of 6 DDG-51 destroyers over 4 years between fiscal year 2012 and fiscal year 2015 at alternating procurement rates of 1 or 2 ships per year. Now, prior to the restart last year of the DDG-51 program the Navy had procured the most recent DDG-51s in 2 successive 4-year multi-year procurements, and I would note that previous studies have found that the most efficient procurement level necessary to meet force structure requirements and maintain production efficiency is to do 3 DDG-51s a year.

Has the Navy decided on an acquisition plan for procuring these ships? Are you looking at doing multi-year procurements, which could help you reduce the costs?

Mr. MABUS. In any procurement program that we do, we look at all the alternatives, including multi-years. There are, as you are well aware, certain thresholds that a multi-year has to reach and, because the DDG-51 line, as you pointed out, was restarted last year, we have not—we have not had sufficient ship numbers to make a decision and to do the certifications necessary of whether a multi-year will save us the requisite amount of money or not.

Senator COLLINS. I would encourage you to take a close look at that approach, which has been used successfully in the past.

Mr. MABUS. Thank you.

Senator COLLINS. Admiral Roughead, you have said strongly and repeatedly that you view 313 ships as the minimum for our fleet, and indeed there was a draft version of the QDR which suggested that the Navy might request a minimum level of 324 ships. In any event, 313 is the number that you've consistently testified is necessary.

Recently the Congressional Budget Office gave testimony before the House subcommittee in which it cast doubt on whether the funding in the future year defense plan is adequate to meet that minimum level. Indeed, the CBO has warned that its estimate shows that the battle force fleet could fall to only 270 ships by the year 2025 with a \$15 billion annual budget and estimated that if there were a bit higher budget it might be 240 ships. But still, in both cases the projections by CBO do not show us meeting that 313-ship level.

Could you comment on the CBO analysis, please?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, ma'am. The budget that we have proposed and that is before you puts us on a trajectory and we believe that we have adequately priced the ships that will take us beyond the 313 minimum. As we get out into what I would call the mid-years and the requirements that we have for building the fleet, recapitalization of ships that we're building in large numbers every year, as they fall off the scope as we recapitalize the strategic deterrent, the funding does become quite challenging in that mid-year period.

But the budget that we have before you and the plan that we have laid out puts us on that trajectory to take us over 313 ships.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you.

Finally, Mr. Secretary, I know you've been to my State and I very much enjoyed your visits, both to Bath Iron Works and the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine. I want to associate myself with the comments made by the Senator from Hawaii about the importance of our public shipyards, which are making such a contribution, particularly in the area of submarine overhaul and maintenance. I believe that Senator Akaka has made very good points about the backlog in maintenance projects. The chairman also has referred to that. I just want to pledge to work with you to make sure that you have the funding needed.

Mr. MABUS. Thank you, Senator.

Senator COLLINS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Collins.

Senator Hagan arrived in the nick of time to be recognized. Your timing is exquisite. I hope it was intentional so I don't catch you by surprise. I'm stalling a little bit—

Senator HAGAN. Oh, no, that's fine. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Senator Hagan.

Senator HAGAN. I just wanted to once again thank you for being here and your testimony and especially your service, each and every one of you. You're doing a great job.

I wanted to say that my office has received a signed agreement in principle concerning the Camp Lejeune water contamination study, and the signed agreement between the assistant Secretary of the Navy for Environment and the acting Director for the ATSDR, and I certainly appreciate the Department's deciding to fully fund this Camp Lejeune water mortality study in the ATSDR and APOW.

But I wanted to know when we can expect for this agreement in principle to be solidified and when will the money be transferred to ATSDR for the actual study?

Mr. MABUS. The money will be transferred as soon as we get the voucher and it will take 3 or 4 days. But we are ready to fund this. And the agreement in principle is pretty much the agreement. We're ready to move forward on this with both the—with all six studies, four of which previously have been agreed to, with the mortality study and with the health survey. We have committed to fully fund whatever science comes out of the health survey in terms of doing a fuller health study.

Senator HAGAN. Great. I think the fact that we have so many families that have had questions for so many years, that it is time to begin this study so that we can get answers to the family members who have served at Camp Lejeune over so many years. So thank you on that one.

I also wanted to talk about that in Afghanistan, with the challenging terrain and extremely limited infrastructure, it serves as a formidable logistical challenge for our military. Recent reports have indicated that the Department of Defense pays an average cost of \$400 per gallon for fuel that's delivered to and consumed in Afghanistan's remote locations, where the Marines often operate.

The extent of our current dependence on fossil fuels is a strategic vulnerability that has the potential to influence foreign policy and national security objectives. What does the Marine Corps intend to do in order to lighten our energy footprint, reduce energy inefficiencies in expeditionary environments, and reduce energy dependencies? And are our Marine Corps bases and stations vulnerable to the energy grid?

General CONWAY. Ma'am, let me correct something first of all that was cited. A Defense Science Board study did determine as much as \$400 is sometimes spent on fuel, but for the most part that's fuel that's flown up to Army forces in RC-East in some very rigorous terrain. Our costs on average are more than what you pay at the service station here, but not nearly approximating those costs.

That said, frankly, I was stunned when I looked at what I consider to be waste in terms of how we are going about the fight. There's a lot of what I would call low-hanging fruit in terms of how we can become more efficient in terms of our fuel, in terms of the structures that we build and their ability to retain cold or heat, in terms of water, any number of things that we consume on a daily basis that simply can be made better.

