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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

March 22, 2016

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Chairman Forbes, Ranking Member Courtney 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 provide you an update on 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, Service Support and Sealift missions are accomplished by a force comprised of 122 ships. Since July 2014 when I saw this committee last, the mix of ships includes new platform types with capabilities that have not been available in the past. The total force brings a variety of capabilities in direct support of numerous missions; from at-sea resupply of our naval combatants and large cargo transport to prepositioning and reconfiguring at sea, critical cargo for Marine Corps, Army, and Air Force. Additionally, missions include humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR), diving and salvage operations, rapid intra-theater movement of cargo/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) and Service Support

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 Logistics Force (CLF) enable Carrier Strike Groups and Amphibious Ready Groups to operate forward and remain on station during peacetime and war. The global peacetime CLF force structure supports continuous Navy presence worldwide and Fleet required sustainment training and deployment workup cycles. For perspective, these ships last year collectively delivered just under 470 million gallons of fuel (in 3,000 events), 29,000 pallets of ordnance (in over 160 events), and 82,000 pallets of dry cargo (in over 1,300 events).

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 multi-mission Fast Combat Support Ships (T-AOE) provide station ship support 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 Replenishment Oilers (KAISER Class)

There are fifteen fleet replenishment oilers (T-AO) 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.

Recapitalization Fleet Replenishment Oiler (JOHN LEWIS Class)

The JOHN LEWIS Class, formerly T-AO(X), will recapitalize the existing Fleet Replenishment Oiler capability and will enable continued sustained forward naval operations. The current KAISER class T-AO will begin to inactivate starting in FY 21. The JOHN LEWIS class T-AO will maintain proven fuel delivery capabilities and will significantly increase its freeze/chill capacity. As the Fleet continues to operate in a dispersed manner, the ability of the T-AO to deliver both fuel and dry cargo will become increasingly important and will enhance operational flexibility. The JOHN LEWIS class T-AO will be double hulled and will meet current environmental standards. Additionally the ship will have a flight deck to support vertical replenishment.

Contract award for the first ship of the class is scheduled the summer of 2016 and it is anticipated that USNS JOHN LEWIS will be delivered in FY 21. Serial production begins in 2018 and total ship quantity is planned to be 17 ships.

Dry Cargo/Ammunition Ships (T-AKE: LEWIS AND CLARK Class)

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. Twelve ships are assigned to combat logistics missions and are capable of landing and refueling a V-22 Osprey. The remaining two T-AKEs belong to the Military Sealift

Command Prepositioning Program that supports the Marine Corps. The two Prepositioning ships are undergoing hangar modifications to permit embarkation of two V-22 aircraft.

Fast Combat Support Ships (SUPPLY Class)

The two Fast Combat Support Ships (T-AOE) 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 afloat medical facilities, and towing, rescue and salvage, ships. 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. 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 and Service Support Ships

The Combat Logistics Force has proven its ability to support operations worldwide. It is my expectation that we will continue to explore improving our agility in theater and 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, Air Force 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.

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.

Afloat Prepositioning

Of the 85 ships performing Sealift missions, 24 are designated as Afloat Prepositioning. The afloat prepositioning ships support Marine Corps, Army and Air Force requirements. Fifteen ships are assigned to the Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF), seven are assigned in support of an Army Prepositioning Set (APS-3), and two support the Air Force. These ships are a combination of U.S. government-owned ships and long-term chartered U.S.-flagged ships and are pre-loaded with Service equipment, supplies and ammunition.

The Prepositioned Fleet is strategically staged in key areas, such as Guam, Saipan and Diego Garcia, 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. The Expeditionary Transfer Dock (ESD), formerly Mobile Landing Platform (MLP), joined the LMSR as part of both Prepositioning Squadrons. They 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 ESD 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 ESD is an intermediary transfer point for troops, equipment, and cargo moved ashore by Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF), formerly JHSV, or LCAC. ESDs can land up to three LCACs, which can in turn access over 80% of the world's coastlines.

Surge

Surge ships are the second subset of Sealift, comprised of 61 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 61 Surge Sealift ships, 15 are operated by MSC and include ten 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 operationally controls the inventory of organic sealift vessels, including RRF ships. MARAD's RRF ships supplement the sealift capacity of the MSC surge sealift ships. Ships are expected to be fully operational within their readiness status timeframe and tendered to MSC for operation. MARAD and MSC contract with commercial U.S. ship managers to provide ship maintenance, equipment repairs, logistics support, activation, manning, and operation management. Ships in ROS have maintenance crews of about 10 U.S. merchant mariners that are supplemented by additional U.S. 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.

Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF) (Formerly Joint High Speed Vessel)

Another integral, unique and new part of the Sealift capability is the EPF. Unlike the aforementioned prepositioning ships, EPF 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, an EPF 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. EPF 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 EPFs have operated globally in support of Fleet Commander missions by providing an agile and highly capable ship suitable for adaptive force packages of many types.

EPF 6 was delivered in January 2016 and production continues with EPFs 7-10. In FY2016, Congress provided funding for a twelfth EPF and the Navy is currently issuing a Request for Proposal for construction of EPF 11 and 12.

The Role of U.S. Navy's Military Sealift Command

MSC exercises operational 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, that support the Navy, Marine Corps, Army, Air Force, USTRANSCOM, Missile Defense Agency and other U.S. government agencies, fulfilling national maritime needs worldwide. In addition to its active ships, MSC can recall MARAD's RRF ships or charter civilian shipping to meet specific logistics requirements.

Innovative Use of Adaptive Force Platforms

Navy is looking to find efficient ways to more effectively perform Theater Security Cooperation (TSC) missions by developing innovative mission payloads/packages. Emergency aid deployed from Maritime Prepositioning Force (MPF) cargo embarked on LMSRs and EPFs can support engineering, disaster relief, and medical stability operations. The Navy has been developing and leveraging modularity concepts and scalable adaptive force packages to provide a wide variety of capabilities. Alternative platforms equipped with payloads have already begun to meet Combatant Commanders' needs in support of an expanded range of military 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, to receive needed maintenance and to focus and train toward core warfighting 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, Service Support Ships and Sealift as they contribute to the

CNO's tenets for our Navy. I want to thank you for your continued support of our Force. Also, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before the Committee.