

General Timothy M. Ray
Commander, Air Force Global Strike Command
Commander, Air Forces, U.S. Strategic Command

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DWG: Good morning, General Ray. Thank you so much for doing this in the midst of everything else that we're all going through. I really appreciate your taking the time and I think there's a lot of interest in having the conversation with you today.

We've got something like 17, 18 journalists from a wide variety of different publications. Folks, because of the nature of this, being a phone call, and because I can't see who would like to ask a question, I'm going to do what I usually do, ask the first question, then I'm going to simply in this case go down the list of those of you who are on the line and I'm going to do it in the order in which you responded to the invitation. Whoever answered first, which happens to be John Tirpak of Air Force Magazine, you'll go first, John, after me and then I'll just read down the list and we'll hopefully get to everybody. We'll certainly try.

General Ray, I doubt this is going to be a one topic conversation, but I do think we have to start with COVID-19 and ask you how is it affecting your command, has it in any way impaired the ability to conduct your mission? Talk to us about the impact it's having on your command.

General Ray: When we think about a national crisis like this, the American people, our senior leadership, and certainly our partners and allies and everyone else around the world, they need to know that this particular mission set which I call the cornerstone of the security structure of the free world, and that is absolutely ready, poised, prepared, focused, and that's

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exactly where it is right now. We've been thinking about this problem for well over a month. We've taken some very good measures and we are very much ahead of this challenge as a command and I couldn't be more pleased with the leadership I'm seeing up and down the line. But our mission is quite capable, ready and focused and I'm very pleased that you're getting what you're asking for out of this command as an American taxpayer.

DWG: What are some of the things you had to do to make that the case in this situation where COVID-19 is affecting the United States heavily and actually the globe?

General Ray: I won't go into a lot of details on some of the things. Part of the benefit we enjoy is living in places like North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming and Montana where your closest neighbor is five or six miles away which is in and of itself social distancing.

We thought about how we create resiliency and depth in our team. We've been very judicious about the procedures to protect ourselves. We've got great medical teams that are focused on this. But our ability to step back and make sure that before it became a problem where we live locally that we've taken the right measures to help us minimize our exposure, maximize our sortie and our mission capability as well as deal with the inevitable impact that we're going to have some people who do get sick but be able to manage that to the best of our ability, and we think we're well ahead of that for now.

DWG: Before I turn to John Tirpak, are there any cases of COVID-19 that have been diagnosed in Global Strike Command personnel?

General Ray: We don't talk about the numbers, but yes. And what I will tell you is that they're already recovered. We've enjoyed a very healthy population from the beginning, so in the end we know there will be some cases and we'll work our way through it. The discipline in execution is helping us manage

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that quite well.

DWG: Thank you, sir. John Tirpak next, then Valerie Ensina of Defense News.

DWG: Good morning, sir.

The Air Force is looking to retire early to pay for the [JASB] quite a few tankers. I was wondering if Mobility Command had spoken with you about ways that you could maybe reduce or mitigate your demand signal on the tanker fleet?

General Ray: We continue a dialogue with Air Mobility Command through the operational side of our command and the air component of U.S. Strategic Command, AFSTRAT, and then our relationship with the other air components around the world. I believe we have a very good conversation about how to do that wisely. We're always looking for efficiencies, always looking for opportunities. But I wouldn't say that there's anything new that we're doing to change that. We will continue to look at the reengining effort for the B-52. We think of that as just one measure over the long haul that gives us more long range strike capability.

DWG: One more thing. Global Strike Command over the years has gradually taken more and more of what the old SAC used to be. The only thing it seems not to have is tankers. Do you think that GSC in the future may need its own tankers for the extra long ranges you're going to have to be operating at in the future?

General Ray: I do not believe we need to have our own tankers. I believe the team at Air Mobility Command does an exceptional job in organizing, training and equipping that force, so we have the right relationships to prioritize our requirements. And I think when we speak of long range strike it has a significant priority, so I'm not concerned about that, nor would I entertain a desire to have tankers in our command.

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DWG: Thank you.

DWG: Valerie. Then it will be Vivian [indiscernible] of Defense News.