So we have put in place an Expeditionary Energy Office, a colonel with about ten people both military and civilian that will work for him. We're not going to burden the field commander with this responsibility. That would be unfair. I've been in his shoes and he simply needs to know what he needs and how soon it's going to get there. But we think that we owe it to the Nation to be better stewards of the resources available, to cut back on our needs where we can, to keep young Marines and sailors off those convoys to the extent that we have reduced demand, and we're very serious about going about that.

In terms of bases and stations, we think we're doing pretty well. We have the mandate that's been placed on us. It is one of the Secretary's four priorities, to cut back our energy consumption about

30 percent by 2015, petroleum consumption by 20 percent at the same time, and we're working hard to be able to do that.

More success I would say at this point in our western bases and stations because of solar energy and wind. But across the Corps we're working hard to try to be more efficient and again better stewards of our resources.

Senator HAGAN. Do you have plans and procedures in place to monitor how you're achieving these goals?

General CONWAY. Yes, ma'am, absolutely, only through metrics and determining just what we can do. And there have been some things done already. We have—for whatever combination of reasons, the Army did not have need for eight solar water generation kinds of capabilities. We took those happily and they're already in Afghanistan.

But we have a series of metrics that the office of this colonel is maintaining to give us a grade and see where we need to go.

Senator HAGAN. Great.

I have a question concerning the mental health care for our returning service members. As our service men and women continue to rotate home from Iraq and Afghanistan, there are those among them that are obviously returning with significant mental health issues. Early intervention services for these men and women may reduce the demands placed upon the VA once these service members are discharged.

What programs or initiatives are being put into place to address the mental health concerns of our returning servicemembers?

Mr. MABUS. Senator, as I said in answer to a previous question, there's nothing more important that we do than to care for the people who have borne the battle. That is equally true of mental health as it is in physical health. The Navy and Marine Corps are both doing a lot of work in both PTSD and traumatic brain injuries. For traumatic brain injuries, one key is very early diagnosis and care near the battlefield. The Marine Corps in particular, supported by Navy medicine, has been working to make sure that the symptoms are recognized by both medical and non-medical personnel in the field.

We do an evaluation, a mental evaluation, before people go on deployment in the Navy or in the theater as Marines. We do a second one when they come out to see if there has been any impact, and then another evaluation some time after they return home.

Things like, for Navy individual augmentees, as we bring them out of theater we have a stopover in Kuwait to allow them to decompress from what they have been doing before they return home and be evaluated in terms of physical and mental health. I know that the Commandant and the CNO can give you other details, because we are working very hard on these things.

One of our primary focuses is to make sure that there is no stigma attached to asking for help for mental health issues. One of the things we look at is to make sure that as people ask for help that those people who ask are promoted at exactly the same rate as the ones who do not need that assistance. So I think that in our senior enlisted ranks and our officer ranks that the understanding that we need to make sure that there is no stigma attached to asking for mental health services, and in fact that there's an imperative

that if you need any help or if people around you recognize the symptoms that they encourage you to get help.

We're working as hard as we are on anything to make sure that our returning warriors' mental health needs are absolutely met.

Senator HAGAN. Thank you. And I do want to thank you again for having the agreement in principle completed on the Camp Lejeune water mortality study, and that that obviously begins as soon as possible. So thank you for that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Hagan.

Senator THUNE.

Senator THUNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to thank you all, Admiral, General, Secretary, very much for your service to our country, and I appreciate your responses to the committee and the questions that you're being posed today.

I would echo what the Senator from North Carolina has said on the issue of energy. That's something I have a great interest in. The Air Force has taken quite a fairly aggressive, I think, at least goal out there in terms of trying to acquire 50 percent of their domestic aviation fuel via alternative fuel blends in which the alternative component is derived from domestic sources. I think this issue of dependence, this dangerous dependence that we have on foreign sources of energy, is a very real issue, and of course the military is the biggest user.

So I hope that the Navy and the Marine Corps can move in that direction as well, because I do think it's not only a national security issue, obviously, but it's also something that I think in terms of the economic security of the country is really critical. So I'm hoping that you can pursue that path as well.

Admiral Roughead, I wanted to raise a question with you. I'm very concerned about the START follow-on treaty negotiations that we're currently having with the Russians, and particularly worried about the steep cuts that are being made to the number of delivery vehicles and that it might necessitate making our nuclear triad a diad. As you know, President Obama agreed in a joint understanding with President Medvedev last July to reduce the nuclear delivery vehicles somewhere in the range of 500 to 1,100 systems. Then a few days later General Cartwright, who is the current Vice Chair and former head of Strategic Command, testified before this committee that he would be very concerned about the ability to maintain the nuclear triad if the number of delivery vehicles would go below about midpoint between 1,100 and 500 or, in other words, if the number went to somewhere in the 800 delivery vehicle range.

So the question I have, Admiral, is do you share General Cartwright's concern about the ability to maintain the nuclear triad if the final START treaty number agreed on for delivery vehicles is below that 800 delivery vehicle number?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir. As you know, the negotiations are still ongoing. But I think as you get into the lower numbers that General Cartwright cited, it does become problematic. But we have been working with the Joint Staff, all the services, and clearly the value of the triad is well acknowledged.

