

Statement for the Record

Ms. Betty Sapp

Director, National Reconnaissance Office
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INTRODUCTION

Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Cooper, and distinguished Members of the Committee, I am pleased to appear before you today on behalf of the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO) to discuss National Security Space Activities. It is an honor for me to appear alongside our mission partners from the Department of Defense (DoD), Mr. Douglas Loverro, 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 collaboration 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 additional opportunities to meet in another setting to discuss with you NRO capabilities, partnerships, and value of the NRO contributions to National Security.

NRO Priorities

The NRO remains committed to maintaining its stellar record of acquisition and program successes, while also delivering a more capable, resilient, and affordable future NRO architecture

to respond to emerging threats and dynamic mission needs. Over the coming years, the NRO will incorporate revolutionary new technologies into our architecture that will provide enhanced support to the warfighter while also improving the resiliency of our systems. These technologies are made possible in part by our investments in research and development, and we will continue these strong investments to drive enhanced future capabilities. 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 current state of the NRO. Last year we executed yet another successful launch campaign placing four satellites in orbit in six months, and we're scheduled to launch two more in the second half of this year. These successful launches are a visible testament to the diligent efforts of our program teams who successfully acquire and deliver these complex systems, and each one signifies that a new system will soon be providing enhanced intelligence capabilities to the warfighter. 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 continue to deliver these systems on time and within budget.

The NRO remains committed to maintaining the health of the launch vehicle industrial base to provide our systems with assured access to space. The NRO, in partnership with the Air Force, recently finalized a new Evolved Expendable Launch Vehicles (EELV) acquisition strategy aimed at promoting competition among launch providers while also stabilizing launch cost and sustaining the industrial base. Under the strategy, the NRO and the Air Force will procure 36 EELV booster cores over 5 years from the heritage Atlas and Delta lines, while also reserving up to 14 booster procurements for competition among all certified launch vehicle providers. To that end, the NRO, Air Force, and NASA, have jointly agreed on a strategy for certifying new entrant launch providers, such as Space Exploration Technologies (SpaceX) and Orbital Science Corporation, 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 developing and acquiring new capabilities to launching and operating the most technically-advanced systems, 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. I am 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 fourth 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.

Additionally, our Ground Enterprise Directorate continues to make considerable headway in moving us toward a more holistic, "horizontal" ground enterprise - a single networked information collection and distribution system more responsive to user needs, more resilient in the face of projected threats, and much more efficient and effective in providing mission capabilities.

SPACE PROTECTION

The NRO fully recognizes that space is an increasingly contested and congested environment. While foreign nations understand our country's reliance on space and seek means to deny our space advantages, our ability to operate in the presence of threats helps to deter foreign actions and maintain a strategic advantage. To that end, the NRO has worked jointly with the Air Force to align the NRO's space protection activities with Air Force Space Command, the DoD, and the broader space community. The collaboration across the defense and intelligence communities enhances the NRO's capability to effectively plan for emerging threats, and greatly strengthens the architecture to ensure continued operational freedom.

NRO CONTRIBUTIONS: CRITICAL TO THE FIGHT.

Lastly, I would like to highlight the real bottom line for the NRO - our support to the warfighter. In addition to traditional NRO ISR systems and support, we provide a wide array of focused capabilities to help solve specific, critical ISR needs in the Afghanistan area of responsibility. We've brought dozens of innovative ISR solutions to the fight. These services, products and tools directly contribute to the highest priority missions, to include: counter-Improvised Explosive Device (IED) efforts; identifying and tracking High-Value Targets; countering narcotics trafficking; and special communications.

However, the most important capability we provide to the fight is our people - our on-site problem-solvers. We typically have about 75 men and women deployed into harm's way on any given day serving as liaison officers to units, providing technical expertise, or supporting those focused NRO programs. Every day, they have a direct and positive influence on combat operations and mission success, to include saving the lives of U.S. and Coalition forces.

I'll cover just a few highlights, but trust me when I say that we bring a lot more to the fight. We partnered with the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency to provide airborne Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) imagery. LIDAR has been

very effective in mapping the rugged terrain of Afghanistan, improving force protection, operational planning, and situational awareness.

In the counter-IED effort one of our most successful programs continues to be RED DOT. RED DOT takes the various sources of indications and warnings we receive, combines them into an integrated picture, then sends them out directly to the tactical user, to include the HUMVEE on patrol. Last year alone, RED DOT indications resulted in the removal of more than 235 IEDs from the battlefield - a huge success for the program, and a real life saver for our men and women in harm's way.

A real strength of the NRO is our ability to fuse multi-intelligence data to support warfighter intelligence needs. We have helped the warfighter visualize large volumes of data temporally and spatially, establishing patterns of life, identifying the unusual within a multitude of fused data sets, and integrating full motion video data with automated multi-intelligence tipping, cueing, and alerting capabilities. Our cutting-edge solutions combine GEOINT and SIGINT, and span the space, air, and ground operational domains to improve the warfighter's common operational picture and enhance his effectiveness in finding, fixing, and finishing targets.

Additionally, the NRO has developed numerous advanced capabilities for Personnel Recovery and Friendly Force Tracking,

and our quick-reaction capability solutions have been employed with resounding success in counter-IED, homemade explosive materials detection, and special communications missions worldwide.

CONCLUSION

The men and women 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 execute 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 continue visits to the NRO, our mission ground stations, and satellite factories 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.