

Aerospace World

By Adam J. Hebert, Senior Editor

Airman Killed, Two Injured

A1C Antoine J. Holt, 20, died from injuries received April 10 when an enemy mortar struck his tent at Balad Air Base in Iraq. Two other airmen in the tent were injured, one seriously.

Holt, who was from Kennesaw, Ga., and the other two airmen were deployed to Iraq from the 603rd Air Control Squadron, Aviano AB, Italy.

A1C Scott Palomino, 19, was severely wounded in the attack. Subsequently, his left leg was amputated below the knee. The other airman, whose name was not released, was treated for minor injuries.

On the day after the attack, an Air Force MQ-1 Predator, the armed version of the unmanned aerial vehicle, was flying with a US flag in Holt's honor when it attacked and killed two Iraqi insurgents who were staging another mortar attack on the base. (See "Predator Kills Insurgents," p. 17.)

The flag will be delivered to Holt's family, US Central Command Air Forces announced.

USAF Redirects JASSM in Flight

The Air Force for the first time has retargeted a Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile in flight. The event took place during a March 26 test shot over a Utah test range, after the JASSM had been launched from a B-1B bomber.

The launch was the final event in



SrA. Luke Scown, of Beale AFB, Calif., shoots during the security forces tactics competition May 4 at Vandenberg AFB, Calif. The event was part of Guardian Challenge, Air Force Space Command's space and missile wartime readiness test.

the missile's developmental testing program for integration with the B-1B. Operational integration testing began in April.

"The B-1 is the only platform capable of replanning the route of the JASSM in flight and sending it to another target," said Maj. Wim Libby, test pilot with the 419th Flight Test Squadron, Edwards AFB, Calif.

JASSM, a stealthy, medium-range cruise missile, is expected to be fielded with B-1B combat units this summer.

USAF Addresses Poor Housing

Air Force officials announced this spring that they intend to spend roughly \$1.6 billion in Fiscal 2005 to help eliminate substandard family housing at bases in the United States. The service wants to fix the housing problem by 2008.

The \$1.6 billion housing commitment is more than half of the Air Force's 2005 military construction and family housing budget request, which includes funds for active, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve Command facilities.

A 2005 budget request of \$128 million for dormitory projects, said officials, keeps the Air Force on track to meet goals to eliminate inadequate housing for unaccompanied junior enlisted personnel. The dormitory master plan calls for replacement of substandard permanent party dormitory rooms by Fiscal 2007. Technical training dorms are due to be replaced by Fiscal 2009.

A-10 Pilots Cleared in Fratricide Case

Two Air Force A-10 pilots were cleared of wrongdoing in a 2003 fratricide event after a US Central Command board determined they had "acted appropriately, based on the information they possessed at the time of the incident."

The incident took place March 23, 2003, when 18 Marines were killed during an intense firefight in Nasiriyah, Iraq. Up to 10 of the Marines may have been killed by friendly fire, though exact causes of death were impossible to determine because of "heavy fighting with the enemy at the time of the incident," stated a CENTCOM news release.

In its investigation, the command found that many factors contributed to the incident, including problematic communications links and a battle plan that changed as the firefight developed.

Ultimately, the Marine Corps forward air controller who called in the air strike was found to be at fault for the friendly fire. The Marine captain believed no friendly forces were in front of his unit, and, although he could not see the target area or the A-10 aircraft, he directed the A-10s to strike.

USAF photo by A1C Edmund Gibbons III

Airlift Surges for Troop Rotation

Air Force mobility aircraft have played a major role in what officials have termed the largest troop movement since World War II.

Over a 90-day period, US Transportation Command transported some 250,000 troops, either into or out of Southwest Asia, using both air and surface movements. On a typical day, personnel from the Tanker Airlift Control Center (TACC), Scott AFB, Ill., moved more than 400 aircraft—considerably higher than the 300 per day they had averaged during the past two years. Before the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the TACC handled about 200 aircraft per day.

The TACC, which is part of Air Mobility Command's 18th Air Force, coordinated both military and commercial airlifters participating in this massive troop rotation.

Exchange Consolidation Eyed

The Defense Department plans to reform its military exchange system to avoid duplication and increase efficiency, officials said in April.

"Presently, you've got three different organizations that are delivering the same benefit to the same customer," said retired USAF Maj. Gen. Charles W. Wax, who is leading DOD's exchange reform efforts.