Senator THUNE. Do you see a scenario in which the triad might be in jeopardy if they agreed to a number, though, that's below that

800, if you get down to the 700, 750? And there has been some reporting in the Russian press that that's the range that they're looking at.

Admiral ROUGHEAD. In the discussions that I've had, Senator, I'm not concerned that—nor have we had discussions about any elimination of a leg of the triad.

Senator THUNE. Good.

Admiral, the new QDR rightly dedicates a lot of ink to deterring and defeating aggression in anti-access environments, and it directs the Navy and the Air Force to develop a new joint air-sea battle concept for defeating adversaries with sophisticated anti-access and area denial capabilities, which in turn will help guide the development of future capabilities needed for effective power projection operations.

I strongly support expanding and improving our Nation's long-range strike and power projection capabilities and I was pleased to see you mention in your prepared testimony that the Navy, as directed by the QDR, is working with the Air Force to develop this new joint air-sea battle concept, and I understand that was discussed a little bit earlier this morning.

I understand that you and the Air Force Chief of Staff signed a memorandum to begin developing this new operational concept last December—last September, I'm sorry. I guess the question is, in your view how will long-range strike capabilities fit into this new air-sea battle concept?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. I think that they will fit into the air-sea battle concept, as will many other facets of that type of operation. We've also included the Marine Corps in air-sea battle. But I believe there's long-range strike that needs to be considered. Even the ability for us to be able to engage in an air-sea battle from under the sea becomes extremely important, and also the importance of networks in how we knit all this together is a key element, and I've made that point to my people, that in addition to all of the kinetic considerations that we also have to be thinking in terms of networks, because any adversary is going to be looking at that same thing as well.

Senator THUNE. Last September the Manchester Guardian reported that the President has rejected the Pentagon's first draft of the nuclear posture review as being too timid and has called for a range of more far-reaching options consistent with his goal of eventually abolishing nuclear weapons altogether, according to European officials, and that's a quote from that newspaper. Is that an accurate report?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. I haven't read the Manchester Guardian, Senator. But I've been involved in the NPR and I believe that the process we've had, the considerations we've had, has placed great value on our nuclear deterrent force, all legs of that triad, and the considerations of being able to field the strategic needs of the Nation. So I haven't read the article, but I'm very comfortable with the discussions we've had, the involvement that we've had, and how we're looking at things.

Senator THUNE. With respect to the delay on that, why is it continually getting pushed back? We're looking at now April is the latest date that we've heard in terms of that being completed.

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir. We continue to work with OSD on this, and I'll get back to you on the particulars of the delay.

Senator THUNE. And that reporting is, like I said, that comes from a European newspaper. But we've been led to believe that the analysis guiding the START negotiations in the QDR was completed at the front end of that nuclear posture review process, and that the first draft was reportedly scrapped on a concern that it was too timid in terms of reducing the number of nuclear weapons. Maybe you don't want to comment.

Admiral ROUGHEAD. The "too timid" phrase is one that I had not heard before. I think as we have worked our way through what's a very complex process, I've been very comfortable with the discussions that we've been having, sir.

Senator THUNE. All right, good.

Thank you, gentlemen.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Thune.

Senator Burriss is next.

Senator BURRIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to add my thanks to these three excellent Americans for their dedication and commitment to the service of our country. I would just like to let them know where I spent last week, the Marine Corps recruiting depot down in San Diego, the Marine Air Station in Miramar, where I experienced and flew that Osprey and crashed it about 20 times. Also, Mr. Secretary, I visited the naval medical center in San Diego, and I must say, Commandant, I thought I was a pretty rough kid coming up until I saw that training that those Marines were going through in basic, and preparing them to be warriors and to defend this country. The leadership down there that I met was terrific, the commitment from the officers on down to the enlisted personnel. I want to compliment you for what you're doing in preparing those young men.

General CONWAY. Thank you, sir. I'll pass that to the troops.

Senator BURRIS. Also, on the question of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," gentlemen, I hear the various positions and I know that you may have some input into that major question that we will be confronting. Keep in mind that at one time blacks could not serve with any dignity in our military. We just heard the comment on where we are now with this diversity issue and the top ranks. Not only that, but we've had an African American who served as the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and of course we have currently an African American who's the Commander in Chief. Also, at one time we didn't allow women in our services, and now we're talking about even having women on submarines.

So please keep that in mind in terms of what it is and how we judge individuals by their orientation or by their sex or by their race, so just by way of comment.

Mr. Secretary and Mr. Conway, the Joint Strike Fighter. The program has been plagued with numerous delays and setbacks. If the program continues to be beset with difficulties, at what point will your readiness posture be significantly affected in terms of that aircraft?

General CONWAY. Sir, we have seen setbacks in the program. We, as a product of this 5-year defense plan, have seen a reduction of

28 Marine Corps Joint Strike Fighters and that's a serious impact on our readiness, because for about 11 or 12 years now we have not bought an attack aircraft. We did not buy the E&F when the Navy did and so we've been relying upon our F-18's A through D types and on our venerable Harriers.

So we're really anxious to have the Joint Strike Fighter come on line when it's supposed to, with the capacities that we believe it has. We're nevertheless encouraged that the supplier is going to make his time line that he's promised us, which is initial operating capacity in 2012.

Senator BURRIS. Commandant, pardon me. That's not what my information is. My information is that they're behind schedule, that they're trying to test various components of it because of the complications of it replacing three or four of those other planes. And if we have any information to the contrary, please—

General CONWAY. We'll have to compare notes, sir. December 2012 is what we have been tracking now for quite some time. We have three aircraft at Pax River at our test facilities. We will see vertical flight we think this quarter and delivery of other airplanes before the end of the year.

