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STATEMENT OF

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ON THE
LOGISTICS AND SEALIFT FORCE REQUIREMENTS AND
FORCE STRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

BEFORE THE

HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

SEAPOWER AND PROJECTION FORCES SUBCOMMITTEE

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Chairman Forbes, Ranking Member McIntyre and distinguished members of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces. As Director of the Strategic Mobility/Combat Logistics Division in the office of the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (DCNO for Fleet Readiness & Logistics), I appreciate the opportunity to speak about the current state of readiness of the Combat Logistics and Strategic Sealift Forces. My testimony will describe the forces and the framework in which they operate. Additionally, it will touch on what has been accomplished over the past year, to include – continuing to meet operational requirements, while simultaneously driving successful, innovative, and non-traditional solutions to global maritime logistics.

Mission

The Combat Logistics and Sealift missions are accomplished by a force comprised of 122 ships. This force brings a variety of capabilities in direct support of numerous missions including at-sea resupply of our naval combatants; prepositioning of critical cargo for Marine Corps, Army, and Air Force and overseas large cargo transport; humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR), diving and salvage operations; rapid intra-theater movement of cargo and personnel; towing; and afloat staging capabilities. This unique segment of the Fleet provides and facilitates the scalable capability required by the Combatant Commander to execute their missions around the globe. I'll now provide a brief description of the force.

Combat Logistics Force (CLF)

The Navy's mission is expeditionary and has long required the capability to conduct worldwide and sustained operations at sea. The Navy has been, and will always be, called upon to operate forward in areas where access to shore bases may be limited. Therefore, the ability to rearm,

refuel and re-provision our ships at sea, independent of any restrictions placed on it by a foreign country, is critical to the Navy's ability to project warfighting power from the sea.

As the lifeline of resupply to Navy operating forces underway, the ships of the Navy's Combat Logistic Force (CLF) enable Carrier Strike Groups and Amphibious Ready Groups to operate forward and remain on station during peacetime and war, with minimal reliance on host nation support. The global peacetime CLF force structure supports continuous Navy presence worldwide and Fleet required sustainment training and deployer workup cycles. For perspective, these ships last year collectively delivered just under 500 million gallons of fuel (in 3,400 events), 37,000 pallets of ordnance (in over 200 events), and 84,000 pallets of dry cargo (in over 1,400 events).

The CLF provides logistics support to warships by underway replenishment via connected and vertical replenishment. A typical connected replenishment starts when a warship makes an "approach" on a CLF ship. The CLF ship maintains steady course and speed while the "customer ship" approaches and comes alongside the CLF ship, matching course and speed. The distance between the two ships is usually between 120-200 feet. The CLF ship then passes heavy metal wires, to the customer ship, that are connected at the replenishment stations. These wires are placed under tension to support fuel hoses for refueling operations or trolleys that move pallets of provisions, ammunition, or other cargo from ship to ship. Ships with flight decks can also receive provisions and ammunition via vertical replenishment. During this evolution a helicopter transfers cargo in external sling loads, or in the case of mail or passengers, inside the helicopter.

The CLF is made up of single and multi-mission ships. The older single mission ships, specifically the Fleet Replenishment Oilers (T-AO), primarily provide one product, fuel, but have the ability to provide limited quantities of dry cargo. The newer multi-mission Fast Combat

Support Ships (T-AOE) provide "one stop shopping" to customer ships by simultaneously replenishing ammunition, provisions and fuel. The Dry Cargo and Ammunition Ships (T-AKE) primarily provide ammunition and provisions, but can also supply fuel at limited transfer rates and quantities compared to the AOE or AO. Ships of the Combat Logistics Force include:

Fleet Oilers (T-AO 187 Class)

There are fifteen fleet replenishment oilers that fuel deployed Navy combatants and their embarked aircraft via connected replenishment. Each is capable of carrying Diesel Fuel Marine (DFM), aviation jet fuel (JP-5), fleet cargo and provisions. They do not have embarked helicopters but are capable of vertical replenishment.

Dry Cargo/Ammunition Ships (T-AKE Class)

The newest and most advanced, this class of auxiliary ships is comprised of 14 supply ships that deliver ammunition, provisions, stores, spare parts, potable water and petroleum products to naval forces. They provide supplies at sea by connected replenishment or vertical replenishment with their own helicopter. Two of the ships belong to the Military Sealift Command Prepositioning Program that supports the Marine Corps.

Fast Combat Support Ships (T- AOE 6 Class)

The four Combat Support Ships in service deliver fuel, ammunition, provisions, stores, spare parts, potable water and petroleum products. These supplies are delivered at sea by connected replenishment or vertical replenishment with their own helicopter. The AOE class is also capable of higher sustained speeds than the T-AO or T-AKE, when mission requirements dictate.

Service Support Ships

Another facet of naval support is provided by our Service Support Ships. Capabilities resident on respective platforms include towing, rescue and salvage, and afloat medical facilities.