Exchanges for the three services currently use separate finance, accounting, human resources, information technology, logistics, and merchandising systems, noted Wax.

Individual troops are the ones "ultimately paying for this duplication," he said. A 1999 Pentagon study estimated that full integration would save up to \$200 million annually.

Predator Kills Iraqi Insurgents

An armed MQ-1 Predator on April 11 killed two insurgents who had attacked Balad Air Base in Iraq with mortars, said US Central Command Air Forces. The two terrorists were killed by Hellfire missiles fired from the unmanned aerial vehicle.

The men were part of a four-person group "attempting to fire mortars at the base," a CENTAF statement said. A similar attack at the base the previous day (April 10) killed one airman when a mortar hit his tent. (See "Airman Killed, Two Injured," p. 16.)

"A two-person UAV crew on a defensive surveillance mission learned that four Iraqi insurgents were in a field near the base," the CENTAF news release recounted. "Using their targeting pod, they located the enemy team just as the enemy team shot a weapon at the base. While the UAV crew obtained clearance to respond, ... the four insurgents separated and ran in opposite directions."

The Predator team had to pick one pair to track and, as it followed the two men, another mortar was launched into the base. Before a third mortar could be fired, the Predator team got permission to strike and scored a direct hit with a Hellfire missile.

Predator teams successfully engaged enemy forces again the following day, CENTAF added, when they called in an F-16 close air support strike against multiple insurgents.

F/A-22 Begins Operational Test

The Air Force on April 29 began initial operational test and evaluation (IOT&E) of the F/A-22 Raptor. Satisfactory completion of IOT&E will lead to full-rate production of the new fighter.

"We would not enter this test unless we believed the Raptor will pass," Marvin R. Sambur, USAF's assistant secretary for acquisition, told reporters at the Pentagon.

He added that the F/A-22 is on a tight schedule to meet its December 2005 initial operational capability (IOC) date, but he did not anticipate problems. If some unforeseen problem does occur, he said, the IOC would slip a few months, not years.

"The development phase" of the F/A-22 is now completed, Sambur said. "This airplane is ready. It's here now. This is not a promise. ... This is real."

IOT&E will assess the F/A-22's deployability, maintainability, survivability, and lethality, as well as directly comparing its performance to that of the F-15C, which it is to replace. The testing will involve multiple dogfights pitting four F/A-22s against twice as many F-15s and F-16s. The Pentagon will review the Air Force's IOT&E findings in the fall.

Sambur said that, although IOT&E will concentrate on the air-to-air role of the airplane, "we will have an air-to-ground capability" when the airplane is declared operational. The attack role will be tested in spring 2005 during follow-on operational testing and evaluation.

The avionics software problems that afflicted the Raptor over the last several years have been resolved, said Sambur. The fighter now demonstrates 10.8 hours average time between component glitches in the software, up dramatically from under three hours earlier this year. Since then, there have been "several software updates," he said.

—John A. Tirpak

Last year's announcement of the proposed unification met with skepticism among some exchange officials and members of Congress.

The Unified Exchange Task Force is scheduled to produce an integration plan for the Pentagon to deliver to Congress in January 2005. If approved, the Pentagon would expect to implement the plan during spring 2006.

The plan will not include privatization, said officials. The far-flung and specialized nature of the exchanges makes such a move unworkable.

Airman Dies in Training

TSgt. David Gressett, an AC-130H Spectre gunner based at Hurlburt Field, Fla., died April 1 after collapsing during training in an altitude chamber at Tyndall AFB, Fla.

Gressett, who was assigned to the 16th Special Operations Squadron at Hurlburt, had previously and successfully completed the aerospace physiology training course three times—in 1994, 1996, and 1999. The aerospace physiology flight at Tyndall trains more than 1,800 personnel each year.

USAF officials said a board of officers will investigate Gressett's death.

More US Troops to Afghanistan?

The size of the US force operating in Afghanistan will likely increase as the time draws closer to that country's September elections, said Gen. Richard B. Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Afterward, the US force could go "back down to lower numbers," he said.

The US troop level has increased from 11,000 to 15,500 in recent months in a stepped-up hunt for Osama bin Laden and other militants, reported Reuters News Agency.

