

Air Force World

Defense Policy and Spending Bills Signed

President Obama on Dec. 19 signed HR 3979, the Fiscal 2015 defense authorization bill, into law. The legislation authorizes \$585 billion for the Defense Department and the Energy Department's national security programs in this fiscal year—running through Sept. 30—including \$495.9 billion for the Pentagon's base budget, \$63.7 billion for overseas contingency operations, and \$17.5 billion for DOE's nuclear weapons and defense activities.

Obama signed the bill one week after the Senate passed it, and some two weeks after the House approved it. On Dec. 16, Obama signed into law the \$1.1 trillion spending bill incorporating some \$554 billion for DOD in Fiscal 2015.

DOD's slice included \$490 billion in base spending and another \$64 billion in overseas contingency funds, as well as funding to continue fighting ISIS in Iraq and Syria and to combat Ebola in Africa.

First Flight for KC-46 Program

A provisioned 767-2C freighter took off from Paine Field in Everett, Wash., on Dec. 28, marking the first flight for the KC-46A Pegasus engineering, manufacturing, and development program.

The Air Force said the aircraft is "the critical building block for the KC-46 missionized aerial refueler." It flew for three hours and 32 minutes, according to a Boeing news release.

★ screenshot



Boeing must still complete additional modifications, including installing the refueling boom and other military-specific equipment that are to be completed in time for the first flight of a KC-46 (EMD #2) this spring.

"We know flight testing will lead to some discovery; today's flight kick-starts that work. There is an aggressive schedule going forward into Milestone C decision point for approval to start low-rate initial production, but we remain cautiously optimistic we can meet the mark," said Col. Christopher Coombs, the KC-46 system program manager, in an Air Force news release.

Under a 2011 contract, Boeing will build four test aircraft, including two 767-2Cs and two KC-46As. The Air Force in-

tends to procure 179 Pegasus aircraft by 2027. The first 18 are to be delivered by August 2017.

Contract Court

The Air Force has launched a new initiative dubbed "contracts court," aimed at reducing the overall number of contracts issued by the Air Force each year, Secretary Deborah Lee James said during a Dec. 16 session with airmen.

Under the new program, senior leaders are required to justify the need for all contracts. If, during the defense of the particular item or service, "it doesn't appear that it is necessary going forward, then perhaps we need to do without it," said James in response to a question from an airman.

01.06.2015

A maintainer stands on the flight line in front of a C-5M Super Galaxy blanketed with snow at Dover AFB, Del., in early January. Despite snow covering the aircraft and flight line, maintainers kept the C-5M mission moving.



“We have reduced contractors over the last year and I predict that we will continue to do so in the future.” The system was implemented approximately six months ago “to make sure we are making every dollar count.”

Korea, Japan, US To Share Intel

The US military will serve as an intermediary between US treaty allies Japan and South Korea to better share classified intelligence information on nuclear developments and missile threats posed by North Korea.

The formal agreement between the three countries, announced just before the New Year, creates a “framework” for the Defense Department, the Republic of Korea’s Ministry of National Defense, and Japan’s Ministry of Defense to pass classified data. This includes imagery, electronic intercepts, and human intelligence specifically related to North Korea’s nuclear program, missiles, and protection requirements of US agreements with both Japan and South Korea.

The deal marks progress on efforts to get the two US allies to cooperate more closely on regional security matters, despite longstanding tensions.

The agreement will allow for a “more effective response” to future North Korean provocations and during contingencies, the Pentagon claimed.

The US recently agreed to expand missile defense cooperation with South Korea as it builds its own missile defense system, and another AN/TPY-2 missile defense radar was recently deployed to Japan to boost existing radar coverage.

C-17 Units Face Stand-Down

Air Mobility Command will stand down two C-17 squadrons over the next two years and move the units’ 16 total airplanes into backup status as part of a cost-saving plan laid out in Fiscal 2015 defense legislation.

Officials will inactivate the 17th Airlift Squadron at JB Charleston, S.C., this fiscal year, followed by the 10th Airlift Squadron at JB Lewis-McChord, Wash., in Fiscal 2016, according to a Dec. 22 AMC news release.

Each squadron operates eight C-17s. Moving these aircraft from the Air Force’s primary aircraft inventory to its backup aircraft inventory is expected to save the service approximately \$110 million per year since BAI assets are not assigned personnel or flying hours.

