

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT & GOVERNMENT REFORM**

**OPENING STATEMENT OF
CHAIRMAN EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

**Hearing: The Future of the V-22 Osprey:
Costs, Capabilities, and Challenges**

May 21, 2009

Good morning. Thank you all for being here.

We had hoped to conduct today a thorough examination of the Defense Department's V-22 Osprey, an aircraft with a controversial past, a troubled present, and an uncertain future.

However, the Defense Department has evidently decided to stonewall our investigation. On May 5, 2009, I wrote to Secretary of Defense Gates to request information on the Osprey, including copies of two reports on the performance of the Osprey in Iraq, called "Lessons and Observations." I also requested a list of all V-22 Ospreys acquired by the Defense Department, including their current locations and flight status.

However, to this date, the Defense Department has failed to provide this information, despite repeated reminders from the Committee. This is simply unacceptable.

General Trautman, I want you to carry this message back to the Pentagon: We will pursue this investigation even harder than we have so far. We will not be slow-rolled. We will not be ignored.

I intend to conduct a full investigation of the Osprey, not just an investigation of the information that you want me to see. We hope you will provide it voluntarily, but if you do not, we will compel your compliance.

To ensure a thorough investigation and to allow the Defense Department additional time to provide us with these records, we will continue this hearing in two weeks and I am asking the witnesses to return to present their testimony at that time. This hearing is now adjourned, to be resumed in two weeks at the call of the chair.

Thank you.