DWG: Hi, sir.

I wanted to ask about COVID-19 and whether it's having impact on the B-21 program. Certain suppliers and primes are having difficulty in having to shut down operations for a couple of weeks or slow down what they're doing. Then you have Air Force [Indiscernible] organizations. Some of them have had to slow down activities as well. So I'm wondering if that's had any impact on the development, production or tests for B-21. Thanks.

General Ray: I'm not going to talk to the specifics of the B-21 program right now. We figure [indiscernible] COVID-19 in America and where it goes. And even what I tell you today may not be a valid point two weeks from now. We're going to go through arguably the toughest several weeks in our nation's history since the 2nd World War, some say in a century.

So we're going to continue to stay connected with our teammates and talking about what we need to do. We know we're flying a little less, but we're flying what we need. We're staying ready and we're working with our sustainment and our modernization teams. Some activity continues, but we're going to have to meter that as we go.

DWG: If I could follow up real quickly. Are you guys still believing that the B-21 is going to do first flight in 2021, or has that slipped to the right?

General Ray: I'm not going to speak to the actual dates of that. I know some things have been said. We work hand in hand with the Rapid Capabilities Office. I was just on a video-

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teleconference with that team yesterday, as we work our way through that. But certainly we'll keep you posted when we're ready to launch.

DWG: Thank you. Next is Steve Trimball of Aviation Week followed by Patrick [Host] of Jane's.

DWG: Thank you.

I've been noticing some activity at AFRL about arsenal shift, palletized munitions, expanding the capacity for standoff and [needed stand in] munition flow. I wonder how does that sort of fit into Global Strike command's portfolio at some point? Especially if we're talking about using C-17s or C-130s versus B-21s or B-52s? How do you think about that and where that goes?

General Ray: Right now we know the requirement for long range bombers is north of 220. In the past we said it was 175, but that was a programmatically derived approach. We in the Air Force believe it's north of 220.

There are multiple ways to get to that [indiscernible] path. Right now the short term in any path forward includes working our way through sustaining the B-1 and adding capacity [to it] until we have the B-21s coming off, to sustain the B-2 until the B-21 is coming off the line at the numbers we need. It follows a considerable modernization effort for the B-52 which we have a very good game plan for going forward. Then you want to look for those opportunities to add capacity where you can.

My preference is to entertain something that can have more long range strike that's more rapidly available. I believe our ability to bring the longer range strike capabilities [in our] arsenal plan type of concept, if that's the capability that shows more promise. But when you think about using a cargo plane, you're in competition for other airlift requirements and you know full well that that's [due] to demand signal.

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I think as well there's a utility there, but for where we are we think a longer range capabilities with longer range cruise missiles I believe is where we want to go. Exactly how that looks, we don't have that right now. We're going to have to keep the plan we have in front of us and look for some opportunities.

DWG: If you're talking 220 that implies at least 50 more bombers than what you would have between 100 B-21s and 76 B-52s. I mean could there be an increase in B-21s out of that?

General Ray: From where I sit right now as the Commander of Global Strike Command I have to set the conditions over the next couple of years, and even my replacement will have to work through [indiscernible] to set those conditions. I think you can look at multiple paths, but I believe we're probably four or five years from being able to come up with that plan specifically.

DWG: Thank you.

DWG: Patrick [Host] of Jane's followed by Michael Gordon of Wall Street Journal.

DWG: This is Vivian, I think you said I would go after Valerie.

DWG: I'm sorry, I did, yes. Sorry. You're next.

DWG: Thank you.

I wanted to ask you real quick about how Global Strike Command was looking at the Advanced [Style] Management System program. Are there specific projects coming up that you plan to be participating in? What sort of products that Global Strike Command has right now that you think would be particularly adaptable, useful, to the AGMS program? Thank you.

General Ray: I think this is probably a deeper, longer

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conversation and we should probably do a follow-up on that particular topic. What I would tell you here and now is that we think [MC2] over assured coms and Joint All Domain Command and Control is [indiscernible] with some caveats. So what we're talking about in that [AGMS] and [JASC2] world, we're very invested in it and we believe that that is quite applicable for our portfolio.