AMC’s goal is to return these C-17s to PAI status at some point and transfer them to the reserve components as soon

Lightning Maintenance Abroad

Italy will carry out heavy aircraft maintenance for F-35s in Europe, while Australia and Japan will handle strike fighter work in the Pacific, the F-35 program office recently announced.

Turkey will tackle heavy engine maintenance for Europe. Pacific engine work will be done, once again, by Australia and Japan.

Lt. Gen. Christopher C. Bogdan said at a press conference that Italy won the right to do the work by virtue of its \$1 billion investment in an F-35 final assembly and checkout facility on its soil, thus sharply reducing what the other partners must invest.

Italy and Turkey are to be ready to do European work in 2018. In addition, Britain was designated to handle overflow aircraft work, and Norway and the Netherlands will provide additional engine capacity circa 2020.

Australia and Japan are to be ready for heavy airframe work not later than 2018, and Australia is to be ready for heavy engine work that same year, with Japan following “at least three to five years later.”

Each country will work with its own industry to perform F-35 work “over and above their own F-35 needs,” stated Bogdan.

Regional considerations such as forward basing, aircraft phasing, and transportation also contributed to initial assignment decisions,” the system program office said.

These assignments do not bar other partners of future foreign military sales customers from future sustainment roles, according to the SPO.

Thus far, South Korea is the only other confirmed Pacific F-35 buyer, though Singapore is involved as a second-tier partner and is expected to buy some aircraft.

—John A. Tirpak

as Fiscal 16, said Maj. Gen. Michael S. Stough, AMC’s strategic planning chief.

The 17th AS was the first operational unit to receive the C-17 back in 1993.

No Involuntary Uniformed Cuts

The Air Force will not continue involuntary uniformed-force reductions in Fiscal 2015 as previously planned, Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James announced in December.

“Enough is enough. We are as low as we are going to go,” the Secretary said during an online town hall-style meeting. “We have reduced far enough. We will not go leaner, and we will fight to hold on to the numbers now that we have.” In terms of new airmen coming in and experienced airmen staying on, “we need both,” James said.

The Fiscal 2014 force shaping was supposed to provide that balance. “Analysis is analysis and real world is the real world,” James said, adding that in her travels over the last year, she has grown less convinced that involuntary force management is needed.

The Air Force will, however, continue drawing down its civilian workforce.

“Our hope is that through multiple rounds of voluntary civilian workforce shaping measures and the use of pre-reduction in force placement flexibilities we should be able to offset most of our civilian impacts,” stated Air Force spokeswoman Rose Richeson.



USAF photo by SrA. Krystal M. Garrett

Roll Out the Barrel: SSgt. Ronnie Simons, a weapons load team chief, inserts a 25 mm Gatling gun into an AC-130U Spooky gunship at Hurlburt Field, Fla., Jan. 12. The guns are inspected and the barrels switched out every 18,000 rounds.



USAF photo by TSgt. Marie Brown

No Bang For These Bucks: Explosive ordnance disposal technicians use sand as a drawing board to plot their movements while on a foot patrol during a training exercise at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia.

Sub Chasers' Gold

Civil Air Patrol World War II veterans were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal—Congress' highest honor—for their role in protecting the US homeland during the war, in a ceremony at the Capitol on Dec. 10.

"I salute CAP's founding members for their legacy of service and sacrifice in protecting the homeland during World War II," CAP Commander Maj. Gen. Joseph R. Vazquez said in a press release.

Some 40 wartime CAP members, including six "sub-chasers" who patrolled the US coastline for German U-boats, as well as Berlin Airlift hero retired Col. Gail S. Halvorsen, who learned to fly in CAP during the war, attended the ceremony.

CAP members flying civil light aircraft from 21 coastal patrol bases along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts were credited with spotting 173 U-boats, attacking 57 of the vessels, and escorting more than 5,600 allied shipping convoys. CAP members located 91 allied vessels in distress and 363 survivors at sea, according to officials.

Surviving wartime members were presented replica medals in recognition of their service.

Suppression Practice

Fighter crews from a cross US Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa gathered at Spangdahlem AB, Germany, in late December for five days of training in suppression of enemy air defenses (SEAD) operations.

Exercise Iron Hand 15-2 was unique as a US-only air combat exercise in Europe, said Lt. