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SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
STRATEGIC FORCES SUBCOMMITTEE  
UNITED STATES SENATE

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

PRESENTATION TO THE SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE  
STRATEGIC FORCES SUBCOMMITTEE  
UNITED STATES SENATE

SUBJECT: Status of Air Force Nuclear and Global Strike Systems

STATEMENT OF: General Robin Rand, Commander  
Air Force Global Strike Command

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## **Introduction**

Chairman Sessions, Ranking Member Donnelly, and distinguished Members of the Committee; thank you for allowing me to represent the over 31,000 Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC) Airmen. This is my first opportunity to appear before this committee and I look forward to updating you on what the Command has accomplished and where we are going.

## **Air Force Global Strike Command Mission**

As you know, the Command was created to provide a focus on the stewardship and operation of two legs of our nation's nuclear triad while also accomplishing the conventional global strike mission. We live in a world that continues to rapidly change and until we have the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons we must never forget the stabilizing influence the triad has on our allies, partners, and adversaries. The nuclear mission remains our top priority, however we must not discount the important work our Airmen do conventionally. In fact, this past year AFGSC assumed command of the B-1B mission, bringing all Air Force bombers under one command. In order for us to be effective across the spectrum of conflict from day-to-day deterrence and assurance operations to nuclear engagement, our Airmen must be ready and equipped with the right tools to do the job. Continuing in the proud heritage of Strategic Air Command, yet tailored for today's evolving world, AFGSC's mission is: "Airmen providing strategic deterrence, global strike and combat support...anytime, anywhere!"

The Command's top priority is to ensure our nuclear arsenal is safe, secure, and effective. This priority underlies every nuclear-related activity in AFGSC whether it is the maintainer turning wrenches or our planners working on future weapon systems. We must never fail in the special trust and confidence the American people have bestowed on our nuclear warriors. It means that leaders must continue to support and advocate for the sustainment and modernization of these weapon systems.

Our conventional bomber forces defend our national interests by deterring or, should deterrence fail, defeating an adversary; they also assure our allies and partners around the globe. Two capabilities are fundamental to the success of our bomber forces: our ability to hold heavily defended targets at risk and our ability to apply persistent combat power across the spectrum of conflict anywhere on the globe at any time. The United States' fleet of heavy bombers provides the nation a visible global warfighting capability that is essential to the credibility of America's

national security strategy. These bombers carry our latest high-tech munitions in quantities to ensure the Air Force can meet our nation's global responsibilities, and therefore are in high-demand by the regional Combatant Commanders.

## **Air Force Global Strike Command Forces**

### ***Intercontinental Ballistic Missile Forces***

Twentieth Air Force (20 AF), one of two Numbered Air Forces in AFGSC, is responsible for the Minuteman III (MM III) Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) and UH-1N helicopter forces. The 450 dispersed and hardened missile silos maintain strategic stability by presenting potential adversaries a near insurmountable obstacle should they consider a disarming attack on the United States. Currently, no potential adversary can hope to destroy this force without depleting its own arsenal. Every day Airmen deploy to our three missile fields, executing strategic deterrence and assurance operations, while standing ready to execute if called upon. They accomplish this mission in a challenging environment and on a massive scale; our missile crews, maintenance teams, security forces personnel, and others who support this mission traveled over 17.9 million miles last year alone. This is a unique and critical mission area that deserves our attention. As part of the Air Force's efforts to improve the nuclear enterprise, 20 AF assumed stewardship of the 377th Air Base Wing at Kirtland AFB. As part of that transfer, the Kirtland Underground Munitions Maintenance and Storage Complex now falls under 20 AF and AFGSC thereby bringing a critical mission set under a nuclear focused command.

### ***Minuteman III***

We continue to sustain and modernize the Minuteman III ICBM. This includes upgrading the command, control, and communications systems and support equipment. We continue moving forward on the Transporter Erector (TE) Replacement Program (TERP) and the Payload Transporter (PT) Replacement (PTR) to modernize our existing fleet of large maintenance vehicles utilized to transport missile components to and from the field. We currently expect TERP to reach initial operational capability (IOC) in FY18 and PTR to begin production in FY17.

