

RECORD VERSION

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BEFORE THE

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COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS**

Mr. Chairman and distinguished Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to report to you on current Force Protection Programs. It is our privilege to represent the Army, and the Soldiers who rely upon us to provide them with world-class weapon systems and equipment so they can successfully accomplish any mission at anytime, anywhere in the world.

Mr. Chairman, we are working to enable the Army and our Sister Services to fight and win the Global War on Terror (GWOT), while transforming our forces to defeat future enemies of the United States. Nothing we do is more urgent or pressing than ensuring our Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, Airmen, and civilians have the best leaders, organizations, and equipment we can provide them today and tomorrow. Our task would be impossible without the tremendous support from you, the Members of the Committee, and your staff members. You have helped us make tremendous strides in enhancing the level of protection afforded to our Soldiers who are conducting operations in support of OEF/OIF.

For the Army, protecting the force, present and future, means protecting the Soldier. In the Spring of 2004 nearly every attack from an improvised explosive device (IED) resulted in a Coalition casualty. Today, through personal body armor, improved protection in vehicle up-armoring, electronic counter-measures, greater situational awareness, and better training and operational focus, we have drastically reduced this ratio to about one casualty for every four IED detonations, and we continue to drive down this ratio. We do this through a holistic approach to force protection – personal body armor, vehicle armor, and electronic shields. The Army has balanced materiel solutions with innovations in both the organization of our forces and in unit level tactics and training.

We are also bolstering the protection afforded to our Soldiers when they are mounted and traveling the dangerous roads of Iraq. This includes enhancing the protection levels of tactical wheeled vehicles in one of three possible ways. The first level (I), and the optimal solution, is to produce new vehicles with integrated armor, ballistic windows, and air conditioning. This protects the

Soldiers from small arms, many types of mines, and IEDs. At the second level (II), we provide Add-on-Armor kits consisting of armor plates, ballistic glass, and air conditioning. These kits also protect our Soldiers from many small arms, mines, and IEDs. The third level (III) provides Department of the Army–approved steel and kit patterns for fabricated kits. This is an interim solution that is installed at the theater or unit level. It does not include ballistic glass. The Army is taking care to ensure that all kits and Add-on-Armor provide an appropriate level of protection and do not pose a separate danger to Soldiers by overloading vehicles or causing secondary fragmentation on impact from an IED. The Army has extensively tested these kits against a variety of probable threats and will continue to test all applications submitted by industry.

The tactical wheeled vehicles that are receiving this additional protection include: the High Mobility Multi-Purpose Wheeled Vehicle (HMMWV), the Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT), the Palletized Load System (PLS), the Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles (FMTV), the Heavy Equipment Transport (HET), the 5-ton truck, and the line haul truck tractor. The Army has installed level II and level III armor kits, under this program, on over 28,000 wheeled vehicles in the theater of operations, in addition to fielding almost 8,000 Up-Armored HMMWVs. Our goal is to procure Level II Add-on-Armor kits for over 25,000 wheeled vehicles in theater. The Secretary of the Army stood up an Armor Task Force at the General Officer level to provide increased management to the armoring effort. Weekly meetings of this task force were initiated on December 1, 2004, with the short term goal of speeding up the armoring of tactical wheeled vehicles and the long term goal of determining a comprehensive armoring strategy for all Army vehicles. His task was to ensure that all vehicles driving across the berm from Kuwait into Iraq have armor protection. Per his guidance, that goal was achieved on February 15, 2005.

The Up-Armored HMMWV is one example of a type of vehicle with integrated armor protection. The Up-Armored HMMWV protects against bullet threats, IED fragments, and anti-tank/anti-personnel mines. Theater commanders deployed with 235 Up-Armored HMMWVs in May 2003. The

requirement has steadily increased and now stands at over 10,000 Up-Armored HMMWVs. Industry had been producing 450 Up-Armored HMMWVs per month since October 2004; production increased to 550 per month in March 2005. The United States Central Command currently has almost 8,000 Up-Armored HMMWVs in its area of responsibility. We anticipate meeting the current theater requirements with June 2005 production. The Up-Armored HMMWV program has funding for a total of 10,345 vehicles.

The threat of Radio-Controlled IEDs remains pervasive in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Working in conjunction with Congress, CENTCOM, Services, and industry, the Joint IED Defeat Task Force is making progress in meeting the requirements for forces in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Since our last update to this Committee in February, we have fielded an additional 900 countermeasure devices in the theater, bringing the total to over 4,200. We are also continuing to work diligently to develop a comprehensive system that will provide the full spectrum protection that our forces need for current and future threats—and which will ultimately replace the complex combination of devices currently deployed in theater.

We are a Joint military and we are constantly working together to enhance survivability for our deployed forces. Our brave men and women in uniform display unrelenting tenacity, steadfast purpose, quiet confidence, and selfless heroism. We appreciate your wisdom, guidance, and strong support as we work to ensure that they have what they need to successfully accomplish their missions and return home safely.