STATEMENT OF LT. COL. MICHAEL J. TREMPER, USAFR

GOVERNMENT FLIGHT REPRESENTATIVE

DEFENSE CONTRACT MANAGEMENT AGENCY

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

SUBCOMMITTEE ON INVESTIGATIONS AND OVERSIGHT

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 12, 2007

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

I would like to thank the subcommittee for providing me the opportunity to testify here today.

I am a member of the Air Force Reserves, presently assigned to the 4th Air Force Headquarters Plans and Programs Staff at March Air Reserve Base, California. In addition to my military duties, I am a B-767 International Pilot for Delta Airlines based in Atlanta, Georgia.

In response to critical manning levels, I maintain concurrent responsibilities as a Government Flight Representative (GFR) for the Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA). I have served as a GFR at DCMA for approximately eight years, and have provided oversight for several programs, ranging from Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) to manned airborne sensor platforms. The programs were managed by various agencies, including the Missile Defense Agency, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), the Office of Naval Research (ONR), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

As GFR, my primary role is to provide operational oversight of Contractor Flight Operations. The GFR leads a three-member Aviation Program Team (APT) consisting of the GFR, a maintenance manager, and safety specialist. The APT conducts periodic inspections of contractor facilities and flight operations. The results of these inspections are utilized to assist in risk assessment and mitigation of the Program. The contractor is required to conduct its flight operations according to very specific contractual requirements contained in the DCMA Joint Instruction 8210.1, and it is the role of the APT to evaluate the contractor's level of compliance with these requirements. As part of the requirements, the contractor is obligated to submit the "Contractor Flight and Ground Operations Procedures." The GFR is the approval authority for

these procedures and for flight authorization involving aircraft having Government assumption of risk.

The duPont Aerospace program is categorized by DCMA as a "Non-Resident" program, meaning that the level of flight activity does not warrant a full-time, on-site APT. I have been assigned to this program for approximately eight years and have conducted numerous inspections of duPont Aerospace. The first inspection was conducted on January 27 and 28, 2003. As a result of this inspection, the contractor received a "high" risk assessment rating. The program was found to be contractually non-compliant in virtually all evaluated aspects of the operation, and resulted in the temporary withdrawal of GFR approval for procedures and aircraft testing. duPont Aerospace immediately expended considerable effort to address all items of non-compliance identified by the APT. A follow-up assessment was conducted by the APT, and determined that the program had met the minimum levels of compliance required, and the GFR approval for procedures and aircraft testing was reinstated. Subsequent inspections identified a considerable upward trend in program compliance with contractual requirements.

During the development of the DP-2 program, there have been four mishaps involving the test aircraft. The first mishap occurred on November 2, 2003, and resulted in significant damage to the aircraft. Notification was made to the Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) Safety Center. Based on the contractor's damage cost estimate and lack of injury to personnel, the mishap was placed at the Class C classification level. The Safety Center authorized the contractor to conduct its own mishap investigation and to submit the mishap report. The test aircraft again experienced mishaps on November 16, 2004, April 25, 2006, and August 8, 2006. duPont Aerospace again conducted the mishap investigation and produced final reports for these mishaps. These reports were submitted to the GFR and the duPont Aerospace Airworthiness Review Panel (ARP).

The aircraft mishap on August 8, 2006, was reported to NASA and ONR ARP representatives, however, no notification was made to the GFR. I subsequently informed the contractor that this was not in accordance with the approved mishap reporting procedures. At that time, I again temporarily removed Government approval of contractor procedures and test authorizations until a thorough accounting of the
mishap and clarification of mishap reporting procedures were provided. The contractor conducted a mishap investigation and submitted a mishap report for review to the ARP and GFR. After a thorough review of the test program was conducted by the duPont ARP, the GFR approval for Procedures and aircraft testing was reinstated.

The DP-2 aircraft testing is currently being conducted at the duPont Aerospace facility located at Gellespie Field in El Cajon, California. GFR authorization has been granted for the continuation of both in-ground effect (IGE) and out-of-ground effect (OGE) tethered hover test operations. As the DP-2 Research and Development program advances, the duPont Aviation Program Team will continue to perform its contractual oversight responsibility and provide risk assessment and mitigation of this contractor's flight test operation.

This concludes my prepared remarks. I will be happy to answer questions you may have.