We are also equipping ICBM launch control centers (LCC) with modernized communications systems that will upgrade or replace aging and obsolete systems. The LCC Block Upgrade, expected to begin deployment in 2020, is an overall modification effort that

replaces multiple LCC components to include a modern data storage replacement for floppy disks and new Voice Control Panels to provide higher fidelity voice communications. We continue to push forward on improving Remote Visual Assessment at our remote LFs, a significant security upgrade, to improve situational awareness and security. We expect this program to be IOC in FY19. Another very important program, ICBM Cryptographic Upgrade II, is scheduled to begin production in FY17 and will improve our cryptographic security while dramatically streamlining code change operations.

We conducted four successful MM III flight tests in Fiscal Year 2015 that, along with one Simulated Electronic Launch Minuteman test in the operational environment, demonstrate the operational credibility of the nuclear deterrent force and the AF's commitment to sustaining that capability. Operational flight testing is currently funded and planned for four operational test launches in FY16 to satisfy requirements outlined by United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) and the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). In fact, we have already launched one of those and expect to launch the next two this month.

#### ***Ground Based Strategic Deterrent***

The Minuteman flight system, currently on its third model, has been on continuous alert since the early 1960s and has proven its value in deterring our adversaries and assuring our allies well beyond the platform's initial 10-year lifespan. ICBM capability gaps were identified and validated by the Joint Requirements Oversight Council, and subsequently approved in August 2012 by the Air Force Chief of Staff, resulting in an Analysis of Alternatives (AoA). The AoA was completed in 2014 and concluded that an integrated replacement to the MM III weapon system was the most cost-effective approach to filling capability gaps. Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE) reviewed the AoA report and validated it as "sufficient to support a Milestone A decision and initiate a program of record." SAF/AQ approved the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent (GBSD) Acquisition Strategy in December of last year and directed the program to proceed to the Milestone A Defense Acquisition Board. Additionally, we are engaged with our Navy partners to further investigate areas for intelligent commonality between potential GBSD systems and future Navy weapons. We hope to find areas of overlap with the objective of reducing design, development, manufacturing, logistics support, production, and testing costs for the nation's strategic systems while still acknowledging that the different weapon systems will have some requirements that

necessitate unique solutions due to their differing missions. We are also collaborating with the NNSA to develop a life extension program for our aging W78 nuclear warhead, which will operate on both MMIII and GBSD.

Due to system age-out, the first priority is to replace the missile itself. However, command and control (C2) and infrastructure recapitalization is necessary to continue safe, secure, and effective operations. It is no small task to upgrade the command and control systems along with the underlying infrastructure that supports the weapon system. For example, at our largest missile field operated by the 341st Missile Wing, we must connect and support hardened systems across almost 14,000 square miles, an area the size of Maryland. This vital nuclear command and control is currently serviced by buried copper wire and equipment installed in the 1960s. AFGSC is defining approaches to upgrade C2 and modernize necessary facilities. GBSD cannot be viewed as just another life extension to our existing MMIII; it is time to field a replacement ground-based capability that will continue to assure our allies and deter potential adversaries well into the future. Thank you for your continued support of GBSD ensuring it will lead to a viable replacement for the MM III ICBM.

### ***UH-1N***

AFGSC is the lead command for the Air Force's fleet of 62 UH-1N helicopters. The majority of these aircraft support two critical national missions: nuclear security in support of the ICBM force and the Continuity of Operations and transport missions in the National Capital Region. They also actively participate in the Defense Support of Civil Authorities program often being called to help with search and rescue activities.

The UH-1N does not meet the missile field needs for range, speed, and capacity as outlined by DOD and USSTRATCOM requirements. We will continue to work to mitigate some of these requirement gaps through various measures such as arming the UH-1N and providing refueling stations throughout the missile complex. However, there are certain requirements we are unable to mitigate and I am happy to discuss that further in a classified environment.

