

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 29, 2008

The Honorable Michael Wynne
Secretary, Air Force
1670 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330

Dear Secretary Wynne:

The November 2, 2007 F-15C mishap raises many questions about the health of the aging inventory of Air Force aircraft. Although we now know that many of the longerons were not constructed to blueprint specifications, this accident highlights the importance of predictive tools in construction, sustainment, and modernization of our aircraft fleets.

As we continue to face budgetary constraints, cope with sustaining and maintaining aging fleets of aircraft, and strive to provide our pilots and aircrews with the highest quality training, we believe that modeling and simulation tools should be leveraged to maximize military readiness. While many of these technologies were not available when aircraft such as the F-15 were originally designed, today's modeling and simulation resources can prove to be a great benefit to our legacy fleets and our new acquisitions.

Accordingly, we kindly request your observation of the use of modeling and simulation tools in the operations and maintenance of the Air Force's aviation assets.

- 1) Are modeling and simulation tools being used to predict structural failures or other problems with your legacy aircraft fleets?
- 2) Are your legacy aircraft fleets equipped with adequate monitoring and data collection systems to support the modeling and simulation capabilities that currently exist?
- 3) Have modeling and simulation tools enabled manufacturers to incorporate lessons learned into their aircraft designs to improve quality and reduce failure rates?
- 4) Are new acquisitions, such as the F-22 and F-35, equipped with the necessary tools to enable modeling and simulation support for life-cycle sustainment?
- 5) What role do simulators play in meeting aircrew training requirements? Was there increased reliance on F-15A/D simulators while the fleet was grounded, and how will simulators be used as you go about requalifying pilots after the extended down-time?

Thank you very much for your leadership, service, and commitment to the nation and the Air Force. We look forward to continuing an open-dialogue and strong partnership in supporting and providing for our nation's airmen.

Sincerely,


J. RANDY FORBES
Member of Congress


SOLOMON ORTIZ
Member of Congress