So it is the answer to your question, though, because 2012 is really important to us in that we have gone for so long without this capacity.

Senator BURRIS. Absolutely.

General CONWAY. And if we don't make those kinds of time lines it will almost immediately have impact on our ability to provide the strike fighter capacity that both the Navy and the Air Force depend on.

Senator BURRIS. General, I applaud the level of integration of the Navy and the Marine Corps Reserves into the total force structure by the Navy and the Marine Corps. How would you characterize the success of their integration into the overall mission of the Department of the Navy?

Mr. MABUS. I think the integration of the Reserves of the Marine Corps and the Navy has been an absolute success. We simply wouldn't be able to do some of the missions that we do without the Reserves. They perform an incredibly wide variety of missions. Their training and readiness is exemplary, and when they are called to active duty they are integrated seamlessly and well. As I said, we owe our Reserves not only the training and readiness, but also the things that I answered previously about health care, mental health care, and when they return from active duty.

Senator BURRIS. Mr. Secretary, do you see the need for more funding to cover the costs of fulfilling the manning of the reservists?

Mr. MABUS. Senator, I think that the budget that we submitted will allow us to meet every mission, both Active Duty and Reserve.

Senator BURRIS. Admiral, did you want to comment on that, sir?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. I was just going to say that integration is absolutely extraordinary. But even with that, we're not satisfied. In the Navy we're continuing to look at ways with which our Active and Reserve components can flow between the two more seamlessly. A few months ago it would take, by the time you got all of the paperwork and admin done, it was about a 4-month proc-

ess. We now have that down to 8 days and my personnel chief and my Chief of Naval Reserve know they have to get it to 72 hours.

But we can do that because of the terrific professionalism and the fact that we truly are one Navy. It doesn't make any difference if we're Active or Reserve. We are one Navy.

General CONWAY. Senator, I would only comment, sir, on the mentality of the Reserves. It's absolutely incredible to me, but our Secretary of Defense has set aside guidelines and terms of their usage and how frequently we can make use of our Reserve formations. These people want to come on board active duty and they want to come on board in most instances even more frequently than what the policies will now allow for.

There are some just tremendous people out there who really do want to be a part of what's taking place in the world today.

Senator BURRIS. Commandant, you're making that comment—I see this myself. I wonder, even those wounded warriors, the ones that come back from combat injuries, or amputees—I saw some of them out in San Diego Hospital or saw them over at Walter Reed. I'm amazed at the commitment that they have.

I asked this young—I think he was an infantryman from the Army, but he was being discharged from Walter Reed when I was out there. He was an amputee just below the knee and he was being discharged that day. I asked him: Okay, well, young man, what do you want to do? He said: Sir, what I really want to do is to go back and join my unit.

You know, General, I couldn't hold it. I just cried right before him. I mean, it's amazing to me. We've got to give thanks to those type of individuals, committed to give us protection and that cause and help us to be the America that we are. We couldn't do it without them.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. My time is up.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Burris. Senator Burris speaks for this entire committee in those eloquent comments.

Senator LeMieux.

Senator LEMIEUX. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, General Conway, Admiral Roughead, thank you for your service to the country. Thank you for the men and women who serve in the Navy and the Marines.

As you know and as we had a chance to talk about last night, Florida loves having the Navy and the Marines, not as many Marines as we would like, General, but we'll work on that. But from NAS Jacksonville and NAS Pensacola down to Key West to Blount Island to Mayport, we're just very privileged and proud to have you in Florida in the numbers that you're in.

I want to first commend you for the work that you have done and are doing in Haiti. I had a chance to go on a Congressional delegation trip 2 weeks ago and to visit the young men and women who are down there who are helping in that rescue and the humanitarian effort. It is, as you know, as difficult a situation as one could find in the world. They're doing great work, and I appreciate the work that they continue to do.

The next thing I'd like to talk to you about is a topic that we've discussed before. It will not come as a surprise to you, and that is Mayport and the decision that the Secretary of the Navy signed,

the record decision to make Mayport a nuclear-ready facility in order to have a nuclear-powered submarine.

Now, it's my understanding that we have enjoyed having an aircraft carrier in Mayport since 1952 and it's been maybe not continuously that way, but it was that way up and through 2006, when the USS *Kennedy* was decommissioned.

Admiral ROUGHEAD, I know that there has been some discussion about home porting a carrier at Mayport. But it's my understanding that the Navy has had a long policy of strategic dispersal, that is dispersing your assets in numerous places in order to best protect them, and that you do this, for example, on the west coast of the United States. So is it true that the Navy has historically had aircraft carriers home ported in multiple ports on each coast, and that Mayport has been home to several aircraft carriers in the past?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. That's correct, sir.

Senator LEMIEUX. Also, is it true that the Navy maintains more than one nuclear-capable port on the west coast and that making Mayport nuclear-capable only makes a sensible strategy just like the Navy employs on the west coast of the United States?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir, that's correct.