"We've ramped up our presence here a little bit, anticipating and trying to ensure that we have no more violence as we head toward elections," Myers told reporters traveling with him during a visit to the theater.

The size of the force in Afghani-

stan will be based on requirements, Myers said. Overall levels "ebb and flow," he said.

Airman Named on "The Wall"

The Department of Defense announced in April that it had approved the addition of Air Force Capt. E. Alan Brudno's name to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.—some 30 years after his death.

Brudno had been held by the North Vietnamese as a prisoner of war for more than seven years, during which time he "endured long-term, severe physical and psychological abuse and torture-related wounds," stated a DOD release.

Brudno did not die in Vietnam. He was repatriated in 1973, then took his own life within four months. That made this case controversial.

The Air Force petitioned to have Brudno's name etched into the wall. The service believed that Brudno died as a result of wounds sustained in the combat zone—the criterion for inclusion.

The Pentagon agreed. It said that, because of the "devastating effects of these wounds," Brudno "succumbed within a short time after his release from captivity." Those "particular merits" led to the decision, stated the announcement.

Officials of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund and others raised concern that including Brudno's name would lead to inclusion of the names of thousands of other suicides.

Defense officials maintain that the

DOD Studies NORCOM-SOUTHCOM Merger

The Defense Department is considering whether US Northern Command and US Southern Command should be merged into a single warfighting command that would have responsibility for defense of the entire Western Hemisphere. The new command: Americas Command.

Currently, NORCOM's area of responsibility (AOR) is North America, while SOUTHCOM covers Central and South America.

The Pentagon, in 1997, moved SOUTHCOM headquarters from its Panama location to Miami, so physical location may not be much of an issue. However, such a merger would require close coordination with Canada because the commander of NORCOM, also serves as commander of NORAD, the binational command the US shares with Canada.

The Americas Command proposal has been around for several years, but Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld only recently resurrected it. He directed a joint staff study to determine whether a merger would "improve effectiveness and efficiency, enhance the capability to perform ... missions, improve operational focus, eliminate unnecessary redundancies, and reduce resource requirements," according to its terms of reference.

Plans call for Rumsfeld to be briefed on the study's recommendation in June.

decision to include Brudno's name "must not be misunderstood to include, broadly, cases involving more attenuated circumstances that may have led to postwar suicides, or those postwar deaths more distantly based on cases of war-related psychological trauma."

CENTCOM Area Expands

As a result of a little-noticed change to the Pentagon's Unified Command Plan, US Central Command's area of responsibility (AOR) now encompasses Syria and Lebanon. An April 22 Pentagon news release stated that President Bush signed the change on March 10.

Syria and Lebanon had long been part of US European Command's AOR.

These two countries, stated the release, "are politically, culturally, and militarily more oriented with the countries in Central Command." CENTCOM stretches from Egypt to Pakistan and from Kenya to Kazakhstan.

This move had been debated for years, according to a DOD official. The Pentagon periodically reviews the plan and, in 2002, made two major changes: creation of US Northern Command and placement of Russia within EUCOM's AOR.

The April release stated that Israel will remain aligned with EUCOM. DOD claimed that Israel is politically, culturally, and militarily more closely aligned with Europe. Keeping Israel in EUCOM, however, also allows CENTCOM officials to avoid dealings with Tel Aviv, which would complicate their work with Arab Nations.

World War II Memorial Opens

The World War II Memorial on the National Mall opened to the public the last week in April, well ahead of its official dedication ceremony.

The \$170 million memorial, paid for almost entirely by private donors, was scheduled for formal dedication on May 29 as part of a four-day Memorial Day weekend celebration.

The memorial, situated on a 7.4-acre site between the Washington Monument and Lincoln Memorial, is the result of an 11-year effort. It was authorized by Congress in 1993. Construction began in September 2001. It is the first national memorial dedicated to all who served in World War II. The



USAF photo by MSG Jim Varegyi

Eleven years after it was authorized by Congress, the new World War II Memorial opened for visitors in late April and was slated for official dedication during Memorial Day weekend. See "World War II Memorial Opens," at right.

dedication ceremony is expected to draw more than 100,000 visitors.

Eberhart Pushes Maritime NORAD

USAF Gen. Ralph E. Eberhart believes that complete situational awareness of threats approaching the United States will require NORAD to develop a maritime role. Eberhart, who is commander of the binational NORAD and US Northern Command, discussed the possibility at two public forums earlier this year.

