

Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert
Senate Appropriations Committee Subcommittee on Defense
Joint Strike Fighter Hearing Opening Statement
19 June 2013

Thank you Chairman Durbin, Vice Chairman Cochran, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the future of naval aviation this morning.

Today's topic, for me the F-35C is really a key part of our future. It provides a unique and essential set of capabilities for our air wing and for our carrier strike group, effectively for the fleet. And it will dramatically enhance the near term and the future air wing capability immediately upon its integration.

Now as we prepare to integrate this aircraft we're **focused on three things**. One, to ensure that the F-35C delivers on the requirements that we validated that we need. Two, to make sure that integrating the F-35C into our airwing is effective and that it conforms to the carrier. It has to fit into the air wing. Third, to understand the parts that are required for affordable operation and sustainment.

Now, with regards to **capability**, we need stealth, we need their advanced electronic warfare sensors, the weapons and perhaps more importantly the command and control capability that this aircraft brings. With its stealth and its EW capability, it effectively enables us to be closer to the threat. You confuse targets -- that means as you detect targets you can bring them together, determine what is what, what is the threat and build a common operational picture and you can engage first.

Perhaps just as important, the F-35C is designed to share this operational picture with other F-35s, other tactical aircrafts, including our Super Hornet, and other aircraft in the air wing, other ships and other platforms, via hard tactical data links. So it really is a force multiplier in addition to being an incredibly capable aircraft.

With regard to **integrating** the F-35C into the carrier and into the air wings, our top challenge is to reconcile that we need to get done before our IOC. We need to get the software program 3F capability certified. It brings us weapons, EW systems I just mentioned and an aircraft that meets the operational envelope certification. We need an arresting hook that is durable, reliable and precise. And we need the helmet mounted display system which is being

worked right now with some deficiencies, and we need that certified. As I mentioned before, to integrate, we need it to be carrier compatible if you will, and that evaluation will start next year. Based on the joint projection we are on track with this with some risk particularly in the software certification.

Now with regard to **understanding and addressing our operations and sustainment**, we have a lot of work to do. But I think we have adequate time to prepare to integrate the F-35. We are conducting a business case analysis of the level of repair effort, the logistics, the maintenance scheme that we will use. And we have tri-service meetings -- that means I meet with my service chief counterparts quarterly and we meet with the joint program office quarterly to go over these sorts of things.

We will need a concept of operations to have been established to settle what the flying hour costs are going to be. In other words, what are my flying habits for this type of aircraft. Simulation -- which is very advanced; vs. training vs. proficiency flying. I need to determine what the best estimate for the cost of flying this aircraft, and we'll work through that.

We have a mandate that Mr. Kendall has given us. And right now we look and project that we will meet this mandate. But this is something we have to focus on, we the fleet. Our sustainment challenges are to be able to maintain this aircraft in a maritime environment. Saltwater, moving ship in a carrier, a humid environment, it's hot and dusty, and how do we maintain this aircraft in the hangar bay. We need to be able to repair the aircraft in my view and that requires the right parts and the correct scheme, and we need trained sailors to do that. And if we're going to repair it then we need an affordable logistics train, and one that is responsible.

So to me Mr. Chairman the F-35C is designed to provide the capability we need and I look forward to working with this committee, with the Congress and with program committee to bring this into the fleet in an affordable rate, thank you.

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