Senator LEMIEUX. Now, I've heard discussion that this is going to be an extremely expensive proposition, talks about a billion to 2 billion, and that it's not going to be an effective or efficient decision for the Navy. Can you comment on that for me, Admiral?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir. We estimate the cost to be just past \$500 million. Some of those costs have already been incurred because we are involved with dredging the basin there. But the costs are also spread out over a period of years. It's not one lump sum in any given year, but it's spread out, and will give us the opportunity to have an alternate carrier port on the East Coast, which would then make it possible for every ship class that we have to have alternatives as far as where they could go to be maintained or where they could go to put in if they had emergent work to be done.

Senator LEMIEUX. I guess, Admiral, that part of the concern is that if there is only one East Coast port for a nuclear carrier and there were some kind of natural disaster or other manmade disaster, that that would significantly limit our strategic abilities.

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Particularly as it would apply to our carrier fleet, yes, sir.

Senator LEMIEUX. In terms of the future of the Navy and the ships that the Navy will have, it's my understanding that more and more ships may be nuclear-powered, not just subs, not just aircraft carriers, and that that's going to require proper shore facilities to maintain those nuclear propulsion plants.

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Senator, as we look to the future, nuclear power clearly is something that we will be looking at as a propulsion source. There are many factors that come into play—construction, maintenance, the manning, the training. But as we look to the future, fuel considerations, energy considerations, and then the power that some of the newer weapons systems are going to require, you're automatically drawn to nuclear power as a source, and we're going to be looking at that.

Senator LEMIEUX. So having those capabilities in multiple locations to be able to service those ships is important?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir, it is.

Senator LEMIEUX. Last on the Mayport issue: I've heard some talk about concerns about hurricanes and weather. In Florida we've unfortunately, like other States, had hurricanes hit us in the past. Has there been an evaluation as to whether or not Jacksonville is as susceptible as the rest of Florida is to hurricanes?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir. That was one of the factors that we looked at, because I think that one can easily conjure up an image that anything in Florida is susceptible to multiple hurricanes. But when you look at the historic nature of the storm tracks, that area in the Jacksonville area is not prone to what many perceive to be high incidence of hurricanes.

The patterns either take them south or the patterns take them up toward the Carolinas, and the area in Jacksonville seems to be in a very fortunate pocket.

Senator LEMIEUX. It does. I'm not aware of a hurricane ever hitting Jacksonville. Perhaps it has. It hasn't in the last 4 years that I'm aware of, and I don't think we've had one prior to that. Maybe a long time ago, but it has been a long time. That area does seem to be a pocket.

I want to next talk a little, if I may, Mr. Secretary and Admiral, about the good work that the Navy is doing in relationship to Colombia. I had an opportunity to visit Colombia last week on a delegation trip and meet with President Uribe as well as Minister of Defense Silva and talk about the good work that we've been doing for the past 8 years—longer than that, but specifically in the past 8 years—to help the Colombian military with fighting narco-trafficking and all of the challenges that Colombia has had with the FARC.

It recently was mentioned to me by the Admiral that the Fourth Fleet was able to achieve a major success with a drug seizure on February 22 and disrupting a go-fast vessel and recovering more than a quarter ton of cocaine.

I want to emphasize to you how important I think this work is. The drug terrorists, these folks what are working from Colombia all the way up through Central America into Mexico, are very dangerous people. They are not just drug gangs. They are terrorists. We recently saw this incident in Mexico where the young soldier who had killed in a firefight one of the drug cartels and then given a State funeral, that his entire family was killed afterwards by the drug cartel in order to make a point.

That is extremely worrisome to me. It's also extremely worrisome to me, not to get into information that we can't speak about openly, but we know that Iran is projecting its image into Latin America. We know that Ahmadinejad is visiting Venezuela on several circumstances and occasions. And we know that there are concerns about Hamas and Hezbollah in Latin America and South America.

So I want to commend you on the work that you're doing with the Colombians and with our other partners in Central and South America. I had an opportunity to visit our friends in Honduras as well and our good work that we're doing there in partnership with them under the new government.

So going forward—and my time is up, but I want to make the point of how important I think it is that you continue to do the work that you're doing with JIATF South and with the Coast Guard and the combined efforts with the Colombian military, because I find that as an emerging threat to our country and to our National security. And while we are focused, properly, on Afghanistan and Iraq and other places in the world, we cannot fail to look south. We cannot fail to make sure that we do not have terrorist threats within this hemisphere.

So thank you for that good work and thank you for your service. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator LeMieux. Senator Webb.

Senator WEBB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just to follow on a bit from the—as you might expect, from the comments of my good friend from Florida and my other good friend from Florida arriving to make comments after I speak, I'd like to emphasize that I do have a good deal of empathy for that area of Florida for the fact that they have lost ships due to retirement, and that there are ways to address that situation.

But I would also like to emphasize that this discussion is clearly not over, and that there are strong statements that could be made contrary to what was just said. This isn't the place. I've got a very limited amount of time here and I want to get into some detail with the situation in Okinawa and Guam, General Conway.

But we are in a situation where we are going to have to find ways to make better use of limited funds and we are going to be wanting to put them in places that enhance our overall ability to perform our National objectives, and that very strongly includes making sure that we hit the mark on our shipbuilding goals, Admiral, as you and I discussed when you visited. And there's a great deal of concern about this.

I just listened to Senator Collins mention a CBO study that indicated that if certain trends were followed the size of the Navy could be at 270 by 2025. I know that the bow wave always looks good in the Pentagon. I spent 5 years over there. Your testimony is that you can hit your 313 minimum in a certain period of time.