DWG: I guess I was thinking in particular about the [indiscernible] 2016. I know that has to do with multi-domain coms and situational awareness. So is that, are there any discussions about integrating that or using it in a future [AGMS] demonstration?

General Ray: Which one are you talking about? You were garbled, I'm sorry.

DWG: Sorry, the War Task program, the Wave Relay Tactical Assault case.

General Ray: We are working that very aggressively right now with AFRL.

DWG: Could you [indiscernible] future [AGMS] demonstration perhaps?

General Ray: We will continue to work with the team on [JASC2] [AGMS] or the on-ramps and for the [tasks]. We are in that conversation. Have been included on that with the Secretary of the Air Force's staff and with the STRATCOM/NORTHCOM teams.

DWG: Thank you.

DWG: Patrick and then Michael.

DWG: Hi. Have you done the ground testing for the MH-139 yet?

General Ray: We're working our way through that right now. I

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can get back to you with some more specific details about the developmental and operational tasking that's going on. There's probably a few more details that you will want beyond my particular answer, but we have begun some test activity.

DWG: Can you give us a little bit of detail about what your evaluation has been of the aircraft and operational testing?

General Ray: I'll have to come back on another engagement with you for those details. I'm not prepared to give you those exact details right now. We have been focused very heavily on COVID as you might imagine, but we'd be glad to have a follow-up conversation with you here this week if you need to.

DWG: Would you say that COVID has impacted the platforms testing?

General Ray: I don't believe it has.

DWG: All right, thank you.

DWG: Michael, then Ariana from Military.com.

DWG: Thank you, General. Two quick questions.

One, you mentioned that you're [continuing your] missions, but obviously the current situation has caused you to make some modifications. What are the Chinese and Russian Air Forces doing from your standpoint? Have they reduced their level of activity? Are they continuing pretty much business as usual?

A second question, you referred to B-52 modernization. Can you please give me a ballpark estimate of what that is going to cost? When that's going to start and finish? I realize there are a lot of different elements that reengining and avionics and cockpit and all that, but just some basic numbers on that would be helpful.

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General Ray: I'll circle back with you on the basic numbers. We're going to work the long range standoff missile as one of the modernization efforts, a new radar, new engine, and there are some communication upgrades. That's going to flow over several years but we'd be glad to circle back with you with some specific estimates in terms of times and dollars in a follow-on.

DWG: If you can do that I'd appreciate it. I've been trying to get that.

And on the Russians and Chinese, what's your take on their level of activity? Are they doing what they've always done? Or are they adapting?

General Ray: I have to be really careful about what I say or how I know it, so there's a classification piece. What I'm going to tell you is I watch what's going on all over the globe. So as Global Strike Command, as the air component of Strategic Command, and in terms of the only allied bomber force and the only allied ICBM force we monitor change in the Middle East and Africa, in Asia, in Europe and certainly here in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. So we watch everything that's going on.

DWG: Have you noticed any differences?

General Ray: I think Europe has slowed down. I think China and Asia, they're at, they haven't slowed down to nothing. They're still operating. But the Pacific and Asia is a very big problem set. So I'm going to be really careful about what we say is happening with the Chinese and the North Koreans specifically.

DWG: Ariana and then William [Hanigan].

DWG: Hi, sir. Thanks for doing this.

I wanted to get back a little bit to Steve Trimbball's question there. I know Air Force Global Strike Command just did a proof

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of concept back in the fall to increase the payload capability for the B-1. I've recently seen your comments in Air Force Magazine about having potentially that be for Arrow as well as conventional LRSO. You've been doing tests with LORASM and JASSM-ER. Just reading the tea leaves here, I mean what is the goal for the remaining B-1 fleet? Are you potentially getting it ready to be the next arsenal plane for Global Strike Command?

General Ray: I think the arsenal plane concept is probably better defined as more of a clean sheet approach to a platform that can affordably and rapidly fill the gap for long range strike capabilities and to go down a more innovative path. That's how I treat the term arsenal plane.

