

COMMITTEE LANGUAGE FOR FISCAL YEAR 1998

EA-6 SERIES ACCOUNT: APN

PRESBUD	HNSC	SASC	CASC	HAC	SAC	CAC
86,783	154,783	111,783	101,783	169,783	126,783	116,783

HNSC LANGUAGE (Rpt. 105-132)

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EA-6B modifications

The budget request contained \$86.8 million for EA-6B modifications but did not include funding to replace wing center sections (WCS) or for the turbine engine blade containment system (TEBS).

The first 65 EA-6B aircraft were manufactured with an aluminum alloy WCS that is susceptible to stress corrosion cracking. Thirty nine of these aircraft are still in service, 20 of which Congress provided WCS replacement funding in fiscal years 1995 and 1997. Consistent with its prior actions, the committee recommends an increase of \$50.0 million to replace the WCSs of 10 additional EA-6Bs. The committee urges the Secretary of the Navy to provide funds to complete the WCS modifications in his fiscal year 1999 budget request.

Based on historical data analysis of the EA-6B's engine, the Navy determined that the EA-6B will experience between three and five aircraft losses due to catastrophic failure of turbine engine blades before the EA-6B reaches its retirement. In fiscal year 1997, the Congress provided \$5.0 million to address this problem, but the committee has since learned that the cost to outfit the entire fleet has risen to \$60.0 million. Since the EA-6B is no longer in production and the total cost to modify all EA-6Bs with the TEBS is less than the value of one aircraft, the committee recommends an increase of \$18.0 million to continue this modification.

SASC LANGUAGE (Rpt. 105-29)

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EA-6B support jamming upgrade

The budget request included \$86.8 million for modifications to the EA-6B Prowler airborne electronic warfare aircraft. Subsequent to the budget request the committee learned of an emergent requirement to counter recently detected special radar techniques. Evidence indicates that a new family of threats has the potential to operate effectively in the presence of EA-6B or EF-111A jamming. However, there is now an opportunity to incorporate a low risk, affordable upgrade to the EA-6B in conjunction along with modifications already underway to counter the new family of threats.

Accordingly, the committee recommends a increase of \$25.0 million to the budget request for EA-6B modifications, with \$13.0 million to be used for nonrecurring costs including integration and test prototypes, and \$12.0 million to produce the modified Band 9/10 transmitters to provide an initial capability for one carrier air wing.

CASC LANGUAGE (Rpt. 105-340)

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EA-6 Series

The budget request included \$86.8 million for EA-6B modifications.

The House bill would authorize an increase of \$68.0 million, including \$50.0 million for 10 wing center sections (WCS) and \$18.0 million to continue the turbine engine blade containment system (TEBS).

The Senate amendment would authorize an increase of \$25.0 million to incorporate a low risk, affordable upgrade to the EA-6B in conjunction with modifications already underway to counter the new family of threats.

The conferees agree to authorize an increase of \$25.0 million to replace the WCS of 5 additional EA-6Bs. The increase of \$25.0 million for WCS is partially offset by a \$10.0 million reduction for late obligations, resulting in a net increase of \$15.0 million for EA-6B modifications. The conferees urge the Secretary of the Navy to provide funds to complete the WCS modifications in the fiscal year 1999 budget request.

HAC LANGUAGE (Rpt. 105-206)

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Mission-essential shortfalls: The Committee has always emphasized less-glamorous, yet mission-essential items which are critical to the troops in the field. The Committee bill recommends increases over the budget request for such items as: Additional combat communications systems (\$32,000,000), night vision devices (\$14,400,000), and Bradley fighting vehicle upgrades (\$115,000,000) for the Army; new and remanufactured trucks and HMMWV's for the Army and Marine Corps (\$156,700,000); Army, Navy and Marine Corps ammunition (a net increase of \$258,900,000); modifications and upgrades for EA-6B (\$83,000,000) and P-3 aircraft (\$129,000,000) for the Navy; initial issue gear (\$40,700,000) and base telecommunications for the Marine Corps (\$42,600,000); and additional aging aircraft and engine reliability enhancements (\$33,000,000), force protection measures (\$27,800,000) and base information systems protection (\$51,000,000) for the Air Force. The Committee also provided \$31 million for development and procurement of lighterage systems to support joint service strategic sealift operations.

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*MODIFICATION OF AIRCRAFT
EA-6 SERIES*

The Navy requested \$86,783,000 for EA-6B modifications. The Committee recommends \$169,783,000, an increase of \$83,000,000. Within this amount, \$50,000,000 is for wing center sections, \$18,000,000 is for turbine blade containment upgrades, and \$15,000,000 is for USQ-113 communications jammers.

CAC LANGUAGE (Rpt. 105-265)

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NAVY AIRCREW EJECTION SEATS

The conferees believe the Navy must place greater emphasis on aircrew protection and safety, a problem that is of growing concern with the introduction of lighter-weight crew members. In fiscal year 1997, the Congress appropriated an additional \$5,000,000 to initiate Phase II of the Navy Aircrew Escape System (NACES) P3I program. The conferees are disappointed that this effort has not yet begun, particularly in light of technological advancements in propulsive stabilization and sensors that could substantially decrease the technical risk of resolving the safety shortcomings of the NACES. These same advances may also be applicable to making needed safety improvements in the GRU-7 seat flying in the EA-6B aircraft.

The conferees are aware of Navy plans to restructure the NACES P3I program. While voicing no objection at this time, the conferees expect that the restructured effort be conducted in a manner to include a flight demonstration of the life-saving benefits of these technologies to existing ejection seats, and that EMD planning for introduction to the fleet be completed. The conference agreement includes an additional \$6,000,000 only to accelerate the NACES P3I program to include demonstrated propulsive stabilization solutions.