

COMMITTEE LANGUAGE FOR FISCAL YEAR 1998

**F-14 SERIES
ACCOUNT: APN**

PRESBUD	HNSC	SASC	CASC	HAC	SAC	CAC
290,500	290,500	290,500	287,200	290,500	275,200	287,200

**F-14 UPGRADE
ACCOUNT: RDT&E**

PRESBUD	HNSC	SASC	CASC	HAC	SAC	CAC
11,704	11,704	11,704	11,704	11,704	11,704	11,704

**F-14A MODS
ACCOUNT: NGRE**

PRESBUD	HNSC	SASC	CASC	HAC	SAC	CAC
				34,000		

HNSC LANGUAGE (Rpt. 105-132)

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F/A-18

The budget request contained \$2,101.1 million for procurement of 20 F/A-18E/F aircraft, four fewer than the number for which advance procurement funds were requested in fiscal year 1997, and \$90.5 million for advanced procurement of 30 aircraft in fiscal year 1999.

Based on the recently-released recommendations of the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), the Navy's current procurement objective for the F/A-18E/F is 548 to 785 aircraft, at a maximum production rate of 48 aircraft per year, which has been decreased from the fiscal year 1998 budget request procurement plan of 1,000 aircraft at a maximum production rate of 60 aircraft per year. The committee understands that the Navy plans to determine its actual procurement objective based on the initial operational capability date of the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF).

The committee is sensitive to the Navy's requirement to modernize its tactical aircraft fleet. Unfortunately, the Navy failed in its attempts to replace the A-6 and F-14 fleets first with the A-12 and then with the A/F-X, both of which were terminated. Consequently, the F/A-18E/F program emerged—more by default than by design—as the Navy's choice to replace the A-6 in the all-weather attack mission, replace the F-14 in the fleet air defense and tactical reconnaissance missions, and to supplement existing F/A-18C/Ds. The F/A-18E/F improves range and payload capabilities compared to the F/A-18C/D, but it will not be nearly as survivable as either the A-12 or the A/F-X would have

been. Accordingly, the committee strongly supports the Navy's participation in the JSF program to meet its longer-term force structure and modernization requirements and believes that the JSF will be more cost and operationally effective than any previous Naval aircraft when it enters service with the fleet. Therefore, the committee recommends an increase of \$20.0 million in PE63800N to accelerate development of the Naval variant of the JSF, as explained elsewhere in this report.

The committee notes that the budget request proposal to reduce the quantity of F/A-18E/Fs procured in fiscal years 1998 and 1999 by 10 from the 60 proposed in the fiscal year 1997 acquisition plan, together with the QDR recommendation to reduce both the total procurement objective and the maximum production rate of this aircraft, suggests that future aircraft, shipbuilding, and other weapons procurement demands on the Navy's budget are necessitating consideration of alternative F/A-18E/F production rates. Accordingly, the committee recommends \$1,348.9 million for continued F/A-18E/F production, a reduction of \$752.2 million. The committee believes that until the review of the QDR by the independent National Defense Panel is completed in December 1997 and assessed by the Congress, the F/A-18E/F program should proceed at a slower pace.

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F/A-18F Tactical Reconnaissance

The budget request contained no funding for developing the F-14 Tactical Air Reconnaissance Pod System (TARPS) Completely Digital (CD) capability.

The committee understands that the Navy plans to replace the F-14 Tactical Air Reconnaissance Pod System (TARPS) with an electro-optical podded system for the F/A-18F Super Hornet. The committee has closely monitored the technical issues and difficulties experienced by the Marine Corps with the internally mounted Advanced Tactical Reconnaissance System (ATARS) for the F/A-18D. These issues, combined with the expected costs and extent of modifications to the F/A-18F if an internally mounted sensor were chosen, point to a podded reconnaissance capability as a more cost-effective and flexible approach for Navy fighter aircraft.