Such a proposal has surfaced several times in the last few years. In 2002, a senior Canadian defense official said that Canada would not participate in an expanded role for NORAD that could include land and sea elements.

Eberhart said that discussions with Canada are ongoing. In December 2002, NORAD created a binational planning group to improve defenses against maritime and land-based threats to North America. One focus of the group is reviewing a "naval NORAD" option that would provide support to the Coast Guard for maritime security operations.

Currently, NORAD's primary mission is defense of US and Canadian airspace. NORTHCOM, which was created after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, has the mandate to counter external threats to the US and oversees DOD homeland defense and domestic military assistance operations.

New Personnel System Approved

DOD's senior leaders approved the plan for the new National Security Personnel System in April, said Navy Secretary Gordon R. England, who is leading the effort for the Pentagon.

The new system will "introduce changes in the way the department hires, pays, promotes, disciplines, and fires its civilian employees," a department release stated. Authorization for a new system was approved by Congress in the Fiscal 2004 defense authorization act.

The plan provides for "event-driven schedules," said England. "We won't go to the next step until we finish [the previous one]," he emphasized.

The first milestone, which is set for November, is to publish a draft labor-relations regulation in the Federal Register.

In an April open letter to department employees, England and David S.C. Chu, DOD's personnel chief, said the goal is to "design a transformed system for the department's 700,000 civilian employees that supports our national security mission

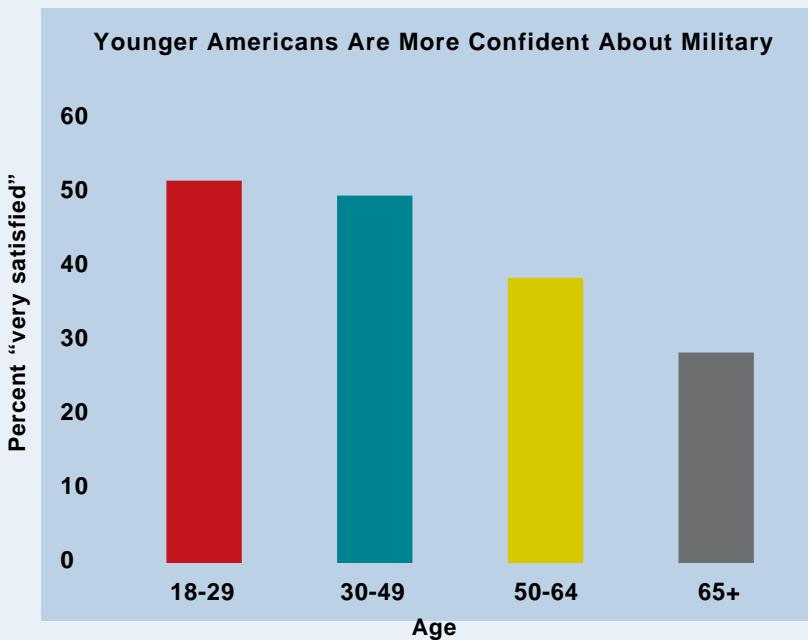
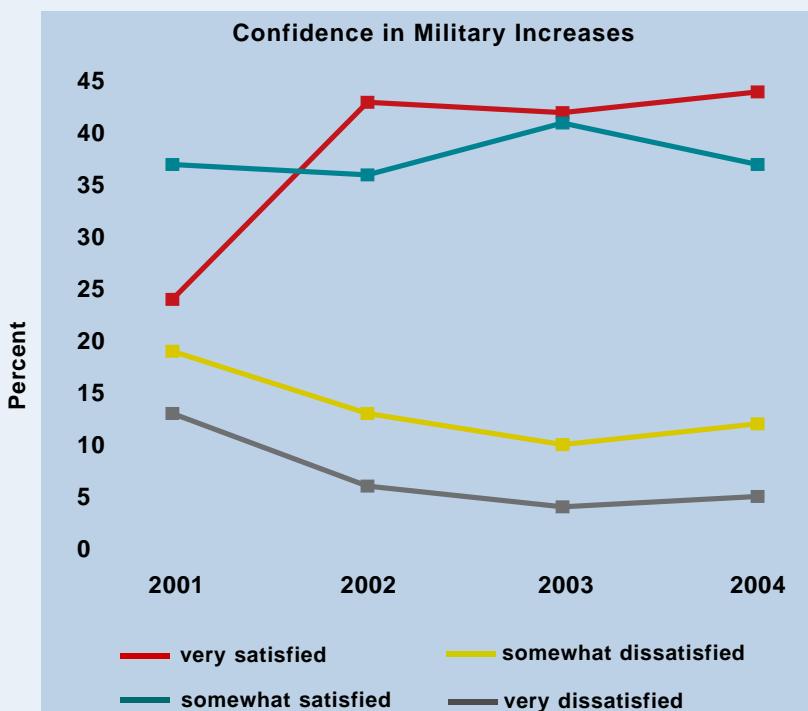
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Americans Express Confidence in US Military