Our hospital ships (T-AH) have been involved in humanitarian civil assistance missions and are able to provide medical care onboard and ashore, from primary care to internal medicine, dental, radiology, and pharmacy services among many other specialties. These ships have routinely participated in humanitarian assistance across the globe and reinforcing efforts with partnering nations. Both USNS Mercy and USNS Comfort are scheduled to deploy separately in support of such operations in 2015. The Navy's Towing and Salvage Ships (T-ATF and T-ARS) support global towing, salvage, submarine rescue and diving requirements. Collectively, Service Support ships bring Combatant Commanders a wide scope of critical naval support across the globe.

Summary and Vision for CLF

The Combat Logistics Force has proven its ability to support operations worldwide. It is my expectation that we will continue to explore "out of the box" solution sets to meet the logistics demands of our naval warfighters.

Sealift

Major ground combat operations require access to and transportation of a high volume of unit equipment and supplies – well over a million tons in some scenarios. Bringing this capability into the theater of operations is Strategic Sealift, which provides the necessary transportation for Marine Corps and Army combat unit equipment, ammunition, fuel, and sustainment materiel in times of contingency. Sealift delivers this capability to the Combatant Commander through strategic afloat prepositioning, surge sealift and sustainment shipping. Since September 11, 2001, Strategic Sealift ships have played a significant role in contingency operations, moving over 126 million square feet of supplies and combat equipment for operations supporting the military effort in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The program manages a mix of government-owned and long-term chartered dry cargo ships and tankers, as well as additional short-term or voyage-chartered ships. These 85 ships are in two major categories: prepositioning and surge. When called for tasking, each type brings a unique and vital set of capabilities. Large Medium-Speed Roll-on/Roll-off (LMSR) sealift ships, which are nearly the size of Aircraft Carriers, have the capacity of more than 300,000 square feet of cargo and can carry aircraft and heavy armored vehicles. They have cranes, a stern ramp and a movable ramp that services two side ports for easy offload. Marine Corps, Army and Special Operations Forces are the principle customers of the LMSR fleet.

Surge vessels are maintained in a 5-day Reduced Operating Status (ROS). While in ROS, these ships are manned by a reduced crew whose responsibility is to bring the ship online when activated. These ships are managed by the Military Sealift Command (MSC) or U.S. Department of Transportation Maritime Administration (MARAD). Upon activation, MARAD vessels are under MSC-operational control. Each year, some ships are provided no-notice activation orders to be "ready to sail" by the prescribed timeline. Since this program began in 1994, over 250 ships have been tested in meeting the timeline with only two not able to meet "ready-to-sail" criteria.

Afloat Prepositioning

Of the 85 ships performing Sealift missions, 25 are designated as Afloat Prepositioning units. They support Marine Corps, Army and Air Force requirements. Fifteen ships are assigned to the Maritime Prepositioning Squadrons (MPSRON) located in Guam and Diego Garcia; eight are assigned in support of an Army Prepositioning Set (APS-3); and two support the Air Force. These ships, pre-loaded with Service and Defense Logistics Agency equipment, are a combination of U.S. government-owned ships and long-term chartered U.S.-flagged ships.

The Prepositioned Fleet is strategically located in key areas prior to actual need ensuring ready-access for contingencies. Doing so provides flexible, first-response stocks of military equipment, combat gear, and supplies essential to sustaining initial phases of major combat operations. As an example of the capabilities provided, ships supporting the Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) provide equipment and supplies for two Marine Expeditionary Brigades (MEBs) – over 18,000 Marines – and has the ability to sustain their operations for 30 days. The forces are capable of responding within the theater in seven days for a range of military operations. When Mobile Landing Platform (MLP) ships join LMSR ships as part of the Prepositioning Squadron next year, they will enable greater sea-basing capability and increased flexibility across the operational area. In addition, the Dry Cargo/Ammunition Ship (T-AKE), coupled with aircraft from amphibious ships, CH-53 Super Stallion and MV-22 Osprey, can provide sustainment directly to joint forces ashore. The Offshore Petroleum Discharge System (OPDS) delivers fuel from up to eight miles offshore.

An MLP is a tremendously versatile ship, acting as a floating base for expeditionary operations. Equipped with a ramp, Landing Craft Air Cushioned (LCAC) spots and ample cargo space, the MLP is an intermediary transfer point for troops, equipment, and cargo moved ashore by JHSV or LCAC. MLPs can land up to three LCACs, which can access over 80% of the world's coastlines.

Surge

Surge ships are the second subset of Sealift, comprised of 60 ships (of the 85 Sealift ships). These ships move unit equipment from the U.S. to a theater of operation and are comprised primarily of Roll-On/Roll-Off (RO/RO) ships which facilitate the rapid on-load and off-load of rolling stock and Service-unique, special mission equipment. Of the 60 Surge Sealift ships, 14 are operated by MSC and include nine LMSR's and five RO/RO Container ships. The

remaining 46 Ready Reserve Force (RRF) ships, maintained by the Maritime Administration, include eight Fast Sealift Ships, two heavy lift, two aviation support, 27 RO/ROs, six crane ships, and one OPDS ship.

