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THE HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON TACTICAL AVIATION AND LAND FORCES

STATEMENT OF
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ACTING DIRECTOR, COST ASSESSMENT AND PROGRAM EVALUATION

BEFORE THE
TACTICAL AIR AND LAND FORCES SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE
HOUSE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

ON
FISCAL YEAR 2022 BUDGET REQUEST OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE FOR
FIXED-WING TACTICAL AND TRAINING AIRCRAFT PROGRAMS

JULY 13, 2021

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**Written Testimony of the Joseph R. Nogueira
Acting Director, Cost Assessment and Program Evaluation (CAPE)
Office of the Secretary of Defense**

Chairman Norcross, Ranking Member Hartlzer, distinguished members of the subcommittee; thank you for the opportunity to discuss the Department of Defense's collaborative effort to develop, acquire, and operate an appropriate mix of tactical aircraft. These efforts prioritize China as the pacing challenge while addressing threats emanating from Russia, Iran, and North Korea. I would like to thank your staff, and the staffs of the other defense committees, for the hours they have dedicated to discussing this important topic with us. Their insights have been very helpful.

In support of each annual budget request, CAPE provides comprehensive options for the Secretary and Deputy Secretary to implement the current strategic guidance. Prior to the annual budget build, CAPE conducts its own non-advocate analysis to support senior leadership on force structure, modernization, and readiness trades to meet future warfighting demands. Each year, the Services submit their draft budget submissions to CAPE and the Under Secretary of Defense for Comptroller for review. CAPE, in concert with OSD, Joint Staff, Combatant Commanders, and the Services, evaluates the draft Service budget submissions and supporting analysis. CAPE develops fair and balanced alternatives to meet strategic objectives for the Secretary's final decision, captured in the final budget submission to Congress.

The Fiscal Year 2022 budget request for tactical aircraft implements the National Security Strategic Guidance in several ways, including investment in modernization, readiness, and capacity to field higher-end capabilities. In particular, the Secretary chose to shift resources away from more vulnerable tactical aircraft platforms and weapon systems that are mismatched to the threat, in order to focus investment on modernizing the tactical aircraft fleet and developing critical enabling capabilities. These are hard choices for the Department, particularly when considering the overall affordability challenges of the tactical aircraft fleet, and analysis from CAPE and others informed those hard choices.

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Specifically, CAPE conducted several analytic efforts assessing the capability, capacity, and readiness of the Department's tactical aircraft fleet to support the Secretary's decision-making. Several of these studies were directed by Congress, to include the 2020 Independent Cost Estimate for the F-35 program and a 2021 assessment of F/A-18E/F Service Life Modifications. To support major defense acquisition program milestones, CAPE generated Independent Cost Estimates for the F-15 Eagle Passive/Active Warning and Survivability System program and the Next Generation Jammer – Low and Mid Bands programs. In addition, CAPE oversaw the Joint TACAIR Synthetic Training Analysis of Alternatives, the Air Force Next Generation Air Dominance Analysis of Alternatives, and the Navy Next Generation Air Dominance Analysis of Alternatives. CAPE also conducted other studies directed by Department leadership to investigate TACAIR survivability, lethality, overall affordability, and novel concepts of operation to support Combatant Commander needs. These studies continue to support the annual budget review process and current TACAIR Mix Studies.

In addition, as a part of the Fiscal Year 2021 National Defense Authorization Act, Congress tasked CAPE to complete analyses on the Service acquisition strategies for 6th Generation Aircraft, as well as the Air Force Digital Century Series business case. Both studies are underway, and CAPE is engaged in detailed discussions with the program offices, contractors, and other stakeholders to gain the necessary data and insight to inform the Department's evolving acquisition strategies and satisfy Congressional reporting requirements.

Furthermore, there are a number of separate, but closely related, analytical efforts underway across the Department to determine the appropriate balance of 6th, 5th, and 4th generation capabilities. CAPE is leading analysis focused on TACAIR portfolio affordability and the key tradeoffs between capability, capacity, and affordability. The Joint Staff, in coordination with the Combatant Commands, is leading the department's thinking on how TACAIR should be employed in a future conflict. Finally, the Air Force and Navy are conducting TACAIR studies focused on assessing both near and long-term requirements. The results of

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these efforts will be integrated to inform the President's Fiscal Year 2023 budget submission and associated Future Years Defense Program. It is CAPE's role to advise the Secretary and Deputy Secretary with program options to align resources to strategy, ensuring a transparent and robust discussion amongst all of the relevant stakeholders.

Thank you again for this opportunity and I look forward to your questions today and a continuing dialogue about TACAIR investments.