The American public believes that the US Military is strong enough to protect its interests despite being heavily tasked—some say stretched too thin—for ongoing operations in the war on terror, according to a recent Gallup poll. The poll showed that a total of about 80 percent were "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" with military strength and preparedness.

The poll also revealed that age is a major factor. Younger individuals are more confident in the strength of the US military than are older Americans. About half of those under age 50 were very satisfied, while only one-third of those 50 and older indicated high satisfaction.

Despite the age difference, Americans overall appear highly confident in the US military. Similar results have been found each year since the 9/11 terrorist attacks. Before Sept. 11, 2001, the number that were very satisfied was less than half what it is today.



News Notes

By Tamar A. Mehuron, Associate Editor

■ Air Combat Command officials on March 30 dedicated the ACC Conference Center at Langley AFB, Va., to Gen. W.L. Creech, head of Tactical Air Command from 1978 to 1984. Creech died Aug. 26, 2003. (See "Aerospace World: Gen. W.L. Creech, 1927-2003," October 2003, p. 20.)

■ The 2003 Mackay Trophy went to the McChord AFB, Wash., C-17 crew "Vijay 10" for their role in planning and executing the March 26, 2003, 15-ship C-17 airdrop of the 173rd Airborne Brigade into northern Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom. It was the first combat troop airdrop for the C-17, and the largest formation airdrop since D-Day in World War II. The crew members are: Lt. Col. Shane Hershman, Maj. Bob Colvin, 1st Lt. Matt Clausen, and MSgts. Shawn Brumfield and Chris Dockery.

■ The first class of enlisted students to graduate from the Air Force Institute of Technology, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, had eight Air Force and six Marine Corps noncommissioned officers. Speaking at the March 23 commencement, Air Force Secretary James G. Roche told the NCOs, "I consider your attendance at AFIT long overdue, and I am extremely proud that this program has come to fruition." The eight USAF graduates are: CMSgt. Don Clabaugh,

SMSgts. Stephanie Carroll and Francis Szabo, and MSgts. Charlie Cruz, James Kuntzman, Edward Matthews, Duane Sorgaard, and Dan Swayne.

■ The Special Operations Low Level II mission ended on April 1 for the C-5 airlifters of the 436th Operations Group, Dover AFB, Del. The unit had flown SOLL II missions, often performing in black-out condition using night vision goggles to rapidly move troops and equipment into combat zones, for 22 years. Taking up the SOLL mantle are C-17 airlifters of the 437th Operations Group, Charleston AFB, S.C.

■ Flying from Edwards AFB, Calif., on April 18, the X-45A Joint-Unmanned Combat Air System dropped an inert guided weapon near a truck target at China Lake, Calif. This marked the first time an inert, GPS-guided precision weapon was released from an unmanned vehicle, officials said.

■ On March 19, the first C-130J delivered to an active duty wing arrived at Little Rock AFB, Ark. The 314th Airlift Wing will fly the C-130J, equipped with digital instrumentation and a diagnostic computer that identifies and locates aircraft malfunctions.

■ Pratt & Whitney announced in April that testing has begun for the engine

destined for the short take-off and vertical landing (STOVL) variant of the F-35. Testing took place in West Palm Beach, Fla., and ran through May.

■ SI International, Colorado Springs, Colo., received an \$800 million contract to provide engineering and technical services for command, control, communications and computers and other systems worldwide to Air Force Space Command, NORAD, US Northern Command, and US Strategic Command. Work is to be completed by September 2007.