Therefore, the committee supports the Navy's decision to develop a non-dedicated podded reconnaissance capability for the Super Hornet. The committee expects that the Navy will adhere to this decision and stresses that it will not favor any future request for development of an internally mounted F/A-18 reconnaissance capability. The committee believes that the Navy should, to the extent possible, ensure that the TARPS development be transferable to the F/A-18F pod. To ensure that the latest technologies are provided to the user, the committee directs that the development and procurement of the F/A-18F podded system be awarded competitively.

The committee has followed the TARPS digital imagery (DI) electro-optical (EO) improvements and is pleased with the results of this interim, but limited, capability. However, the committee believes there is a need to move to a production EO capability with a larger format backplane that provides both better resolution and a larger target area field-of-view, and understands that the TARPS CD development would provide such a capability at significantly less cost than a Navy purchase of the Advanced Tactical Airborne Reconnaissance System (ATARS).

Based on the successful results from the interim DI efforts, the committee is convinced that CD will provide a cost effective EO tactical manned reconnaissance capability to replace the current film-based F-14 pods. Therefore, the committee recommends \$5.0 million in PE 24136N for TARPS CD non-recurring engineering. The committee directs the Navy to move to TARPS CD production as expeditiously as possible.

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Section 1024—Naming of a DDG-51 Class Destroyer the U.S.S. Thomas F. Connolly

This section would express the sense of Congress that the Secretary of the Navy should name one of the ships of the DDG-51 class of destroyers the U.S.S. Thomas F. Connolly in honor of Vice Admiral Connolly, an architect of the modern United States Navy. Cited for bravery during World War II, Vice Admiral Connolly also guided the construction of today's nuclear aircraft carriers and advocated the development of the F-14 fleet defense aircraft.

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ADDITIONAL VIEWS OF JAMES M. TALENT

I am pleased that the full committee, after vigorous debate, soundly rejected efforts to procure a mix of the older-model F/A-18C/D and the new F/A-18E/F "Super Hornet," and instead procure only the newer E/F. However, I must express my profound disagreement with the net result of the House National Security Committee's action, which was to reduce overall procurement funding for Super Hornets from the Navy's request of \$2.1 billion for 20 low-rate initial-production aircraft to \$1.348 billion, and to reduce the Navy's research and development request from \$267.5 to \$153.3 million. These reductions are entirely unjustified and will detract from the Navy's ability to execute its missions in the increasingly demanding threat environment of the next two decades.

The Secretary of Defense, in his June 10, 1997 letter, emphasized his "strong support of the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet program," stating that "our warfighters require the most advanced technology available." He further added that "the Quadrennial Defense Review clearly validated the need for the F/A-18E/F...Without the E/F we would be sending our pilots into combat at the turn of the century with the 1970s technology of the F/A-18C/D."

The Chief of Naval Operations, in his own letter to the chairman and ranking member, expressed his "strongest possible support for the F/A-18E/F program. It is the cornerstone of the future of carrier aviation and the Navy's number one aviation priority." Further, he recently stated to Congress that "the multi-mission F/A-18E/F Super Hornet is a leap forward in both TacAir design and survivability. The Super Hornet may look like its predecessor, however it is far larger, significantly more capable, and most importantly it is a first strike, every day strike, survivable weapon system for the foreseeable future." The Navy states that the Super Hornet will dominate all possible threats for at least the next two decades.

The CNO's letter further states that "the E/F has flawlessly progressed through every required milestone to include operational requirements, mission needs, cost and threat analysis, and engine development. Admiral Johnson describes the entire aircraft program as "a model of acquisition reform and unprecedented cost performance. The F/A-18E/F has completed significant portions of the flight test program (over 1,100 flight hours)... Testing results have clearly exceeded all specific performance parameters. The program is on schedule, within budget and under specification weight."

In terms of cost, the Under Secretary for Acquisition, Dr. Kaminski, in his recent Selective Acquisition Report, found that the Super Hornet would cost only 13 percent more than its C/D predecessor based on production figures of 1,000 aircraft per program. His report pegged C/D per-unit cost at \$36.5 million and E/ F per-unit cost at \$41.6 million.