### ***UH-1N Follow On***

While we can, to some extent, mitigate the UH-1N's deficiencies in range, speed, and payload, no amount of modification to this 1960s platform will close these critical capability gaps entirely. Recognizing that we cannot modify our UH-1Ns to resolve the capability gaps, we are dedicated to replacing the aircraft with a medium lift helicopter capable of meeting mission

requirements. The UH-1N Replacement Program was funded in FY 2016 and we are now moving out to deliver this capability and closing this critical gap. This past January, the Air Force conducted a High Power Team which confirmed our most critical capability requirements. Our counterparts in SAF/AQ and Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC) are evaluating acquisition approaches that focus on expediting the fielding of replacement helicopters for the nuclear convoy escort and missile field support missions. While we work to deliver the aircraft, we must also work through support challenges such as infrastructure, maintenance, and aircrew training. I can assure you that Secretary James, our Chief, General Welsh and I are completely dedicated to delivering the replacement helicopters as soon as possible.

### ***Bomber Forces***

Eighth Air Force is responsible for the B-52H Stratofortress (B-52), the B-2A Spirit (B-2), and most recently the B-1B Lancer (B-1) bombers. This includes maintaining the operational readiness of the dual-capable bombers' nuclear and conventional missions. The B-52 is an extremely versatile weapon system providing precision, large payload, and timely global strike capabilities both conventional and nuclear. Complementing the B-52, the B-2 can penetrate an adversary's most advanced Integrated Air Defense Systems to strike heavily defended and hardened targets. Our flexible dual-capable bomber fleet is the most visible leg of the nuclear triad. They provide decision makers the ability to demonstrate resolve through generation, dispersal, or deployment. And our ability to rapidly place bomber sorties on alert ensures their continued survival in support of the President and to meet combatant command requirements. The B-1 is an incredibly potent weapon system that has been in high demand by combatant commanders due to its wartime capabilities and mission flexibility as steadily demonstrated in conflicts since 2001.

### ***Global Assurance and Deterrence***

Continuous Bomber Presence (CBP), initiated in 2003, increases regional stability and assures our allies and partners in the United States Pacific Command (USPACOM) area of responsibility (AOR). We have taken steps to increase continuity of operations and maintenance by establishing a detachment at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam. While CBP is seen as a strong signal to our allies of our commitment to the region, it impacts AFGSC personnel and resources. Sustaining a long-term presence in USPACOM introduces stress in other areas as our bomber

force is requested by other combatant commanders. Complementary to CBP, our bombers exercise with every combatant command and every joint partner annually through the Bomber Assurance and Deterrence program. These visible exercises take place all over the globe are a continuous reminder to allies and potential adversaries of our nation's global reach.

### ***B-1***

The B-1 is a highly versatile, multi-mission weapon system that carries the largest payload of both guided and unguided weapons in the Air Force inventory. It can rapidly deliver large quantities of precision and non-precision weapons in support of combatant commanders around the globe.

The B-1's synthetic aperture radar is capable of finding, tracking, and targeting moving vehicles as well as having terrain-following modes and air-to-air situational awareness. The SNIPER-SE pod provides additional capability to engage fixed or moving targets. In addition, an extremely accurate Global Positioning System-aided Inertial Navigation System enables aircrews to navigate without the aid of ground-based navigation aids as well as strike targets with a high level of precision. The Digital Communications Initiative (DCI) modification to the radios provides a secure beyond line of sight satellite connection into the Line of Sight Link-16 network. In a time sensitive targeting environment, the aircrew can use targeting data over DCI, then strike emerging targets rapidly and efficiently. This capability was effectively demonstrated during operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, and Inherent Resolve.

The B-1 will be in demand for many more years and avionics and weapon upgrades are critical for it to remain a viable Combatant Commander tool. The Integrated Battle Station (IBS)/Software Block-16 (SB-16) upgrade, the largest ever B-1 modification, includes an upgraded Central Integrated Test System (CITS), Fully Integrated Data Link (FIDL), Vertical Situation Display Upgrade (VSDU), and a simulator upgrade. This marks a fantastic capability upgrade and the associated cockpit upgrades providing the crew with a much more flexible, integrated cockpit. In fact, the first 15 IBS-modified aircraft have been delivered, fully equipping an entire bomb squadron with these upgraded capabilities.

