

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0901

April 17, 2017

Vice Admiral Mike Shoemaker
Commander, Naval Air Forces
PO Box 357051
San Diego, CA 92135-7051

Dear Vice Admiral Shoemaker:

The recent operational pause of the T-45C Goshawk at Naval Air Station Pensacola serves as a reminder that the safety of our men and women in uniform is fundamental to military readiness.

As commander of Naval Air Forces, I applaud the concrete steps you have taken to address the magnitude of this situation. To that end, I remain concerned with the decision to lift the operational pause for the T-45C absent sufficient data from the examination of On-board Oxygen Generating Systems (OBOGS) within the T-45 Advanced Jet Training System fleet.

First, given that engineering testing and analysis at Naval Air Station Patuxent River, Maryland, is underway, what is the anticipated timeline in identifying the root cause of the problematic OBOGS system? Additionally, can Naval Air Forces provide more transparency regarding the scope of the engineering and analysis testing?

Second, to what extent has the Navy engaged other departments within the Department of Defense possessing equities in pilot safety? For example, Air Force leadership recently addressed an increase in hypoxia-induced episodes among its F-22 pilot community that may yield relevant data in addressing hypoxia-induced mishaps.

Lastly, to what extent has the Navy engaged the private sector, such as Boeing, in addressing the faulty OBOGS system? As such, has the Navy consulted chemists, toxicologists or third party engineers to capture additional perspective regarding the OBOGS system?

My staff and I are looking forward to working with you and your staff to achieve the results necessary to protect and defend the American people, the lives of Naval Aviators and the US Navy Naval Aviation community as they work diligently to resolve this challenging problem.

Sincerely,



Matt Gaetz
Member of Congress