

Statement for the Record

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Chairman Turner, Ranking Member Sanchez, and distinguished Members of the Committee, I am pleased to appear before you today on behalf of General Bruce Carlson (USAF, Ret.), the Director, National Reconnaissance Office (DNRO), to discuss the NRO fiscal year (FY) 2013 National Defense Authorization Budget Request for National Security Space Activities. It is an honor for me to appear alongside our mission partners from the Department of Defense (DoD), Ambassador Greg Schulte, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy; Mr. Gil Klinger, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space and Intelligence and General William Shelton, Commander, Air Force Space Command. The NRO's close relationship and continuing partnership with our mission partners are vital to maintaining our Nation's superiority in space.

The unclassified nature of today's hearing precludes me from discussing many details of NRO programs, as well as sharing some of our greatest successes. However, I welcome the opportunity to meet in another setting to fully discuss with you the breadth and depth of NRO capabilities, partnerships, and value of the NRO contributions to National Security.

**DNRO Priorities.** Since taking the helm at the NRO three years ago, Director Carlson established four goals for the organization: launching capabilities when scheduled, ensuring

our acquisition programs remain in the "green" (meeting cost, schedule, and performance), ensuring strong continued investment in research and development, and expediting operational availability of our systems while maximizing life expectancy (over expected life) for on-orbit systems. To attain these goals, we focus on executing acquisition programs on time and cost through an evolutionary approach to realizing revolutionary new capabilities - an approach made possible by strong research and technology investment. We also continue to improve our relationships with our key mission partners to adapt on-orbit systems and capabilities to support current warfighter needs.

**State of the NRO.** I would like to begin with a few words about the state of the NRO today. Last year we executed the most aggressive launch campaign in over 25 years. We successfully launched six satellites in seven months and this year with the same determination we're scheduled to launch four more in five months with the first scheduled launch later this month. Our ability to sustain such high tempo is due both to the diligent efforts of our program teams who successfully acquire and deliver these complex systems on time, and our strong partnerships with the Air Force launch community. These successful launches are a very important and visible reminder of the space reconnaissance mission the NRO started over 50 years ago, and continues with such great success today. We are

committed to smart acquisition investments and practices to ensure the continued coverage and availability of our vital National Security systems and we work tirelessly to deliver these systems on time and within budget.

The NRO remains committed to using the qualified launch vehicles that meet our requirements and are consistent with the need for assured access to space. The health of the launch industrial base and enhancing assured access to space is essential to the success of our programs and their launch platforms. The NRO is committed to improving the launch industry, as demonstrated by the joint NRO/Air Force development of a new Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicle (EELV) acquisition strategy aimed at sustaining the launch industrial base while stabilizing launch costs. In addition to EELV, the NRO plans to compete launch services for appropriate missions, consistent with the new, joint Air Force, NRO and NASA coordinated strategy for new entrant launch vehicles certification. The NRO, Air Force, and NASA, have jointly agreed on this new entrant launch provider strategy to facilitate competition, avoid undue duplication in the certification process, and ensure the Government is receiving the most cost effective launch services to meet our required performance. We are dedicated to working with the Air Force, NASA, and commercial space providers to

ensure our Nation's launch and space industrial base remains strong enough to meet our mission requirements.

From launching and operating the most technically-capable systems to continued operations of legacy satellites the NRO remains the premier space reconnaissance organization in the world. The unique composition of our workforce is one of our greatest strengths. As you know, we draw our personnel from across the DoD and Intelligence Community (IC), recruiting the best and brightest acquisition, operations, and engineering personnel from the space community. The talented people of the NRO allow our significant and continued mission success, and enable our ability to provide the very best information from the warfighter to the policymaker. Director Carlson and I are both confident that by continuing to leverage current successes and community workforce strengths, the NRO will continue to provide the Nation with the premier space reconnaissance capabilities for National security.