Our B-1 aircrews have been heavily engaged in combat operations; since September 11, 2001, they have flown well over 14,000 combat missions. As you may have heard already, the B-1s have begun departing the United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) AOR to help facilitate needed upgrades. This is a much needed respite to ensure the aircrews and aircraft are

ready to support combatant commanders. However, AFGSC stands ready to support any combatant commander with our other capable platforms to ensure no gap in combatant command requirements. For instance, the B-52 can very capably step back into a role it has filled in the past in the USCENTCOM AOR; its large payload of precision weapons will meet combatant commander needs in theater, and our crews constantly train to ensure they are combat ready should they get the call. In the event of a bomber-capable “Request for Forces” by USCENTCOM, I’ve directed our two B-52 wings to be ready and prepared to backfill the B-1s later this spring.

### ***B-52***

The B-52 may be the most universally recognized symbol of American airpower...its contributions to our national security through the Cold War, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Allied Force, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom are well documented. Our Airmen have worked tirelessly to keep the venerable B-52 mission capable. The B-52 is able to deliver the widest variety of nuclear and conventional weapons. This past year, we maintained complete coverage of our Nuclear Deterrence Operations requirements while supporting our overseas CBP for Pacific Command.

I anticipate the B-52 will remain a key element of our bomber force beyond 2040; it is paramount that we invest resources into this aircraft now to keep it viable in both conventional and nuclear mission areas for the next 30 years. Our B-52s are still using 1960s radar technology with the last major radar upgrade done in the early 1980s. Currently, the mean time between failure rate on the B-52 radar is 46 hours. The current radar on the B-52 will be even less effective in the future threat environment, and without an improved radar system on the B-52, there will be increased degradation in mission effectiveness. In order to remedy this, the B-52 Radar Modernization Program is approaching the conclusion of a Cost Capability Analysis Study and will be working toward an AoA sufficiency review in early Spring this year. Additionally, we are always looking at cost-effective ways to improve efficiency and performance of this important bomber.

Finally, I want to point out that we are still in work to convert 30 operational B-52 aircraft and 12 in storage to conventional-only configurations. We are on track to meet our New START Treaty requirements.



## ***B-2***

For over 25 years, our 20 B-2s have provided the nation with an assured penetrating bomber capability. In each of our nation's last four conflicts, the B-2 has led the way. This is a direct result of the outstanding Airmen who work to operate, maintain, and secure the aircraft. The B-2 is able to penetrate enemy defenses and deliver a wide variety of nuclear and conventional weapons due to its long-range and stealth capability.

We will preserve and improve the B-2's capability to penetrate hostile airspace and hold any target at risk without subjecting the crew and aircraft to threats. We are striving to maintain the proper balance of fleet sustainment efforts, testing, aircrew training, and combat readiness. The dynamics of a small fleet continue to challenge our sustainment efforts primarily due to vanishing vendors and diminishing sources of supply. AFMC is working to ensure timely parts availability; however, many manufacturers do not see a strong business case in supplying parts for a small aircraft fleet. Problems with a single part can have a significant readiness impact on a small fleet that lacks the flexibility of a large force to absorb parts shortages and logistics delays.

## ***Long Range Strike Bomber***

The combat edge of our B-2 is being challenged by next generation air defenses and the proliferation of these advanced systems. The Long Range Strike Bomber (LRS-B) program will extend American air dominance against next generation capabilities and advanced air defense environments. We continue to work closely with partners throughout the Air Force to develop the LRS-B and field a fleet of new dual-capable bombers; scheduled to become operational in the mid-2020s. Make no mistake – the LRS-B will be a nuclear bomber. However, the platform will not be delayed for use in a conventional capacity while it undergoes final nuclear certification. The LRS-B is being designed with an open architecture which will allow us to integrate new technology and respond to future threats for many years into the future. Thank you for your continued support for this critical program as it moves forward.