■ A new Web-based system that helps airmen prepare for deployment is being tested at Robins AFB, Ga. The deployment readiness service is a single source that tracks and automatically updates multiple records. Other bases are scheduled to get the new system this summer. USAF expects to have all deployable personnel entered in the system by fall.

■ The Air Force awarded Lockheed Martin a \$325 million contract for C-130J upgrades. Work is to be completed by March 2009.

■ The Air Force Association's 2004 Team of the Year comprises investigators with the Air Force Office of Special Investigation. The special investigators—Michael Franklin, Kim Gaestel, Jesse Garcia, Justin Rock, and Michael Willoughby—were selected for their "technical expertise, leadership, and inspiration," said AFA officials. Each year's team includes members of a specific enlisted career field; they are not necessarily part of a formal team.

■ Northrop Grumman received two contracts worth a total of \$252 million for eight Global Hawks, mission control and launch recovery units, support equipment, and spares. Work on the first contract is to be completed in January 2005 and the second in October 2005.

■ The Air Force, on April 14, said it had selected 52 officers to join the service's test pilot program. Most will attend training at the Air Force Test Pilot School, Edwards AFB, Calif. Two will undergo training with the Navy at NAS Patuxent River, Md., and one test pilot will receive training at the French Test Pilot School, Istres, France. Six will be attending the Air Force Institute of Technology to earn master's in aeronautical or electrical engineering before attending test pilot school.

■ Boeing and Ball Aerospace received a \$189 million award from Northrop Grumman to develop and initially operate the Space-Based Space Surveillance System for USAF. The SBSS will detect and track satellites and space debris. It is scheduled for launch in 2007.

USAF photo by SSgt. Aaron Allmon II



One Billion Served. Tankers supporting Combined Forces Air Component Command for Gulf War II started pumping gas Jan. 30, 2003. On April 21, they reached the one-billion-pound mark. This F-16 approaches an Air National Guard KC-135, which delivered the billionth pound. The refueler fleet comprises USAF KC-135s and KC-10s plus RAF VC-10s.

A USAF board recently selected 150 pilot and 10 navigator candidates to attend Specialized Undergraduate Flying Training this year and next. Sixteen of the officers will go to Euro NATO Joint Jet Pilot Training conducted at Sheppard AFB, Tex. The board considered 249 applications for pilot training and 19 for navigator training.

BAE Systems received contracts worth almost \$60 million to upgrade the C-130H Compass Call aircraft weapons systems. Work is to be completed in 2005.

The Air Force Sergeants Association selected SMSgt. Dale Berryhill, an Air Force Reserve Command airborne communications systems operator at Eglin AFB, Fla., for its 2004 Pitsenbarger Award, honoring heroic actions. Berryhill, flying on an MC-130E Combat Talon I over Iraq during Gulf War II, took immediate action to control a fire when flames and smoke engulfed the cargo compartment and flight deck. Upon landing, the aircraft came under small arms fire and Berryhill quickly passed pinpoint targeting coordinates to US forces.

Beale AFB, Calif., won the 2004 Commander in Chief's Annual Award for Installation Excellence in the Air Force, officials announced March 30. The award honors one installation from each service.

Lockheed Martin received a contract worth nearly \$24 million to modernize flight safety and network systems for the East and West Coast spacelift ranges. Work is scheduled to be finished by September 2008.

Government employees rate USAF a high 7th overall out of 28 "Best Places to Work in the Federal Government," said a study released April 15 by the Partnership for Public Service and American University's Institute for the Study of Public Policy Implementation. The rankings of federal agencies were the result of a survey of 100,000 government employees conducted by the Office of Personnel Management.

The Air Force Academy named Lt. Gen. Hubert R. Harmon, a key founder and the academy's first superintendent, "The Father of the Academy" as part of its 50th anniversary celebration. Harmon, who had retired in 1953 after 38 years of service, came back on active duty to spearhead the establishment of the academy on April 1, 1954. He became the first superintendent in August 1954, serving for almost two years, before retiring a second time, in July 1956. He died of lung cancer in January 1957.

Wald Sees Africa Staying in EUCOM

Military responsibility for the continent of Africa is best accomplished exactly how it is handled today, as part of US European Command, said Air Force Gen. Charles F. Wald, EUCOM's deputy commander.

