

Joint Cargo Aircraft (JCA)

Executive Summary

- The Services are behind in updating both the Acquisition Strategy and Test and Evaluation Master Plan (TEMP). Both are required to support the interim program review scheduled for January 2009.
- The Army and Air Force scheduled the Multi-Service Operational Test and Evaluation (MOT&E) as an eight-week test in FY10. Full-rate production for the Joint Cargo Aircraft (JCA) should occur in 1QFY11.
- The JCA LFT&E program has an aggressive schedule, but has been slow to get started. This has the potential to delay the completion of the LFT&E report, which may put the full-rate production decision, as scheduled, in jeopardy.

System

- The JCA is an Acquisition Category 1D joint program with Air Force and Army participation. The program had its Milestone C decision in May 2007 and awarded the low-rate initial production contract of 14 C-27J aircraft.
- The JCA is a two-engine six-blade turboprop tactical transport aircraft.
- The aircraft is designed to operate from short (2,000 feet) unimproved or austere runways. It has a 2,400 nautical mile range with a payload of 13,000 pounds.
- The JCA can carry three standard pallets, six bundles for airdrop, a minimum of 40 passengers, 34 paratroopers, or 18 litters for medical evacuation.
- A fully integrated defensive systems suite will be incorporated onto the aircraft to include radar, laser, and missile warning systems in addition to infrared countermeasures.

Mission

- Army units equipped with the JCA primarily transport time-sensitive and mission-critical cargo and personnel to



forward deployed forces in remote and austere locations. The JCA must be capable of self-deployment to theater.

- The Air Force intends to use the JCA to support their intra-theater airlift operations.
- Secondary missions for the JCA include performing routine sustainment operations, airdrop of personnel and equipment, medical evacuation, support of homeland defense, and other humanitarian assistance missions.

Prime Contractors

- Alenia
- L-3 Communications

Activity

- The first flight of the C-27J that will be configured as a JCA occurred in Italy in June 2008.
- The first aircraft was ferried from manufacturing facilities in Italy to the contractor facility in Waco, Texas, for final modification in late FY08, with the second to follow in early FY09.
- Government Production Qualification testing will begin in FY09, with MOT&E planned for FY10. The full-rate production decision is slated for December 2010.
- JCA LFT&E began in September 2008, with the armor system being the first to test, followed closely by high-pressure oxygen systems.

- The Army and Air Force scheduled the MOT&E as an eight-week test in FY10. Full-rate production for the JCA should occur in 1QFY11.

Assessment

- The Services are behind schedule in updating both the Acquisition Strategy and TEMP. Both are required to support the interim program review scheduled for January 2009. The program is operating under a generic Pre-Milestone C TEMP, which does not include specific information on the aircraft, the contractor, and contractor testing. The updated TEMP

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will provide the test community the ability to adequately plan, fund, and support the upcoming test events.

- The JCA test community would benefit from regular meetings and teleconferences to ensure that not only Service test requirements are being met, but also that the testing is adequate and timely.
- Operational test must include test requirements from both Services. Army and Air Force missions should include time-sensitive combat delivery to austere airfields, aerial delivery of cargo and personnel, medical evacuation, and troop resupply. Operationally-realistic aircrews, missions, and support are required for the MOT&E.
- Contracting issues have slowed the start of LFT&E. The team will need to execute the remaining program efficiently

to support the full-rate production decision as currently scheduled.

Recommendations

- Status of Previous Recommendations. This is the first annual report for this program.
- FY08 Recommendations.
 1. The program must submit an updated TEMP to support the interim program review scheduled for January 2009.
 2. The program should conduct regular test meetings and teleconferences.