When activating surge ships, MSC looks across the inventory of organic sealift vessels, including RRF ships. MARAD's RRF ships supplement the sealift capacity of the MSC surge sealift ships. Management of the RRF program is defined by a Memorandum of Agreement between the DoD and the Department of Transportation. Ships are expected to be fully operational within their readiness status timeframe and tendered to MSC for operation. Commercial U.S. ship managers provide systems maintenance, equipment repairs, logistics support, activation, manning, and operations management by contract. Ships in priority readiness have ROS maintenance crews of about 10 commercial merchant mariners that are supplemented by additional mariners during activations.

All aspects of Sealift - prepositioning, high speed intra-theater transport, and surge - bring new prospects in providing efficient and cost-effective ocean transportation for the Combatant Commanders, as well as other federal agencies.

Joint High Speed Vessel

Another integral and unique part of the Sealift capability is the Joint High Speed Vessel (JHSV). Unlike the aforementioned prepositioning ships, JHSV is not assigned to a specific squadron or service support role. This auxiliary ship can be directed to support any area of operation as required, and is designed for high-speed intra-theater transport. With a 20,000 square-foot mission bay capacity and passenger seating for 312, a JHSV can deploy 600 tons of vehicles, tanks, trucks, ambulances, or bulldozers and a company of Marines or Soldiers extended distances at speeds exceeding 35 knots. JHSV has an adjustable stern ramp for rapid

on-load and off-load as well as a crane to move up to 40,000 pounds of cargo to/from ship or pier.

The JHSV will be forward-stationed and used for high-speed logistics. Experimentation is revealing more potential missions to include mine countermeasures support, humanitarian aid, Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) support and security force assistance. For example, earlier this year, USNS Spearhead was on-station prepared to evacuate personnel during the Sochi Olympic Games. One JHSV can support a non-combatant evacuation of up to 1,200 people. The JHSV brings flexible, quick and multi-faceted logistics support solutions to the Combatant Commander.

Military Sealift Command

MSC exercises tactical control of all U.S. Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) and MSC forces not otherwise assigned to Fleet Commanders. MSC also provides oversight for civilian-crewed ships, providing services to the Navy, Marine Corps, Army, Air Force, USTRANSCOM, Missile Defense Agency and other U.S. government agencies, supporting national maritime needs worldwide. In addition to its active ships, MSC can recall MARAD's RRF ships or with chartered civilian shipping to meet specific logistics requirements.

Recapitalization

The current plan for future Fleet Auxiliary Acquisitions includes the T-AO(X). Beginning in FY21, 17 T-AO(X) Fleet Oilers will start to replace the T-AO 187 and T-AOE 6 class ships to work in tandem with T-AKEs supporting the Fleet. These ships will have increased cargo capacity, enhancing dispersed Fleet operations.

Innovative Use of Adaptive Force Platforms

In context of CLF and Sealift capabilities, and in concert with the Fleet Commanders, we are examining innovative ways to improve capability and capacity to perform TSC- missions - options that also enhance overall Navy combat force availability. Emergency aid deployed from Marine Prepositioning Force (MPF) cargo embarked on LMSRs and JHSVs can support engineering, disaster relief, and medical stability operations. The use of alternative platforms is being considered to meet the Combatant Commanders' needs for responsive medical payloads that support a range of military operations. The Navy has been developing and leveraging modularity concepts and scalable adaptive force packages to provide improved medical response to evolving demand. Other alternative platforms including JHSV could potentially embark existing medical capabilities, reconfigured into Medical Adaptive Force Packages, to best meet Combatant Commander requirements.

Embarked medical payload packages provide potential for partner building, medical stability operations, and advanced trauma care. As possible missions evolve, tasks may include reconstruction, military-to-military training, and advisory services for civil affairs, medical assistance, food and water distribution, and medical evacuations. The LMSR will use its ample cargo capacity to deploy and sustain Navy Seabee and Marine Corps forces to conduct engineering and construction or multinational training engagements. A JHSV combined with a helicopter can provide high speed ship-to-shore movement of personnel and material, while MLPs are capable of providing sea-based operations.

The deployment of Adaptive Force Packages using material in the Fleet inventory can create opportunities for auxiliary ships to expand support missions and increase global presence. We can use sealift and other ships that traditionally fill a support role to accomplish missions on the "low end" of the Range of Military Operations (ROMO), freeing surface combatants, both

amphibious and cruiser/destroyers, to focus on core missions. There will be a steady requirement for missions related to humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and engagements with our partners that non-combatant ships can and may be directed to fill.

Summary

Global operations continue to assume an increasingly maritime focus. As we look to the future, we see a continued need for Navy forces on station to meet the mission requirements of the Combatant Commanders. We will continue to support forward presence and relieve stress on the rest of the force through traditional and innovative approaches. The Navy supports regional stability through naval presence, deterrence of aggression and the assurance of our allies. We will continue to rely on the CLF and Sealift as they contribute to the CNO's tenets for our Navy: Warfighting First, Operate Forward, and Be Ready. Our Navy is operating where it matters, when it matters. I want to thank you for your continued support of our Force. Also, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before the Committee.