Calls for the creation of a new unified combatant command for Africa are misguided, Wald said at a speech before the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C. DOD doesn't need to add another headquarters, he said.

The growing strategic importance of Africa is well recognized by EUCOM. "We can handle it," the general said. "We're big boys."

Wald did add, however, that the name European Command is a misnomer. He said the command is trying to determine what the proper name of the command should be, because its area of responsibility is not limited to Europe.

A preferred name might be "Eastern Command," said Wald. "I don't know what the answer is, but it's definitely not just European Command."

Senior Staff Changes

RETIREMENTS: Maj. Gen. Lorraine K. **Potter**, Lt. Gen. James E. **Sherrard III**.

PROMOTION: To **Brigadier General:** Ronnie D. **Hawkins Jr.**

CHANGES: Maj. Gen. Robert D. **Bishop Jr.**, from Dep. Cmdr., SOUTHCOM, Miami, Fla., to Asst. DCS, Air & Space Ops., USAF, Pentagon ... Brig. Gen. Philip M. **Breedlove**, from Cmdr., 56th FW, AETC, Luke AFB, Ariz., to Cmdr., 31st FW, USAFE, Aviano AB, Italy ... Maj. Gen. Richard L. **Comer**, from Dir., Policy & Planning, NORTHCOM, Peterson AFB, Colo., to Dep. Dir., Engagement, Plans, & Policy Directorate, CENTCOM, MacDill AFB, Fla. ... Brig. Gen. Marke F. **Gibson**, from Cmdr., 332nd AEW, ACC, Balad AB, Iraq, to Cmdr., 354th FW, PACAF, Eielson AB, Alaska ... Maj. Gen. (sel.) Perry L. **Lamy**, from Dir., Ops., AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, to Cmdr., AFRL, AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... Brig. Gen. Kimber L. **McKenzie**, from Dir., Intel., STRATCOM, Offutt AFB, Neb., to Vice Cmdr., 8th AF, ACC, Barksdale AFB, La. ... Maj. Gen. Richard A. **Mentemeyer**, from Asst. DCS, Air & Space Ops., USAF, Pentagon, to Dep. Cmdr., SOUTHCOM, Miami, Fla. ... Brig. Gen. Larry D. **New**, from Cmdr., 325th FW, AETC, Tyndall AFB, Fla., to Dep. Cmdr., CAOC 7, Allied Air Forces Southern Europe, NATO, Larissa, Greece ... Maj. Gen. (sel.) Gary L. **North**, from Dep. Dir., Politico-Military Affairs (Asia-Pacific & Middle East), Jt. Staff, Pentagon, to Dir., Ops., PACOM, Camp H.M. Smith, Hawaii ... Maj. Gen. (sel.) Anthony F. **Przybyslawski**, from Cmdr., Air & Space Expeditionary Force Ctr., ACC, Langley AFB, Va., to Cmdr., AFPC, Randolph AFB, Tex. ... Brig. Gen. Jeffrey A. **Remington**, from Cmdr., 18th Wg., PACAF, Kadena AB, Japan, to Dep. Dir., Politico-Military Affairs (Asia-Pacific & Middle East), Jt. Staff, Pentagon ... Brig. Gen. Jeffrey R. **Riemer**, from Cmdr., AF Security Assistance Ctr., AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, to Dir., Ops., AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... Brig. Gen. Roy M. **Worden**, from Cmdr., 31st FW, USAFE, Aviano AB, Italy, to Dir., Operational Plans & Jt. Matters, DCS, Air & Space Ops., USAF, Pentagon.

SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE RETIREMENT: Christopher L. **Blake**.

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The Iraq Story Continues

Casualties

One hundred nine US troops and two US civilians died supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom during the first three weeks of April, OIF's deadliest period of fighting.

By April 21, a total of 707 US troops had died supporting Iraqi Freedom. Of those casualties, 511 were killed by hostile action, while another 196 died in noncombat incidents.

President Bush declared major combat operations in Iraq complete on May 1, 2003. Since that time, 569 troops have died in Iraq: 402 in combat and 167 in nonhostile incidents. Two DOD civilians were also killed in the line of duty.

Tours Extended for 20,000 Troops

Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld, on April 15, said that 20,000 troops who expected to leave Iraq and Kuwait at the end of one year will instead remain in Southwest Asia for at least three more months.