For the third year in a row, the NRO received a clean audit opinion on our Financial Statements, a truly unprecedented accomplishment within the IC. This positive outcome was the result of continued hard work across the NRO workforce and the culmination of a diligently planned and executed effort to continue our achievement in effective financial management. NRO's internal processes for proper funds management and

accurate financial reports have been validated, and we are successfully positioned to continue to sustain this clean audit into the future.

## **EVOLUTIONARY ACQUISITION**

Maintaining a healthy space industrial base, coupled with delivering programs on cost and schedule, is a matter of critical importance to our national security. Evolutionary acquisition practices, used successfully for decades by the NRO, can help us sustain our industrial base in the future. We can also leverage and extend our acquisition success by institutionalizing proven best practices. A careful look at many of our past successful programs reveal common threads such as leveraging proven designs and platforms, and introducing payload enhancements incrementally into programs of record.

We will continue to implement evolutionary acquisition techniques using proven best practices to control costs and achieve reliable and consistent acquisition results. We will use multi-vehicle purchases for production stability, coupled with investments in new capabilities, while sustaining factory and satellite constellation health to improve cost and acquisition efficiency. The evolutionary acquisition practices could help stabilize our industrial base and allow us to acquire satellites more efficiently.

**NRO CONTRIBUTIONS: CRITICAL TO THE FIGHT**

Lastly, I would like to highlight the real bottom line for the NRO---our support to the warfighter. More than a decade after the attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, the NRO continues to contribute everyday to ongoing operations around the globe. We currently have more than 55 personnel deployed around the globe in direct support of the warfighter to ensure we're rapidly adapting to the needs and changing threats to our Nation and the men and women in harm's way.

In 2011 alone, NRO provided extremely valuable intelligence supporting more than 15 operations to capture or kill high value targets in combat areas. In addition, NRO supported more than 120 tactical operations locating Improvised Explosive Devices, helping to prevent the most lethal attacks against our ground combat forces. These tactical support operations also included support to ground and air tactical actions; counter-terrorist actions; and maritime anti-piracy/interdiction. We also provided vital overhead support to 17 critical Combat Search and Rescue missions. In addition to ground combat operations support, NRO supported 33 Strait of Hormuz transits ensuring U.S. Naval Forces had the intelligence assistance needed for safe passage.

In both the U.S. Central and African Command Areas of Operations, NRO has developed and deployed more than 25 reference emitters which have been used over 13000 times, and

provided a significant enhancement in our ability to geo-locate surface to air missile radar systems. This new capability has allowed U.S. and Coalition military forces to be extremely precise in targeting these significant threats.

The NRO's Ground Enterprise Directorate has recently fielded highly advanced, state-of-the-art systems that have significantly increased the relevance and value of time-sensitive data and products for Combatant Commanders. Ongoing counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism activities have underscored the tremendous impact of these systems in support of combat operations throughout the Eastern Hemisphere. As such, the warfighters' demand for time-sensitive products and data has dramatically transformed both the Intelligence Community production center's and their customer base. NRO has responded with an accelerated fielding of these ground systems that can quickly support finding and alerting potential insurgent events and meeting United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) requirements for near-real-time situational awareness of the battlespace.

In addition to rapidly developing and deploying capabilities in support of the warfighter, the NRO is also proactively involved with pre-deployment defense and intelligence training initiatives to include integration into core curricula at the Army's Intelligence Center of Excellence

at Fort Huachuca, Arizona. Our NRO Mobile Training Teams provided the Army's I Corps and III Corps with training on National Intelligence capabilities available in theater

## **CONCLUSION**

The people of the NRO embody our core values of Integrity and Accountability, Teamwork Built on Respect and Diversity, and Mission Excellence. It is our highly skilled personnel who ensure we attain the NRO vision of "Vigilance From Above" by executing our mission to provide, "Innovative Overhead Intelligence Systems for National Security." Driven by our extraordinary people, the NRO will continue on the path of delivering acquisition and operations excellence, as well as the unparalleled innovation that is the hallmark of our history and the foundation of our future. We encourage you to visit the NRO for detailed discussions on how our systems directly support the National security of the United States.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for your continued support of the National Reconnaissance Office and the opportunity to appear before you today.