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The following extract from Public Law 106-398 (Public Law 106-398, Section 220) established a goal to significantly increase the use of unmanned combat vehicles by the United States Armed forces. All unmanned vehicles require a heading reference. Sparton digital compasses provide precision navigation and heading information critical in today's most challenging autonomous vehicle applications.

Extract

Public Law 106-398 (October 30, 2000)

Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2001

Section 220. Unmanned Advanced Capability Combat Aircraft and Ground Combat Vehicles.

(a) GOAL.—It shall be a goal of the Armed Forces to achieve the fielding of unmanned, remotely controlled technology such that—

(1) by 2010, one-third of the aircraft in the operational deep strike force aircraft fleet are unmanned; and

(2) by 2015, one-third of the operational ground combat vehicles are unmanned.

(b) REPORT ON UNMANNED ADVANCED CAPABILITY COMBAT AIRCRAFT AND GROUND COMBAT VEHICLES.—

(1) Not later than January 31, 2001, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to the congressional defense committees a report on the programs to demonstrate unmanned advanced capability combat aircraft and ground combat vehicles undertaken jointly between the Director of the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and any of the following:

(A) The Secretary of the Army.

(B) The Secretary of the Navy.

(C) The Secretary of the Air Force.

(2) The report shall include, for each program referred to in paragraph (1), the following:

(A) A schedule for the demonstration to be carried out under that program.

(B) An identification of the funding required for fiscal year 2002 and for the future-years defense program to carry out that program and for the demonstration to be carried out under that program.

(C) In the case of the program relating to the Army, the plan for modification of the existing memorandum of agreement with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency for demonstration and development of the Future Combat System to reflect an increase in unmanned, remotely controlled enabling technologies.

(3) The report shall also include, for each Secretary referred to in paragraphs (1)(A), (1)(B), and (1)(C), a description and assessment of the acquisition strategy for unmanned advanced capability combat aircraft and ground combat vehicles planned by that Secretary, which shall include a detailed estimate of all research and development, procurement, operation, support, ownership, and other costs required to carry out such strategy through the year 2030, and—

A) in the case of the acquisition strategy relating to the Army, the transition from the planned acquisition strategy for the Future Combat System to an acquisition strategy capable of meeting the goal specified in subsection (a)(2);

(B) in the case of the acquisition strategy relating to the Navy—

(i) the plan to implement a program that examines the ongoing Air Force unmanned combat air vehicle program and identifies an approach to develop a Navy unmanned combat air vehicle program that has the goal of developing an aircraft that is suitable for aircraft carrier use and has maximum commonality with the aircraft under the Air Force program; and

(ii) an analysis of alternatives between the operational deep strike force aircraft fleet and that fleet together with an additional 10 to 20 unmanned advanced capability combat aircraft that are suitable for aircraft carrier use and capable

of penetrating fully operational enemy air defense systems;
and

(C) in the case of the acquisition strategy relating to the Air Force—

(i) the schedule for evaluation of demonstration results for the ongoing unmanned combat air vehicle program and the earliest possible transition of that program into engineering and manufacturing development and procurement; and

(ii) an analysis of alternatives between the currently planned deep strike force aircraft fleet and the operational deep strike force aircraft fleet that could be acquired by fiscal year 2010 to meet the goal specified in subsection (a)(1).

(c) FUNDS.—Of the amount authorized to be appropriated for Defense-wide activities under section 201(4) for the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, \$100,000,000 shall be available only to carry out the programs referred to in subsection (b)(1).

(d) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section:

(1) An aircraft or ground combat vehicle has “unmanned advanced capability” if it is an autonomous, semi-autonomous, or remotely controlled system that can be deployed, re-tasked, recovered, and re-deployed.

(2) The term “currently planned deep strike force aircraft fleet” means the early entry, deep strike aircraft fleet (composed of F-117 stealth aircraft and B-2 stealth aircraft) that is currently planned for fiscal year 2010.

(3) The term “operational deep strike force aircraft fleet” means the currently planned deep strike force aircraft fleet, together with at least 30 unmanned advanced capability combat aircraft that are capable of penetrating fully operational enemy air defense systems.

(4) The term “operational ground combat vehicles” means ground combat vehicles acquired through the Future Combat System acquisition program of the Army to equip the future objective force, as outlined in the vision statement of the Chief of Staff of the Army.