We will by necessity, and I think for the, for the National Defense Strategy focuses us is to increase our long range strike regardless of a platform. So we see an opportunity as we turn our hand from the close air support mission -- and we have many platforms in the Air Force that can conduct the CAS missions, so there's no shortage of CAS capability. But when we think of a [indiscernible] bomber, its ability to combine long range legs of the aircraft itself with long range weapons, that is particularly beneficial. So that applies to the B-52, to the B-2 and to the B-1.

Now this [is requiring] sources. This [indiscernible] great for the B-1. I see there an opportunity to take on-line missions faster for us, the hypersonic missions faster for us, and fighter bomber fleet. And where I have a very, very positive recovery for the B-1 community, So I have more flyable airplanes and ready crews than we've seen in many, many years so there's a great recovery [inaudible], so it's a natural connection to bring that capability on as we modify the B-52 and we take advantage of the B-1 capacity.

DWG: Can you quickly say what the, when you talk about the recovery, can you quickly say if the machine capable rates have improved in recent months since there have been some setbacks in

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that fleet?

General Ray: I don't want to get caught in terminology of mission rates and mission capability rates. I think you can easily get confused. But I look at well over 25, at least 25 flyable airplanes a day. We've flown more sorties in a month than we've seen in probably the last three or four years. I'm sitting on a significantly larger number of mission ready crews. So that recovery effort is yielding the results and then some. But I'm very pleased with how that team has led and recovered. But the team at Ellsworth last month flew 100 sorties and they've not flown 100 sorties in the last couple of years in a single month. So good progress, good momentum, and I couldn't ask for better.

DWG: William then Sarah, inside Defense.

DWG: Thanks, General.

We're about ten months away from the expiration of New START. I was wondering, I was interested to know one, of any planning your team has been doing in the event that the treaty doesn't get extended. Thanks.

General Ray: Our team here focuses on a more constrained environment of [indiscernible] treaty and I would not give the advice to grow where we are barring a policy change.

So we're looking at New START Treaty as one of the realities for us through 2026 until a policy decision is made above us to change that. So we're sticking with that as the going-in argument and we'll give our best military advice on how to go forward when that opportunity, if it [indiscernible]. It's important to us.

DWG: You said you'd not give the advice to grow. Are you speaking to, who are you advising there?

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General Ray: There are some who think if the New START Treaty ended we would begin a new [class of weapons]. My argument would be that's not where we see the reality. I think where we're asking to remodernism and recapitalize the current triad, that's with the New START Treaty in place. I think that's exactly the place to go. And any change to the nuclear arsenal has to match the context of where the Chinese are, the Russians are, certainly in the minds of our partners and allies and where our national leadership goes. There's no narrowly focused perspective. And certainly we would need to follow the leadership of where we're going as a country.

DWG: Sarah then Marcus.

DWG: Sir, thank you very much for doing this.

I have a question about GBSB. Some have suggested that Air Force Global Strike Command could [use] some sort of advocacy arm based in Washington, DC to advocate for ICBM modernization on the Hill, especially in the next couple of years, our [indiscernible]. Is that something that you think is necessary and that you would advocate for? Especially now as some people are starting to question the large defense budget as COVID-19 is having such a massive economic impact?

General Ray: There's a lot in that question. We remain engaged on a very regular basis with Congress and staffers, certainly with the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the team there as well as the combatant commanders. It would be wrong for me to advocate for a separate advocacy entity. The conversation that I focus on is the triad as you know it now is old; the Russian triad is modernized with some modifications; the Chinese triad is modern. So our affordable way forward would be to modernize this triad. To think of anything other than the triad means you divorce yourself from the context of the Chinese triad, the Russian triad, and then what goes on in the minds of your partners and allies to whom we've offered many of then extended deterrence and they in turn do not pursue their own

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nuclear programs. So there's a counter-proliferation dimension to this.

If there are changes made where we have been successful is in multilateral agreements in previous treaties, and those have succeeded in safely changing the number of weapons in play for some of the larger arsenal. What's difficult to account for is the new participants in this particular environment, and that is a very different dynamic.

DWG: Marcus and then Dmitry.

DWG: Thank you.