But these are just as compelling strategic concerns as dispersal. I've been through three different renditions of strategic dispersal debates in my adult lifetime, one of them, as you'll remember, during the Reagan Administration, when we were going to home port, put a strategic home port, in Corpus Christi. I went down there and made the speech when I was Secretary of the Navy to open that one. They were talking about a strategic home port in Alaska.

You're familiar with the service of Admiral Joe Prueher, I assume, former Vice CNO, commander of Sixth Fleet, former CINCPAC, former Ambassador to China, not being paid by anyone as a lobbyist to express a point of view, who stated his strong agreement that this amount of money would be much better spent in shipbuilding than in creating a redundant facility.

So I want to make that point, just because I'm sandwiched here between two opposing points of view, but this discussion is not over.

I just returned from a visit to Tokyo, Okinawa, Guam, Tinian, and Saipan. The purpose of this trip was to first meet with the new leadership of the Japanese government, but then also to listen to the viewpoints on Okinawa and in these other areas in terms of this military base realignment. General, as you recall, I spent a good bit of time out there in 1973 and 1974, walked and drove every square inch of the military lands on Guam, Tinian, Saipan, went up to Okinawa, looked at our training areas.

Without going through the whole drill, there are two questions that I am very concerned about right now. One is for you, General, and the other is for you, Mr. Secretary. We have gotten ourselves into a box with respect to a 2014 time line, not only in the situation at Okinawa, which has been delayed, as you know, because of the Futenma relocation controversy, and we're waiting for the Japanese government to come forward with a decision, but also in terms of the way we are dealing with the situation on Guam.

This realignment of Marines and these new bases were arguably supposed to be completed by 2014. I think what is happening out there is that the civilian populace in both places are getting very nervous about the prospect of these time lines, in Okinawa, one, because people see that it's not really doable practically; and on Guam, because of the civilian infrastructure itself that would be needed, you can't hit that mark.

I would like to get your thoughts on that time line, General, and what our position might be on it.

General CONWAY. Sir, I share your concern. Of course, we will await the Japanese decision, hopefully by May. But any delay at this point I think is going to be reflected downrange attempting to meet our time lines. As you know, going all the way back to the 70s probably, but certainly today, there's only a certain work force capacity on Guam to get things done. There is a lot that needs to be done.

So our concern is that for every month we delay a decision and action really on the part of both governments in cohort with each other, it's going to have impact on our ability to make the time lines.

Senator WEBB. I think we're going to have to start talking more realistically about what those time lines are and calm people down. And I would also strongly encourage looking at more training areas and firing ranges on Tinian rather than Guam. Guam is, as you know, 208 square miles. They now say 210; somewhere they've gotten 2 more square miles since I was working out there. But one-third of that island's already military retention areas. It's very difficult to put firing ranges and that sort of thing on there.

Tinian is wide open. I went up and looked at it again. The difficulty is it's not part of the specific plan that's being discussed. But the utility long-term is very strong.

Mr. Secretary, I hope you will be able to raise the importance of getting funding for the civilian side on this Guam project if we're serious about doing this. We cannot remain as a viable balancing force in the Pacific without these bases. At the same time, we're coming forward—the numbers I got from last year, just to give you an idea of the disconnect here, were that, in terms of military construction projects for this buildup, there was \$700 million in the

DOD budget inside the wire and only \$51 million outside the wire, and \$50 million of that was DOD money for roads in Guam.

As the General mentioned, they're going to have to increase work force out there. They've got school difficulties, hospital difficulties. When I was there, there was a \$50 million grant that was supposed to come their way through the stimulus package for the port authority that somehow did not happen. This is American soil. This isn't like being off in Kuwait somewhere. These are American citizens and they're starting—the people who have supported this have now started to wonder whether we are really serious about doing it in a responsible way. That can only happen, I think, through inter-agency coordination and strong discussions with the White House.

Mr. MABUS. Yes, sir, I agree. On the grant for the Apra Harbor, I was a very strong advocate for that grant and met with the Secretary of Transportation on two different occasions to urge him to do that grant, for the exact reasons that you just stated.

Senator WEBB. I contacted the White House when I was on Guam, trying to make the point that this isn't simply a transportation issue; it's a national security issue. \$50 million when they've got I think \$150 billion in unexpended money from the stimulus package would go a long way towards calming people down out there, but also getting this done.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Webb.

Senator Bill Nelson.

Senator BILL NELSON. Mr. Chairman, before my dear friend Senator Webb departs, we have certainly had a different position with regard to our parochial interests on the home porting of a carrier. Florida has always been a second port and the Atlantic fleet of carriers has always been dispersed. It was up until 1987 that there was—

Senator WEBB. Excuse me. We've had this discussion before. I have a meeting I've got to go to.

Senator BILL NELSON. Okay. Well, as you are departing, I just wanted to point out that you are a distinguished former Secretary of the Navy, and in your confirmation hearing in 1987—well, the former Secretary and now Senator from Virginia has just departed; I'll just finish the sentence. I went back and checked the record, and indeed he supported strategic dispersal of carriers in his confirmation hearing for Secretary of the Navy.

Of course, it's the logical position, and that was 1987 and the Atlantic fleet, just like the Pacific fleet, had always been dispersed so that you don't put all your eggs in one basket. There are three home ports on the Pacific fleet. There have always been two home ports on the Atlantic fleet, and that was the case up until 2½ years ago when the conventional carrier *John F. Kennedy* was mothballed, and that left no carriers in Mayport.

