

# CH-47F Block II Procurement

Army National Guard

Fiscal Year 2024 Requirements for the Army National Guard



# NGAUS



◀ CH-47 with the 111th Aviation Regiment Mississippi Army National Guard

## The Issue

Despite the Army's planned procurement of CH-47Gs, there are none planned for the Army National Guard. The CH-47F will remain in service well past 2050 and requires upgrades for Multi-Domain Operational (MDO) capability. The ARNG consistently deploys in support of overseas combat operations performing the same missions as the Active Component and provides domestic emergency response. As the Army acquires new equipment and weapons platforms, those systems must be fielded to Active Component and Reserve Component units simultaneously and proportionally to ensure a fully interoperable and lethal Total Force.

## Background

For FY20, the Army proposed delaying CH-47F Block II production by at least 5 years to fund different priorities, like the Future Vertical Lift Program. The Army has already identified competitors for the Future Attack Reconnaissance Aircraft (FARA) and a Future Long Range Assault Aircraft (FLRAA). Both the FARA and FLRAA aircraft will be able to penetrate deep into enemy territory, and current Chinooks won't be able to fly the same distances as either, meaning a heavy-lift capability gap will occur.

The Army's Future Vertical Lift Program does not have a program in place to replace the Chinook, meaning a replacement could be decades away, leading some to call the CH-47 a "100-year helicopter." As the Army's only heavy lift helicopter, the Chinook is vital to our nation's Overseas Contingency Operations and Homeland Security needs. Recently, Army leaders have said they want the newer model Chinooks only for special operations forces, despite the aging fleet of older CH-47s.

The Army's delay in executing the F-Block II program continues to place combat capacity at critical risk and threatens the high operational tempo of an aging operational force. Also, delaying the CH-47F Block II production increases procurement and sustainment costs due to a smaller production base, reduced demand for key parts, and reduced aircraft availability due to quantities and repair parts costs.

## Recommendation

Seek approval for the CH-47F Block II program as soon as possible to schedule upgrades that will keep the CH-47F deployable with the Future Long Range Assault Aircraft (FLRAA) and Future Attack Reconnaissance Aircraft (FARA). The CH-47 Block II program will ensure the CH-47F and CH-47G are Multi-Domain Operational (MDO) capable aircraft.



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