



TORCHBEARER ALERT



ARMY AVIATION RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION: 2004–2011

This is an Army initiative . . . it is about fixing Army aviation for the future, for today and for tomorrow, not just about terminating Comanche. It's a big decision . . . but it's the right decision.

Army Chief of Staff General Peter J. Schoomaker, 23 February 2004

The Army's leadership has made a major warfighting decision about Army aviation for today and tomorrow. This Torchbearer Alert explores the background, technology and warfighting features of this new reconfiguration to revitalize Army aviation. After extensive study that included both lessons learned from the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) and an analysis of future operational environments, the acting Secretary of the Army and the Army Chief of Staff announced on 23 February 2004 a major restructuring of Army aviation coinciding with the cancellation of the Comanche helicopter program. While the cancellation of that major program may have come as a surprise to most, the reinvesting of Comanche's program dollars across the entire aviation program will significantly improve Army aviation as a whole, today and in the foreseeable future.

DID YOU KNOW . . . ?

The Cold War battlefield of the 1980s looked very different from the battlefields the Army faces today. While U.S. Army aviation technological superiority remains unmatched, vulnerabilities still exist: In Operation Iraqi Freedom, 32 Soldiers and nine aircraft have been lost, emphasizing the continuing need for more aircraft survivability equipment (ASE). Across the force, the Army is operating with both an aging fleet and a higher operational tempo than has been seen in decades. More and newer helicopters and more parts for modernization and recapitalization are needed for both active component (AC) and reserve component (RC) aviation units. As the reserve component mission increases, the RC is struggling with the potential choice of making aviation units smaller

or equipping them with sub-optimal aircraft. The new initiative transforms RC aviation so those units will be able to "plug and play" with the AC forces. Planning is underway for unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and a light utility helicopter to replace the Vietnam-era Kiowa. When the Army compared what the Comanche would have provided six years from now to other urgent needs in aviation, the choice, while difficult, was the right one.



CURRENT STATUS

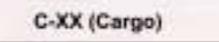
In March 2004, Congress received a proposed amendment to the President's Fiscal Year (FY) Budget that would provide the \$14.6 billion slated for Comanche in 2004–2011 to be used for the new Army aviation restructuring and revitalization. The Army hopes to use this money to bring aviation to the needed level for its Current and Future Force operations. Top priorities include accelerating aviation survivability equipment on most of the Army's deployed, deploying and rotational-base aircraft in Iraq and Afghanistan. The increased ASE will give aircrews the best possible protection and keep pace with modernization efforts. The AH-64A Apache Longbow, UH-60 Black Hawk and CH-47 Chinook helicopters will receive accelerated manufacturing timetables. The Comanche funding will modernize these fleets and modernize all 284 Apache I Longbow aircraft to their future Block III configuration, which will give them all of the Comanche's much-touted capabilities except stealth.

FUNDING FOR ARMY AVIATION

Aircraft survivability equipment, new helicopters, recapitalization of the existing fleet	\$1.26 billion
Rockets, flares	\$15.5 million
Missile procurement	\$93 million
Unmanned Aerial Vehicles	\$54 million
Army National Guard Aviation facilities	\$30 million
Army National Guard Flying Hour Program	\$58 million

In FY 2004–2011, \$14.6 billion will go to upgrades for 70 percent of the Army's aviation fleet. The table shows some major programs and the amount of funding they will receive in FY 2005 if Congress passes the proposed budget amendment.

The funding will also finance the upgrade and modernization of existing attack, utility and cargo helicopters as well as bring a new observation and scout/attack helicopter to the force, replacing the Vietnam-era UH-1 Iroquois (better known as the "Huey") and the OH-58D Kiowa. Using existing technologies and airframes with

ARMY AVIATION MODERNIZATION PLAN		
MISSION	FISCAL YEAR 2004	FISCAL YEARS 2006–2011
ATTACK	 AH-64A Apache	 AH-64D Longbow Block III
RECONNAISSANCE	 OH-58D Kiowa (Divest)	 Armed Recon
UTILITY	 UH-60A/L Black Hawk  UH-1 Iroquois (Divest)	 UH-60 A/L/M  Light Utility Helicopter
CARGO	 CH-47D Chinook  C-23 Sherpa (Cargo)	 CH-47F  C-XX (Cargo)
FIXED-WING Does not include Special Operations Aircraft	 C-12 Huron (Short-range)  Special Electronic Mission Aircraft (RC-12 and RC-7)	 Aerial Common Sensor