Since then a new carrier has come on line, a nuclear carrier since we now have all nuclear carriers, and those carriers—the Navy has made its decision. This goes back. The record is replete. In February 2005 the CNO, Admiral Clark, stated that the Navy should have two Atlantic carrier ports.

In March 2006, the Deputy Secretary of Defense and former Secretary of the Navy Gordon England stated: A nuclear carrier should be in Florida to achieve dispersion.

In March 2006, the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Giambastiani, shared his judgment before this committee that we should disperse our carriers.

These are all parts of the record of this committee, Mr. Chairman.

In July 2007, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Admiral Mullen, stated: "I am on the record more than once for this, very supportive of strategic dispersal of our carriers."

In December 2008, the Secretary of Defense wrote: "Having a single CVN home port has not been considered acceptable on the West Coast and should not be considered acceptable on the East Coast."

In January 2009, the Navy issued a record of decision to establish Naval Station Mayport as a CVN home port. Then we went through all last year, the QDR, at the insistence of the Senator from Virginia. When the QDR was complete, the Department of Defense validated the Navy's position, stating in the QDR: "To mitigate the risk of terrorist attack, accident, or natural disaster, the U.S. Navy will home port an East Coast carrier in Mayport, FL."

I didn't intend to come here and speak on this. If I'd have known that my colleague from Florida was going to speak on it, I would have encouraged him not to. But it seems like that we have to continue, and therefore I will continue. Just so the record is understood, Admiral, you earlier testified, you testified that the total cost of making Mayport nuclear-capable for a home port of a nuclear carrier would be, and I think your testimony was somewhere around \$500 million.

Admiral ROUGHEAD. That's correct, sir.

Senator BILL NELSON. You also stated, if I recall, because I heard you on the television, that that included the amount that was being spent now for the dredging as well as the repairs to the wharf. Is that correct?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. That's correct, sir. It's to make that port nuclear carrier-capable, which I include to be a maintenance capability.

Senator BILL NELSON. Therefore, I would like the record to reflect that that was a matter that we took care of in the defense appropriations bill for this current fiscal year. That is law, and that money is appropriated and it's being spent, and it is a total amount of some \$70 million for the dredging out to a mile and a half, and that's dredging down to 55 feet to accommodate a nuclear carrier, as well as to the repairs to the wharf, which are the two long-lead items that need to be done.

So if my math is correct, \$70 million already appropriated from what the Admiral said, approximately \$500 million. We're talking about somewhere in the range of about \$430 million left over a several-year period to be appropriated to have a second home port for a nuclear carrier; is that right?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. That's correct, sir, give or take some adjustments in there. But we've begun the process. The money is spread over the FYDP, and this year what we need is to be able to con-

tinue this plan. It's the money that allows us to do the appropriate planning that allows us to most efficiently lay in that improvement.

Senator BILL NELSON. Mr. Chairman, I certainly don't want to continue to take the committee's time on this. The decision has been made. Part of the appropriations, a good slug of the appropriations, are already under way. The military has made its decision all the way up to the Secretary of Defense with the QDR. And I'd like to move on.

But as long as this keeps being raised as an issue—and it's my understanding now that I'm going to have to fight as a member of the Budget Committee, of all things, in the account for the military—that I'm going to have to have a fight in the Budget Committee over this very same issue.

If that is the case, so be it. It seems to me that at some point we ought to understand that the decision has been made and it's been made for the purposes of securing the national defense. If we disperse carriers in three home ports with another two ports available in the Pacific, for a total of five, we sure better not put all five Atlantic fleet carriers in one port up river, which the commercial channel runs right by the docks.

So I will stop right there. I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your patience.

I want to thank the CNO, the Secretary of the Navy, the indulgence of the General. I want to thank you all for your public service. Thank you.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you very much, Senator Nelson.

I have just a few additional questions. I don't know if any other colleagues do, but if they do I'm sure they'll come back.

First, Secretary, on the Weapons Systems Acquisition Reform Act of 2009, it was designed to address some of the problems that we've had with weapons systems that take too long, cost too much. An effort is there in law, but it's going to require in the culture to insist on early tradeoffs between cost, schedule, and performance, better systems engineering, better cost estimates, more mature technologies at the beginning, and better developmental testing.

Is the Navy on track to rebuild its systems engineering, cost estimating, and developmental testing capabilities as required by our law?

Mr. MABUS. Yes, sir, we are. We are aggressively moving to hire the acquisition professionals back into the Navy to get those requirements on line.

Chairman LEVIN. The committee added nine F/A-18 E and Fs to the budget request last year, in part to help with a real shortfall in strike fighters. We understand the Department was glad to get those additional aircraft. We've seen a restructuring this year of the JSF program, with a resultant slowdown, we believe, in the production of F-35s, with a slight increase in the number of F-18s, but that increase does not match the slowdown in the F-35 aircraft production.

What is the current assessment of the Navy of the maximum size of the fighter shortfall, Admiral?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Yes, sir. We have worked this management of our tactical aviation very hard for the last couple of years, and I believe we have done some very good work in using attrition air-

craft and transitioning squadrons a little ahead of schedule. So right now as we sit and we look at what we're going to have in the future, it's about 100 aircraft. In POM 2012 we're going to have to look at the life extension on some of our earlier 18 A through Ds, and that's where our focus will be.