Gen. George W. Casey, Army vice chief of staff, said at a Pentagon briefing that the decision was not made lightly. "These are tough times," Casey said. "We're asking a lot of our people and of their families."

The affected troops are primarily active duty Army combat and combat support units.

CENTCOM Counters Falluja Uprisings

US Central Command in early April launched Operation Valiant Resolve, in an attempt to quell a surge in violence centered around the city of Falluja. Led by the Marine Corps, Valiant Resolve isolated the city, located in the center of Iraq's volatile "Sunni Triangle."

Roads leading into the city were blocked off and barricaded, and men of fighting age were prohibited from leaving the city. Air strikes targeted enemy positions and ground patrols sought out insurgents.

The crackdown became necessary after the rising violence made April the deadliest month of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Balad Takes the Reins From Baghdad

Air Force operations at Balad Air Base have increased in recent months as USAF reduced its presence at Baghdad Airport. The Pentagon expects to have all US troops out of Baghdad Airport by the fall.

Balad, an hour's drive north of Baghdad, already hosts a deployed fighter detachment and will become the primary arrival and departure location for troops traveling to Iraq by military airlifter.

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while treating workers fairly and protecting their rights."

Academy Halts Flying

The Air Force Academy halted flying operations for most of its aircraft after a three-day inspection by out-

side maintenance experts raised safety concerns. The affected aircraft included Cessna 150 and UV-18 Twin Otter airplanes, as well as the academy's gliders.

According to an April 5 announcement, 45 aircraft were grounded after

USAF To Pick Second Raptor Base After BRAC

The Air Force will await the results of the 2005 base realignment and closure (BRAC) round before selecting which base will follow Langley AFB, Va., as home for operational F/A-22s. Service officials do not want to prejudice the BRAC process.

Several bases were considered when USAF made its selection of Langley to house the first operational F/A-22 unit. Those other bases will be "likely contenders" in future deliberations, but there could be new ones on the list that meet basing requirements for the new fighter, said Col. Lawrence Wells, chief of F/A-22 requirements for Air Combat Command, at Langley.

Langley is in the last stages of preparations to host the service's first operational Raptors. The first F/A-22s are due at the Virginia base late this year. Air Force leaders expect the Raptor to reach initial operational capability at Langley in December 2005.

The bases that previously lost out to Langley are: Elmendorf AFB, Alaska; Eglin AFB and Tyndall AFB, Fla.; and Mountain Home AFB, Idaho.

The BRAC commission is scheduled to make its recommendations for which bases to close in September 2005.

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maintenance technicians from Tinker AFB, Okla., and Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, "identified maintenance issues in data management, parts control, and maintenance support."

The release stated that introductory flying training would be unaffected because the DA-20 aircraft used for that mission were deemed safe to fly.

Full flight operations were to resume after Brig. Gen. Johnny A. Weida, academy commandant, certified the other aircraft were safe.

Foundation Seeks Inscriptions

Air Force Memorial Foundation officials have asked the public to suggest inscriptions to be used in the Air Force Memorial. The official groundbreaking is scheduled for Sept. 15, with construction to be completed by 2006.

The memorial will include two 55-foot-long granite walls and an area called "Walls of Reflection," formed by seven translucent glass panels surrounding a center square. These panels and the two granite walls at the north and south ends of the memorial's parade ground will bear inscriptions. Suggestions will be considered for use.

According to Edward F. Grillo, AFMF president, inscriptions can be quotes or broader suggestions for themes that could be addressed with inscriptions.

Suggestions for inscriptions should be sent via e-mail: afmf@airforcememorial.org.

NNSA Boosts Nuke Security

The National Nuclear Security Administration has increased its security funding by \$125 million per year to meet "enduring requirements" brought on by the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the NNSA administrator said this spring.

Prior to 2001, NNSA's nuclear weapons security philosophy, said Linton F. Brooks, was based on the premise that "people would try to steal them."

Now, he told defense reporters in April, it is obvious there are individuals who are willing to sacrifice their lives to create a nuclear incident. This awareness has forced NNSA to expand its security perimeters so that potential attackers can be stopped farther away from a nuclear facility.

Some of the changes have been easy to implement, Brooks said. These include changing security rotations and closing roads. Others require new procedures and capabilities.

Despite the new threats, Brooks said, "everything is safe and secure." ■