



## HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE DUNCAN HUNTER – CHAIRMAN

### **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **CHAIRMAN HUNTER OPENING STATEMENT**

### ***Full Committee Posture Hearing on the United States Transportation Command's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2007***

**Washington, D.C.** – This morning, the committee continues its review of the Department of Defense fiscal year 2007 budget request, today hearing from the United States Transportation Command and associated component commands.

As our recent hearings have shown, this year's budget is no exception to those of past years in posing a number of serious resource challenges. Our hearing this morning will focus on the current and future state of our airlift, sealift, and land component transportation forces.

Over the past ten years, the United States has reduced its Cold War infrastructure, and closed two-thirds of its forward bases. This means that to maintain the same level of global engagement, U.S. forces must deploy more frequently, and over greater distances. This also means that the necessary equipment and needed supplies to sustain them, must travel those same great distances. Gen Moseley, Air Force Chief of Staff, stated yesterday that our airlift forces have "crossed the pond" almost ninety two thousand times since Desert Storm with our men, women and equipment as they meet the needs of the nation.

For example, of extreme importance for our warfighters, and this committee, was the movement of armored vehicles and add-on armor kits that TRANSCOM orchestrated. In calendar year 2005, SDDC, via the Military Sealift Command's organic and chartered ships, shipped 6,294 Level One Up-Armored Humvees to CENTCOM for the Army. Similarly, Air Mobility Command airlifted 25,827 Level Two kits. TRANSCOM also met the Marine Corps armor needs by shipping 966 Level One Up-Armored Humvees and 3,276 Level Two kits. The total Level Two armor airlift tonnage for the Army and Marine Corps was equivalent to 798 fully loaded C-5 aircraft.

It's important for us to note that TRANSCOM currently combines these wartime missions with other worldwide operations such as support for detainee operations in Guantanamo Bay, additional contingency and peacekeeping operations around the globe, exercises that are vitally important to keep our forces trained and ready, and humanitarian aid missions such as the Tsunami in Asia, and Hurricane Katrina along the Gulf Coast.

As I mentioned yesterday in the Air Force posture hearing, our aircraft platforms continue to age due to procurement shortfalls that began in the nineties. The challenge of operating and maintaining older equipment is further compounded by a continued high operational tempo. We currently see the results of those deficiencies as we look at our aging KC-135 fleet of tankers, the C-5 strategic airlifter, and the work horse of intra-theater airlift, the C-130. These aircraft, including even our newest strategic airlifter, the C-17, are operating at utilization rates far beyond those planned.

Recently, the Department of Defense completed the Mobility Capability Study and it is viewed by the DoD as a full spectrum assessment of TRANSCOM's capability to support global mobility requirements in accordance with the scenarios in the DoD Strategic Planning Guidance for fiscal years 2006 through 2011. The MCS concluded that the force structure capabilities in the DoD program of record through Fiscal Year 2012 reflect a moderate level of risk in meeting the National Military Strategy and objectives. However, this committee, and most recently GAO, have reservations about its completeness.

For example, the MCS made recommendations, including the initiation of five additional studies that could change the MCS results. They concern intra-theater airlift, sealift of petroleum, oil and lubricants, logistics contingency operations, aerial refueling, and finally a study on integrated global presence and basing. Furthermore, the MCS contains more than 80 references where the report recommends the need for further analysis, assessment, or review to provide a more complete study.

GAO's initial assessment is that "aspects of the MCS's design, execution, and presentation of results raise questions about the adequacy and completeness of the report," and further that "policy makers and other stakeholders may therefore want to exercise caution when using the report as a basis for making program decisions."

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