Chairman LEVIN. Now, why not—why did not request the increase in the F/A-18 E and Fs procurement to compensate for that reduction in JSF?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. What we are looking at, Senator, is the cost of the life extension on the A and D's is not unattractive. We have to look at that and that's where our focus is right now. Getting the JSF on track and delivered is of paramount importance, but we're going to look at the life extension program on the earlier Hornets.

Chairman LEVIN. Admiral, your prepared statement says that: "Accession to the Law of the Sea Convention remains a priority for the Navy." Is that your personal and professional view regarding accession to that convention?

Admiral ROUGHEAD. Absolutely, and it's even more important than just the Navy, Senator. I believe that as we deal with resource issues in the coming years and decades being party to that treaty will be in the best interests of the Nation.

Chairman LEVIN. Secretary, your prepared statement said that you support ratification of that convention, saying that "Ratification would enhance stability for international maritime rules and ensure our access to critical air and sea lines of communication." Secretary, what effects would you foresee if we do not ratify that convention?

Mr. MABUS. Senator, I think that ratifying the convention will give us much more ability to make those things happen in terms of free access to sea lanes, in terms of our ability to use the sea as a maritime commons. And I think that if we do not ratify that convention we take some risk in being able to do some of the things that we need to do.

Chairman LEVIN. Secretary and Admiral, let me join in my support, my commendation for the Navy for reassessing a prohibition which it had on the assignment of women for service on our submarines. I think you're doing the right thing and I commend you for that leadership.

On the question of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," Mr. Secretary, you indicated that you favor repeal of that program. I guess my question is would you favor repeal the way you do, if you felt that it would lead to a negative impact on readiness?

Mr. MABUS. No, sir, I do not.

Chairman LEVIN. So in favoring the repeal, then, is it fair to assume or to believe that you believe it will not have a negative effect on readiness?

Mr. MABUS. That's my personal belief, Senator. But I do believe that the President has set forth a good plan in terms of how to implement and I think that we should follow that implementation plan.

Chairman LEVIN. The President has also indicated, or I guess Secretary Gates has indicated, that there is going to be an effort to see if there can be some modifications in the way in which the

rules are applied without a change in the law. Are you familiar with that directive?

Mr. MABUS. I'm familiar that Secretary Gates has said that, yes, sir.

Chairman LEVIN. Do you know what he is referring to?

Mr. MABUS. No, sir, I do not.

Chairman LEVIN. We thank you all for your service—

Senator BILL NELSON. May I?

Chairman LEVIN. Oh, I'm sorry. I apologize. I looked over there and did not see you, Senator Nelson.

Senator BILL NELSON. Fine, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. You were hiding behind the chair or my eyes are going bad, one or the other.

Senator Bill Nelson.

Senator BILL NELSON. I just wanted to mention a couple things. It's pretty exciting, Admiral, as we're now looking down the road, what does the new nuclear submarine look like. Part of that is going to be designing the launch system of the future. Would you share with the committee what we had talked about before, the role that the Naval Ordnance Test Unit at Cape Canaveral that has been so integral to the design of the existing SSBNs, what that role might be in the future?

Admiral ROUGHHEAD. Yes, sir. As we begin to design the new submarine that will serve our country for decades to come, one of the components of it will be missile compartment and launch systems. Clearly, the relationship that we've had with the center down in Cape Canaveral is one that will continue. As we look to the future, there will be opportunities for not just that site, but also for employment as we begin to spin up and get into various stages of development and test.

Senator BILL NELSON. I'd just like the record to reflect, Mr. Chairman, that unfortunately, due to some misplaced priorities in the development of the new rocket to follow on the Space Shuttle, that rocket is not developed and as a result there are going to be layoffs of some exceptionally talented and trained and educated people at the Kennedy Space Center, which will be a talent pool that as the Navy gets into this design work with regard to the future launcher of a nuclear submarine that talent pool is there. So I want the record to reflect that.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, if I might ask General Conway. We have the Lightweight Mine Roller System. It's listed as one of your unfunded programs. It's my understanding—and I'd love to hear your ideas—that it has been very effective in countering the IEDs in Afghanistan. Can you describe that system and the Marines' attitude about funding for that system?

General CONWAY. Yes, sir, I can. It has been effective, sir. It's valuable to us because it's a steerable system that fits on the front of virtually all of our MRAP vehicles. There's no doubt that it has saved lives.

They for the most part are blown away when the larger IEDs go off. But in instances where they're not, it's easily repairable and put back into operation, and that's what makes it different from some of the others.

Sir, it's on the unfunded priority list because actually we've done some discovery learning on the value of the system since we worked our budget. Normally, unfunded priority list types of things would not take precedence over our budget items. That's by conscious choice. But in this case there are probably two or three instances out of that \$231 million that we have found very valuable just in recent weeks or months in Afghanistan that we wanted to put on that list.

Senator BILL NELSON. Well, we want to keep talking to you about that. Since this seems to be such an effective device, if it's ready to be funded we want to try to provide for that for you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman LEVIN. Thank you, Senator Nelson. Thank you for pointing out that priority. It's a major priority. It has been for this committee for as long as I can remember that these IEDs be addressed in any way we possibly can, and we have never that I can remember, ever not come forth with whatever funding could be usefully spent to address that threat.

Gentlemen, we thank you and we adjourn.

[Whereupon, at 12:28 p.m., the committee adjourned.]