I was wondering what the status of [indiscernible] aircraft are. It was reported a few months ago that a couple of them were down for heavy maintenance. We know here it impacted the SecDef's availability to use those planes. What are the status of those planes and when do you hope to get them back?

General Ray: Can you repeat the first part of your question to make sure I'm answering exactly the right one?

DWG: The E-4B, the night watch plane, they were reported a few months ago that I believe two of them were down for heavy maintenance or a number of them were down for heavy maintenance. What's the status of those aircraft? When do you hope to get them back?

General Ray: There is periodic maintenance for these aircraft, a regular scheduled event. Right now we have no maintenance challenges outside of that scheduled maintenance rotation. We have a very good conversation with the Secretary of Defense's staff and we have great support to make sure we've got the mission met. We're focused on that particular mission obviously in this COVID environment. But right now I don't have you know, hard broken airplanes beyond which is really in the normal sustainment approach for what we call [isochronal] or what we

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call or program [indiscernible] maintenance.

DWG: Okay, so are those planes, is it a decision then by the Secretary's office not to use them? Or you're not making them available to the Secretary's office to use them?

General Ray: We had a conversation about what's the right way forward. There's I think a sense that there's better ways for this to be done. There's a lot more sensitive dimensions to this aircraft. But what I would tell you is we've got a very good conversation going on with the Joint Staff and the Secretary of Defense in terms of how to do that. [Indiscernible] the Secretary of Defense looking for other ways to [travel].

DWG: Dmitry from TASS and then Barbra Starr, CNN.

DWG: Good morning, General. Thank you for doing this.

I wanted to [indiscernible] for a moment. [Indiscernible] remember when you also discussed this last year when you met [indiscernible]. When I went back through the transcript of this session and saw that you said that [indiscernible] to stay in an arms control agreement or regime, that is verifiable and enforceable. So I wanted to ask you since it's less than a year actually remains on the New START, has your military advice changed or is it still the same?

General Ray: I think [indiscernible] words is key here. Sustain is a word you might have added. My point back then remains. It is good for the entire planet for the United States to be in a verifiable and enforceable arms control agreement. It gives us visibility, predictability and an element of trust as long as the elements are verifiable and enforceable are [indiscernible]. To go beyond that and to say it is a given treaty by name is not my place. It is a policy conversation. My advice would be if you have the ability to be in a verifiable and forceable arms control agreement, that is a beneficial thing

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for our country and for the world.

DWG: Has the administration, the political leadership already asked you for your advice on the New START now that less than a year remains?

General Ray: I'm not in that conversation. That would come to me after multiple layers inside the government and it may never come to me based on the policy dimensions of that. But I will tell you right now, I am not in that conversation, and there's a good chance that I would not be.

DWG: Thank you.

DWG: Barbara Starr and then Connie Lee.

DWG: Thank you, General.

I wanted to go back to Michael Gordon's question about Russia and China if I may. When you answered about China I noticed you said that you were of course looking at them and I believe you said and specifically North Korea. What are you specifically looking at when it comes to North Korea? Are you referring basically to the relatively short range launches that have been publicly acknowledged and very widely known? Or is there something else that specifically worries you like that?

General Ray: there's nothing that worries me right now about North Korea except the closed nature of which they're not discussing COVID and the impacts to that country.

In terms of military capacity or preparedness, I won't actually [indiscernible] those indications, but know that it, in a holistic perspective I would try to anticipate the need to support those in USFK and in PACOM, but there's nothing right now happening that makes me focus an additional amount of my attention over and above what I view [indiscernible].

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DWG: Can I just ask, when you mentioned COVID, help us understand, they clearly have not fully disclosed or acknowledge the impact of COVID on their society, but what is the impact? If they are in fact having COVID and perhaps a significant outbreak, what do you see that strategic impact being on North Korea? How do we need to think about that?

General Ray: I'm the wrong person to talk to that. I would actually point you to Indo-PACOM and U.S. Forces Korea. They're far more focused on that particular problem set and they would give you a better answer.

DWG: Okay, thank you.

DWG: Connie, then Jeff Smith.