## ***Air Launched Cruise Missile***

The AGM-86B Air Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM) is an air-to-ground, winged, subsonic nuclear missile delivered by the B-52. It was fielded in the 1980s and is well beyond its originally designed 10-year service life. To ensure the USAF maintains its credible stand-off nuclear capability, the ALCM requires Service Life Extension Programs (SLEP). These SLEPs

require ongoing support and attention to ensure the ALCM will remain viable through 2030. Despite its age, last year we successfully conducted eight flight test evaluations and have 7 planned during FY16. Additionally, AFGSC continues to maintain the conventional variant (CALCM) to ensure it continues to provide conventional stand-off strike capability.

### ***Long Range Stand-Off Missile***

The LRSO is the replacement for the aging ALCM. The ALCM has significant capability gaps that will only worsen through the next decade. The LRSO will be a reliable, flexible, long-ranging, and survivable weapon system to complement the nuclear Triad. The LRSO missile will ensure the bomber force (B-52, B-2 and LRS-B) can continue to hold high value targets at risk in an evolving threat environment, to include targets within an area denial environment. I cannot overemphasize this point: LRS-B without LRSO greatly reduces our ability to hold adversaries at risk and to execute the mission. The LRSO will be compatible with the B-52, B-2, and the LRS-B platforms and we currently expect it to reach Milestone A this fiscal year. Additionally, we are synchronizing our efforts with NNSA to develop the W80-4 warhead to be fully integrated with LRSO.

### ***B61***

The B61-12 Life Extension Program (LEP) will result in a smaller stockpile, reduced special nuclear material in the inventory, and improved B61 surety. AFGSC is the lead command for the B61-12 Tail Kit Assembly program, which is needed to meet USSTRATCOM requirements on the B-2. The B61-12 Tail Kit Assembly program is in the Engineering and Manufacturing Development Phase 1 and is synchronized with NNSA efforts. The design and production processes are on schedule and within budget to meet the planned Fiscal Year 2020 First Production Unit date for the B61-12 Tail Kit Assembly, and support the lead time required for the March 2020 B61-12 all-up round. This joint Department of Defense and Department of Energy endeavor allows for continued attainment of our strategic requirements and regional commitments.

### ***GBU-57***

AFGSC assumed responsibility as the lead MAJCOM for the GBU-57 Massive Ordnance Penetrator (MOP) in the Summer of 2015. The MOP is a 30,000-pound guided conventional bomb designed to defeat hardened and deeply buried targets and is exclusively employed from the B-2. The MOP was initially designed as a Quick Reaction Capability following a

USCENTCOM Urgent Operational Need. Since then it has received several upgrades and enhancements based on warfighter requirements. AFGSC, USCENTCOM, and AFLCMC (MOP Program Office) are currently conducting two more enhancements to increase weapon effectiveness.

## **Security**

Nuclear security is a key function of the Command's mission. A major AFGSC initiative to ensure security continues to be the new Weapon Storage Facilities (WSF) which will consolidate nuclear maintenance, inspection, and storage. We have put forward a \$1.3 billion program (\$521 million across the FYDP) to replace all deficient buildings across our aging 1960's-era Weapon Storage Areas with a single modern and secure facility at each of our bases. This initiative eliminates security, design, and safety deficiencies and improves our maintenance processes. We included \$95 million in funding for the WSF at F. E. Warren AFB, WY, in the last year's budget and the MILCON for the remaining facilities in future years. These facilities are needed to meet requirements for a safe, secure, and effective nuclear arsenal.

## **Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications**

The ability to receive Presidential orders and convert those orders into action for the required weapon system is both critical to performing the nuclear mission and foundational to an effective credible strategic deterrent. The Air Force took an important step this year by declaring Nuclear Command, Control, and Communications (NC3) a weapon system which recognizes the absolute importance of these systems that ensure proper nuclear command and control. Declaring NC3 a weapon system is no small matter; it begins a process to manage this new weapon system's training, resources, and sustainment just like all other weapons systems in the AF. AFGSC is the lead command for National Leadership Command Control (NLCC)/NC3 which establishes one focal point for the weapon system. Since these systems are spread across the government, there are multiple working groups at all levels to ensure open communications. In fact, I chair the Air Force NLCC/NC3 Council where we bring together MAJCOM commanders to prioritize resources and resolve any outstanding issues. I think it is also important to highlight the hard work Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center (AFNWC) and AFMC have put into this effort to support not only the systems but AFGSC as a whole. As I will discuss

later, we are codifying these relationships to establish clear lines of authority and responsibility which will only improve NC3 sustainment and modernization.