In terms of survivability, the Center for Naval Analysis in its recent report to Congress, reported that the Super Hornet would suffer roughly one fifth the losses of an F/A-18C/D airwing given the same threat environment and warfighter scenario. The independent Institute for Defense Analysis, in its report requested by the Joint Staff, determined that the Super Hornet's survivability characteristics, to include a radar signature only one-tenth that of the older C/D, reduces the number of targets considered as "high risk" to the pilot and aircraft by 75 percent over the C/D Hornet it will replace.

Finally, it is essential to point out that the E/F program is not in competition with the emerging joint strike fighter concept. The Super Hornet will replace aging F-14s, whose operational costs the Navy desperately seeks to avoid, and older Hornets, all of which have reached the limits of their technological upgradability. The most optimistic forecast for a Navy version of the JSF is 2010, and even then the service would not be able to place a meaningful number of aircraft on its carrier decks until approximately 2015. The Super Hornet is indeed a "bridge" from the F-14 and C/D-model Hornets to the joint strike fighter, and that bridge by any reasonable estimate appears to be about two decades in length.

I am pleased that the House National Security Committee, after careful consideration of these important issues, declared its overwhelming and bipartisan support for the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet program. JAMES M. TALENT.

CASC LANGUAGE (Rpt. 105-340)

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BOL expendable dispenser system

The conferees are aware of the important survivability enhancement that the BOL expendable dispenser system provides our operational F-14 aircraft, and the potential capability that the system may provide for other aircraft.

The Congress provided approximately \$18.0 million in fiscal year 1997 for final testing and qualification of the BOL on the F/ A-18C/D aircraft. The conferees understand that progress in testing and qualification has been slow, despite the Navy's expressed desire to accelerate the program for the F/A-18C/D. The conferees direct the Secretary of the Navy to report to Congress with the submission of the fiscal year 1999

budget on the results of the Navy's assessment and intentions regarding qualification and potential fielding the BOL system on the F/A-18C/D aircraft.

CAC LANGUAGE (Rpt. 105-265)

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MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT

The conferees agree that each of the Chiefs of the Reserve and National Guard components should exercise control of modernization funds provided in this account including aircraft and aircraft modernization. The conferees further agree that separate submissions of a detailed assessment of its modernization priorities by each of the Guard and Reserve component commanders is required to be submitted to the defense committees. The conferees expect the component commanders to give priority consideration to the following items: CH-47D helicopters, F-14A modifications, magic lantern, F/A-18 modifications, C-9 replacement aircraft, CH-53 helicopters, C-5 simulators, vibration management enhancement program, UH-60L, laser leveling equipment, engagement skills trainers, MELIOS night vision devices, F-16 improved avionics intermediate shops, ultimate building machines, air defense alerting devices (ADAD), A-2 bradley upgrades, ALR-56 radar warning receiver, AN/TQM-41 MMS, avengers, theater deployable communication packages, dragon missile upgrades, multiple launch rocket system (MLRS), magic lantern spares, small arms simulators, senior scout modifications, field artillery ammunition support vehicles (FAASVs), KC-135R reengining, night vision devices and driver's night viewers, heavy equipment transport system (HETS), paladin, M-1A2 tanks, CH-47 FADEC, medium truck extended service programs (ESP), F-16 C/D onboard oxygen generating system field installation and evaluation by the Air National Guard, M-270 launcher mechanical systems (ILMS), high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles, LITENING targeting and navigation pods, all-terrain cranes, modular airborne fire fighting system units, CH-47 internal crash worthy fuel cells, back scatter truck inspection systems, night vision equipment, CH-47 ICH aircraft, commercial industrial equipment, high speed dirt compactors, AH-64 combat mission simulators, high mobility trailers for HMMWVs, palletized loading systems, heavy expanded mobility tactical truck wreckers, M109A6, automatic building machines, air defense alerting device systems, interactive simulators, master cranes, deployable universal combat earth movers, HEMTT wreckers, and AN/VRC-102 Radios.