DWG: Hi. I wanted to ask about hypersonics, specifically Arrow. The Air Force wanted to [indiscernible] about a year earlier than planned. How is COVID affecting that timeline? Are you guys still going to be able to stick to that plan? Or do you have any sort of estimate on how much things will be delayed by?

General Ray: I don't have a revised estimate. We're going to look at future opportunities for our [fleet]. That's a new conversation inside the Department. But we feel strongly that this is a good match and a good timeline. We'll keep focused on however you want to [indiscernible] COVID, and if there's a change then we'd be glad to ride along with one of your [indiscernible] Arrow program. But [we're] one of several customers.

DWG: And you feel confident that the [indiscernible] facilities will be able to support those efforts?

General Ray: I spoke with Secretary Lord this morning actually, and I know that the Department of Defense is very focused on this. I spent time talking with some of our other industry

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partners in the last few days to make sure we're all in the same place.

In the end I think you'll have some places that will deal with temporary closures of facilities and they'll work their way through that. I am the last one to speak about the long-term economic impact of where this is going to go. I'd steer you to the Office of the Secretary of Defense for those broader ones, but you should know that we're having the conversation and it's a good dialogue.

DWG: Thank you.

DWG: Jeff Smith, you're next.

Let me just say to the three folks who were joining us but not supposed to ask questions, it looks like we have time for you so if you have a question you'll be next. Jeff, go ahead.

DWG: Thanks, David. Hi, General. Two questions.

First you said that with regard to China that they haven't slowed down to nothing but I presume because of the way you phrased it they've slowed down. You didn't say anything about Russia. Russia, I presume, also has slowed down. Can you just confirm that my guess is correct?

And secondly, a lot of the conversation so far here has been almost as if we didn't have this pandemic going on and it's not going to affect the way people think about defense spending in particular. I'm just wondering if you've thought about that, and whether or not you're really optimistic that your modernization plans are going to proceed in the same way and at the same pace given the ultimate fallout of people's perceptions about defense spending after COVID begins to ease and government begins to return to its normal paces. Do you really think this is going to leave your budget unscathed?

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General Ray: That goes to the broader question, the entire globe is slowing down in direct or indirect ways. So everybody is slowing down to some extent. The question is how much and what does it mean. That is it's too early to tell.

In terms of the budget, I've said that multiple times that things don't change significantly without a crisis. World War II, Pearl Harbor, Cuban Missile Crisis, 9/11. The question becomes one, how does the world change now after COVID? I think we all agree that it probably won't go back to a pre-COVID state.

What that means is really impossible to tell at this time. I can tell you we think about how we [indiscernible] and understand what that means in terms of an authorization. We continue to pursue the programs we believe, the vast majority of what we're doing is the cornerstone and security structure of the free world and I don't think that's going to change. We would still make the case that we need to modernize the triad. So I think at the end of the day the conversation is going to happen as to where it goes, where the economy goes, where the budget goes, is not something that I can even try to forecast right now.

DWG: Thanks very much.

DWG: Takashi or Paul or Jim, do any of you have a question you'd like to ask?

DWG: Thank you, General. My question is what is the [major terms] for the U.S. and allied countries to maintain nuclear readiness under the COVID-19 crisis? And this comes with [higher level] of testing positive in the Global Strike Command?

General Ray: We won't talk about the number of positive cases. You have to understand dependents, contractors, civilians, and active duty military, and we certainly understand what's going on in the communities. But I will tell you that we do not have

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an impact to our mission based on where we are right now, and we've got plans to deal with further spread of the virus.

For us, we have an excellent posture of readiness right now despite the COVID and we believe that we can sustain that going forward.

DWG: Thank you.

DWG: Paul or Jim? If not, we're in a lucky position because the Commander has spoken so clear and relatively terse with his answers and I guess the setting of the call makes this so efficient that we'll be able to go back to the top, and John Tirpak, you'll be next. But Paul or Jim, do you have anything you'd like to ask?

General Ray: Let me make one point as probably another comment for that is that you expect us to be able to conduct this mission under all conditions. All conditions. Not a selected set of conditions but all conditions and that is how we're approaching this problem set of keeping the cornerstone, the security structure of the free world ready to go and focused on the problem.

