

**STATEMENT OF ROBERT MACLEAN, CHIEF, UNITED STATES PARK POLICE,
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM,
CONCERNING “FLYING UNDER THE RADAR: SECURING WASHINGTON, D.C.
AIRSPACE.”**

APRIL 29, 2015

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Cummings, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the United States Park Police (USPP) involvement in the April 15, 2015, gyrocopter incident in Washington, D.C.

The U.S. Park Police, established in 1791, is the oldest uniformed Federal law enforcement agency in the United States. The USPP, which is primarily responsible for safety and crime prevention in parklands administered by the National Park Service, has enjoyed a long history of partnership and coordination with the numerous public safety, protection, aviation, and defense agencies within the National Capital Region. In the District of Columbia, the USPP has primary jurisdiction over Federal parkland, which comprises approximately 22% of the District of Columbia, including the National Mall, East and West Potomac Parks, Rock Creek Park, Anacostia Park, McPherson Square and many of the small triangle parks.

The USPP officers who proudly and diligently patrol Federal parkland every day are trained to identify, report, and investigate violations of law and suspicious or unusual activity. Although the USPP has an Aviation Unit that flies law enforcement, medevac, and search and rescue missions within the National Capital Region, the USPP does not have primary responsibility of airspace defense over the Federal parklands. As such, the USPP does not have radar detection capabilities to monitor that airspace, nor does it have the appropriate tools to engage, or defend against, an aircraft in the airspace above the parks. Those primary responsibilities and capabilities rest with other Federal agencies.

On Wednesday, April 15, 2015, at approximately 1:20 pm, a Park Police officer observed and reported an aircraft (later identified as the gyrocopter operated by Mr. Doug Hughes) operating near the Lincoln Memorial and estimated it to be approximately 100 feet off of the ground and travelling eastbound towards the United States Capitol. The officer made a request to the USPP Dispatch Center to contact the U.S. Capitol Police. A supervisor confirmed the observation and requested the USPP Dispatch Center notify the USPP Aviation Unit, which, in turn, contacted the National Capital Region Coordination Center to report an aircraft in restricted airspace.

Another Park Police officer observed and followed the aircraft eastbound in his patrol vehicle to where the aircraft landed on the west grounds of the U.S. Capitol. The Park Police officer arrived at the Capitol grounds and observed the U.S. Capitol Police arresting Mr. Hughes. At that point, the USPP became an assisting agency to U.S. Capitol Police on the scene and at the U.S. Capitol Police command post.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my statement. I would be pleased to respond to any questions you and other members may have.

VITAE/BIO

CHIEF ROBERT D. MACLEAN UNITED STATES PARK POLICE

Since the United States Park Police was created in 1791 by our first president, George Washington, the Force has been on duty in our Federal parks for more than 200 years. The Force is a unit of the Department of the Interior/National Park Service, with jurisdiction in all NPS areas and certain other Federal and State lands. The Force provides law enforcement services to designated areas within the NPS (primarily the Washington, D.C., New York City and San Francisco, California metropolitan areas). The Force provides highly trained and professional police officers to prevent and detect criminal activity; conduct investigations; apprehend individuals suspected of committing offenses against Federal, State and local laws; provide protection to the President of the United States and visiting dignitaries; provide protective services to some of the most recognizable monuments, memorials, and special events in the world; and ensure visitors to these areas are guaranteed their constitutional rights.

Chief Robert MacLean was hired on July 14th, 1991, and is a twenty three year veteran of the Force. He has held a myriad of operational and administrative positions within the Force, to include assignments to Crime and Violence Task Forces, Media Relations, Internal Affairs, SWAT and Canine, and command of the Force's Homeland Security Division.

He is currently the Chief of Police, which entails executive responsibility for the Force's mission in the Washington Metropolitan Area, as well as its Field Offices in New York and San Francisco. This mission is intrinsically linked to the department's strategic plan and goals of protecting this nation's most symbolic monuments and memorials (and the visitors to them).

He served in the United States Navy; earned his Bachelor's Degree in History from Virginia Tech; and is a proud graduate of the 225th Session of the FBI National Academy and the Naval Post Graduate School/Department of Homeland Security's Executive Leaders Program.