AFGSC has made tremendous gains in efforts to modernize our communications and cyberspace infrastructure by leveraging technology to make our forces more capable and effective. In our ICBM missile fields, the copper cabling that transport voice and data between the main base and the Missile Alert Facilities (MAFs) in some cases dates back to 1960s technology and equipment. We have undertaken a major modernization initiative to replace old cabling with modern technology that will realize over a 15-fold increase in data capability and improve missile field command and control with unclassified and classified networking, wireless networking, and secure digital voice to the MAFs. These are important upgrades but they still do not replace the buried copper nuclear command and control lines. We are also addressing mission assurance for our main bases and have begun to look at issues of bandwidth allocation and the routing of long-haul telecommunications circuits into our installations to best guarantee continuity of service.

Ultimately, we have taken seriously our charge with sustaining and modernizing the NC3 weapon system. In fact, through the Nuclear Enterprise Review process we identified multiple areas that have atrophied through decades of low prioritization. To remedy that, we have advocated for funds such as \$16 million to improve long-haul communications, \$8 million in telephony upgrades, and \$2 million in radio upgrades. These are just examples of the things we have been able to accomplish with the support of those inside and outside the DOD. Thank you very much for your continued interest and support in NC3; we are in agreement on what needs to be done in the future and I look forward to continuing our efforts.

### **Nuclear Enterprise Review**

As this committee is well aware, the Air Force and this command have undertaken momentous shifts to support our number one priority. Our Airmen are beginning to see resourcing balanced against mission requirements. They see mid-career leaders mentoring those below them, educating them on the importance of their missions. And they see their most senior leaders in the Administration, in the Department, and here in Congress acting on their behalf.

I will lay out a number of accomplishments that have been possible thanks to the support of leadership in all branches of government, the DOD, and the Air Force. But first I would like

to recognize the hard work and leadership of my predecessor, Lieutenant General Stephen Wilson; he embraced the challenge and AFGSC is better for it. I sit before you today as the first 4-star commander of AFGSC and the AF now has a 3-star as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration. This recognizes the importance of the nuclear enterprise within the Air Force and elevates our advocacy. Additionally, as part of the Nuclear Enterprise Review (NER) we found we needed to link all the disparate nuclear activities within the AF into a more synchronized and focused structure to provide direction and support for our nuclear forces. The Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff directed the AFGSC Commander be the single face for the AF for "all things nuclear". We are currently in the process of implementing that guidance which will culminate with AFGSC as the lead command for the nuclear deterrent operations mission and the AFNWC restructuring to provide "direct support" to AFGSC for all material elements of the nuclear enterprise.

We are shifting our security forces members from PRP to the Arming and Use of Force (AUoF) standards. This maintains the high standards required in our business while reducing the administrative workload driven by maintaining two overlapping reliability programs. This ensures our security forces members across the Air Force are held to the same standard and improves mobility between bases. Additionally, we have improved the equipment and uniforms of our missile field defenders through our Model Defender program.

Across the maintenance, operations, and security forces career fields we have implemented the Assignment Incentive Pay (AIP) which reflects the incredible responsibility placed on our nuclear Airmen's shoulders. For our enlisted members in critical career fields we have implemented the Special Duty Assignment Pay (SDAP). AIP and SDAP are but a small way we recognize the hard work our Airmen accomplish in this demanding and ever-important field.

For our ICBM operations, we have implemented a number of changes. Among them is re-imagining the crew construct altogether. We have revamped training to remove the blurring of lines between training and evaluating; implementing reforms to increase the proficiency of our missile crews. We have also changed how the crew tour works. Previously, most crew members would spend four years at their missile base, progress through the different leadership positions, and then move on to another assignment. Instead we are moving to a "3+3" concept where a crewmember will spend the first three years as a deputy and commander becoming an expert on

the weapon system. Most of the crew force will then move to another ICBM base where they will fill instructor, evaluator, and flight commander roles; for those who do not move, they will fill those same roles at their current duty station.