DWG: Thank you, sir.

John Tirpak, do you have another question?

DWG: General, I've heard that there's been some debate between GSC and Air Combat Command over which would be the preferred hypersonic system. My understanding is that ACC is interested more in the Arrow and GSC was more interested in the Hawk. I'm wondering if something has changed or if that debate still continues between the two commands.

General Ray: We're [still in a place] with Arrow being the [way] we need to go. We think we've got a good game plan going forward. We'll continue to work with them. Obviously the

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action officers [inaudible], but I've made my decision and we're stepping out.

DWG: So you don't see the air breathing as having more advantages in the long run in terms of load out on your aircraft?

General Ray: We think the air breathing cruise missile in the long run would be also something we need to consider, but we're very comfortable with where the Air Force is going on their selection on hypersonics.

DWG: Thank you.

DWG: Valerie, do you have another question?

DWG: I'm good, thank you.

DWG: Vivienne?

DWG: I'm good, thank you.

DWG: Steve Trimbball?

DWG: Just to follow up on the hypersonic question, I'm interested, some of the stories I've seen, in fact John wrote the idea of putting up to 30 or 31 Arrows on the B-1 and thinking about that I'm guessing -- I don't know what the cost is but I'm guessing they're several million apiece for those. If you can [indiscernible] I'd be delighted. But is that feasible, putting \$150 million weapon loads -- how does that factor into these standoff weapon concepts that we're hearing about?

General Ray: You're serious about standoff, you're serious about air battle management system and joint [indiscernible]. That's beyond argument. We're very tightly linked to where the Air Force is going there. I think that's exactly the right way

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to go. Certainly the Space Force standing up is an elemental piece of that. I am very, very supportive of that.

When it comes to the B-1, it's basically we, the [iteration] we're seeking is external hard points that can allow us to add six Arrows and then you still have the bomb bay where you can carry the LORASM or the JASSM, JASSM-ER, but you can also on the external points carry LRASM or JASSM-ER which is really where you get [to 30]. So I talk about 30 hypersonics but 30 standoff weapons, and they could be a mix.

DWG: Also on the LORASM, do you think there's going to be a push from Global Strike Command to expand that to another B-1 squadron and perhaps to the B-52s?

General Ray: I'm not going to expand that right now for the B-1. That is a Navy program and we're in support of them. Our investments will be to improve the [external] carriage, make sure that we have a good, sustainment game plan, and that we do work the command and control connection, the [JASC2] is in our priorities with the B-1.

DWG: Patrick Host?

DWG: Nothing here.

DWG: Michael Gordon?

DWG: A quick one since I have the opportunity. Following up on New START, General, does Russia have the potential to significantly increase the size of its arsenal by uploading RVs and taking advantage of its [throw] weight if New START were to lapse? Just as, you know, a military possibility. Do they have that capacity and is that a concern of yours?

General Ray: I am concerned about the overall pace of modernization of Russia and the Chinese compared to where we are broadly. This is a national capability and we have work to do,

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detering it from years of the counterterrorism, [QA] and National Defense Strategy declared long-term strategic competition. So I do continue to watch that. I do continue to watch the number of the non-declared tactical nuclear weapons in terms of what's on the table. There's a significant amount there that we all need to keep our eye on.

DWG: My question is absent New START constraints. If those New START constraints go away does the pace of Russia [indiscernible] allow them to significantly increase their force through uploading RVs and other measures?

General Ray: Well [indiscernible] New START Treaty. They have modernized quickly, so you can extrapolate that going forward.

DWG: Ariana, anything you'd like to ask?

DWG: Yes, actually. I know you, General Ray, have been working to create a schedule of doing more dynamic or shorter bomber rotation to Europe, the Pacific and things like this. That was a big plan for Air Force Global Strike Command that you had all been working on together, and I'm just curious with the latest COVID news, where does that stand? And have deployments been delayed in any way? Or how has that been impacted

General Ray: We're adjusting our schedule. That's a very good conversation [indiscernible] compliance. We've done some good work with tailoring those bomber task forces. We've done some inside the United States tests to lighten our footprint and to be able to do more with that. I'm pleased with the progress. We're going to continue to hold where we are until the COVID [dimension] is over because of the need to, the travel restrictions that are on us. But our planners continue to think and refine and I'm very pleased with the progress.