Source: Headquarters, Department of the Army

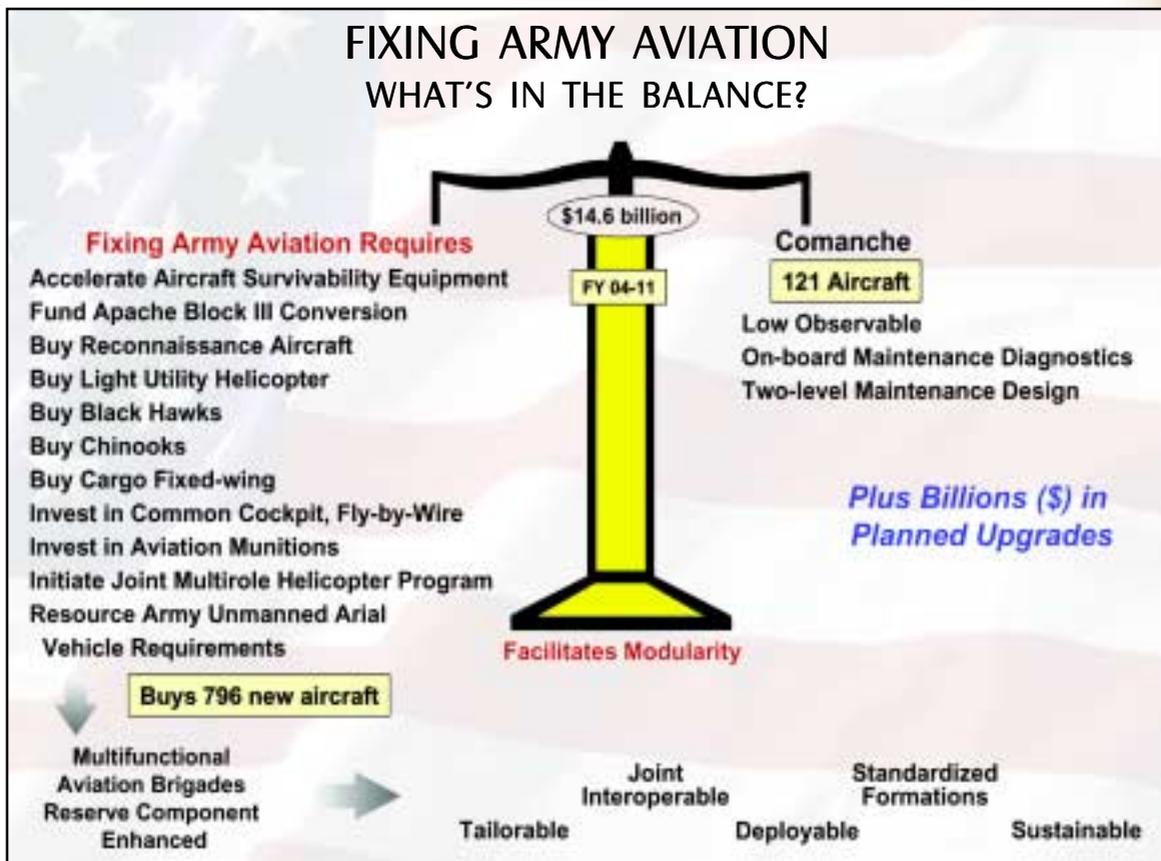
modifications, the Army will replace the aging Hueys and Kiowas with a light utility helicopter (LUH), a variant of such helicopters currently used in the commercial world. The Army also will rapidly acquire several hundred armed reconnaissance helicopters (ARH) to replace the older OH-58D Kiowa Warriors.



Fixed-wing aviation benefits as well. The Army plans to develop an acquisition program for a cargo fixed-wing aircraft (CXX-Cargo) to comply with intratheater needs and to replace the Army's existing C-23s and C-12s. These new fixed-wing planes will work with Air Force platforms and will be configured to meet the challenges of the new operating environment.

The Army will get more than just aircraft with aviation dollars. It will also be able to procure ground support equipment, including towing, ground electrical and hydraulic power units, engine analysis, de-icing systems, maintenance

shop sets and avionics upgrades. More simulators, rockets and munitions are also on the list. The UAV has proven a great asset on the battlefield, providing intelligence and scout capabilities as well as firepower (see Torchbearer Issue Paper *Army Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Systems: A Cost-Effective Combat Multiplier*, April 2004); \$54 million in the proposed FY 2005 budget amendment has been earmarked for acceleration and improvement of these technologies in tactical and small UAVs.



Source: Headquarters, Department of the Army



The restructuring initiative will complete all parts of the aviation transformation plan by the end of the decade. All Soldiers (active, Army National Guard and Army Reserve) will benefit by receiving upgrades and improvements to current aircraft, both fixed- and rotor-wing. They will also receive enhanced training and simulation. The Army will gain almost 800 new aircraft and recapitalize 1,400. The new face of Army aviation will facilitate modularity, bring multifunction aviation brigades to the force and enhance RC capabilities. Army aviation will emerge more joint, tailorable, rapidly deployable and sustainable in standardized formations. With these initiatives, Army aviation provides protection and power to Soldiers on the battlefield today while staying on track with transformation for tomorrow's operations.

WHAT IS NEEDED

Army aviation plays a role in almost every area of military operations. The fleet is operating at up to four times its peacetime tempo in extremely harsh environments, which has taken a toll on the fleet. Maintaining the readiness of Army aviation while modernizing and recapping is a major concern. The Army has taken the initiative

to fix aviation by identifying the challenges and responding with solutions, but the restructuring and revitalization plan's future is not secure.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

AUSA fully supports funding initiatives to maintain the first-rate capabilities of Army aviation for today and into the future (AUSA 2004 Resolutions 04-07, 04-14, 04-15). It is in the hands of Congress to follow through on the President's and the Secretary of Defense's assurances that Comanche funding will stay in Army aviation as codified in the FY 2005 budget amendment. Approval of the amendment will ensure that Army aviation can remain a priority and play a main role in transformation.

To get the latest information on Army aviation and the President's budget submission, click on the Legislative Action Center icon on the AUSA homepage at www.ausa.org. Should you wish to contact your elected officials, just follow the instructions.