We have been implementing changes for our bomber forces, as well. For instance, we have completely overhauled B-52 initial and mission qualification training and are advancing B-52 simulator upgrade timelines to better support nuclear mission training. Additionally, we have developed up our Striker Vista program to advance integration between bomber platforms through the transfer of personnel between wings. This is not a new concept to the AF but it is something new to our bomber forces.

These are just some of the fundamental changes we have implemented in conjunction with the Nuclear Enterprise Review findings. I could list literally hundreds of individual initiatives, most of which have been completed, that cut across the nuclear mission from standing up an independent helicopter group, to significant manpower plus-ups, to new vehicles and equipment, to organizational changes to address long-standing needs. However, more importantly you should know that we are not done. I truly believe we can never return to the previous way of doing things; instead we must always look to the future and always have open minds. Since the NER reports, we have accomplished bottom-up reviews of our bomber forces, airborne launch operations, and the headquarters itself. Most recently, I tasked a team to conduct a review of our convoy operations to ensure we are accomplishing this absolutely critical mission area the best way possible. We are building a culture that embraces innovation and change.

### **2016 Priorities**

In FY15, AFGSC took a deliberate approach with planning and executing its mission. Through the successful execution of new initiatives, AFGSC was able to earn an additional \$214 million from initial distribution used to fund NC3, manpower, readiness requirements, and Nuclear Force Improvement Program initiatives. But we have more work to do and we will move forward in the context of my priorities.

My priorities are relatively simple and they inform every decision I make. They are Mission, Airmen, Families all built on Heritage and Core Values. We exist to serve the nation by providing strategic deterrence and global strike. However, without our great Airmen we could never hope to be as successful as we are. In my visits to our units, I am always humbled

by the dedication of your Global Strike warriors and their unfailing drive to do their best. I truly believe that while we may recruit Airmen, we retain families. To me that means we cannot forget the loved ones who stay behind while our Airmen deploy whether it is overseas or to a missile field. It means supporting the families who back up our Airmen who work long hours ensuring our bases are secure. It means recognizing that no matter the job an Airman is doing, we must never lose sight of the family who makes it all possible.

I mentioned that Heritage and Core Values are the foundation of the priorities I just listed. I think we learn from our history but we are inspired by our Heritage. AFGSC and the Air Force as a whole have a proud heritage. Eighth Air Force has a proud history dating back to the European theater in World War II while Twentieth Air Force did great things in the Pacific theater. Our Airmen should understand and embrace this Heritage. Lastly, our Core Values of “Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do” should underpin every decision we make each and every day. Without these values we sacrifice who we are and then nothing else matters.

## **Conclusion**

Thank you for your continued support of Air Force Global Strike Command and our strategic deterrent and global strike missions. The President’s 2015 National Security Strategy is clear: “As long as nuclear weapons exist, the United States must invest the resources necessary to maintain—without testing—a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent that preserves strategic stability.” Fiscal constraints, while posing planning challenges, do not alter the national security landscape or the intent of competitors and adversaries, nor do they diminish the enduring value of long range, strategic forces to our nation.

Although we account for less than one percent of the DOD budget, AFGSC forces represent two-thirds of the nation’s nuclear triad and play a critical role in ensuring U.S. national security, while also providing joint commanders rapid global combat airpower. AFGSC will continue to seek innovative, cost-saving measures to ensure our weapon systems are operating as efficiently as possible. Modernization, however, is mandatory. AFGSC is operating B-52s built in the 1960s with equipment designed in the 1950s; operating ICBMs with 1960s infrastructure; and utilizing 1960s era weapon storage areas. We cannot afford to delay modernization

initiatives across the two legs of the nation's nuclear triad and the NC3 systems which connect our capabilities to the President.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Congress for your ongoing support of the nuclear enterprise. Your support does not go unnoticed and is absolutely critical to ensuring AFGSC provides the nuclear and conventional capabilities this Nation deserves. It is my privilege to lead this elite team empowered with special trust and responsibility. It is truly an honor to be a Wingman to the outstanding Airmen who make up Air Force Global Strike Command.