DWG: Bill Hannigan?

DWG: I'm good, thank you very much.

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DWG: Sarah?

DWG: I'm good, thank you.

DWG: Marcus?

DWG: I just wanted to kind of follow up on what Valerie asked you earlier. She asked more specifically about the B-21 and the supply chain. A lot of modernization, pretty much of everything you do is done in classified environments where folks presumably still have to show up for work and to be [adhering to such] for the new weapons and aircraft you're buying are all done, again, in a classified type environment. Boeing has shut down all work at [Philly] which is your [AW-1] [indiscernible] replacement.

So realistically looking at this, how are you dealing with the situation and how it's going to just impact what weapons arrive? And then are you looking at possibly having to extend the life of anything that was kind of like on a razor's edge of expiring. I know Minuteman III, but I know that kind of [indiscernible] time out.

General Ray: We continue to work with the Office of Secretary of Defense. We do reviews with the Secretary of Defense himself, modernizing the nuclear arsenal, the triad is still a very, very high priority. The reviews have been very recent and we're going to continue to work that. There's no significant change in my calculus based on where we are and where we would choose to go. I've not been forced to step back and rethink my plan yet. We're trying to understand where things could go, but I'm nowhere close to the point where I need to make a significant alteration to my modernization [game plan].

DWG: By any chance have any of the following joined the call and want to have ask a question? Carla Babb, Bob Burns, or Robby Cramer? Just thought I'd ask.

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General Ray: Let me add one piece there about where we are with modernization. There are temporary shutdowns for facilities and stay at home pieces, and as we work our way through that I will tell you the industry partners are looking for those opportunities to open up facilities. Some of them they're planning to open up some work here where they have closed in the very near future. So it may not be on the exact pace it was, it's going to continue and they're going to look for those opportunities to move forward. So the longer term economic implication is one that will be out there in terms of the American economy and the world economy and I'm really not able to talk about where that is long term. But I will tell you I don't have any immediate concerns for our portfolio when it comes to that particular thing for now.

DWG: Thank you.

Dmitry, anything you'd like to follow up on?

DWG: Yes, sir. I wanted to ask about New Start implementation issues. There have been a number of these issues and I just wanted to ask if you have an update on whether or not things of that nature are being resolved constructively by the two sides? Do you have anything on that?

General Ray: That is a subject of American foreign policy so you'd have to go to the State Department or to OSD and above. But really that's beyond my ability to comment on at that time.

DWG: Barbra Starr? Guess not.

Connie Lee?

DWG: I'm all set, thank you.

DWG: General, I think we've had a really useful and varied set of questions and answers and we are most grateful to you for

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finding time in the midst of all that's going on. I'm delighted that this call worked. Thank you to DoD or the U.S. Air Force, whoever made this work. It worked well, and thank you.

General, I hope we can have you again sometime. I think these sessions are really helpful.

General Ray: Can I make one final comment for everyone's benefit?

DWG: Please do.

General Ray: You should be incredibly proud of the men and women of the United States Air Force across the board in every command and what they're doing. What they're doing with network capacity, mobility, training and production. I will tell you, I am thoroughly impressed with the quality of leadership from top to bottom in this command and how well they've done to respond to this crisis. It's not enough of a good news story, but you have got some amazing people, the medics, the mechanics, the aviators, the staff personnel, the people who are just doing heroic things every day. You should be very proud of the team you have in the field.

DWG: Thank you, sir.

I think we'll stop here. We plan to continue our meetings on this kind of basis going forward for some period of time. We have a couple of very good sessions planned in late April. I won't name them because you never know what's going to happen, but we have some very good guests coming up, so stay tuned for invitations and I want to thank our funders, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Mitre Corp, CNA, and the George Washington University for making this session and others possible. I look forward to hearing from you all soon. We'll put a transcript up I would imagine sometime tomorrow, but not first thing.

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Thanks to everyone. General Ray, thank you so much for making time for this. We're really grateful.

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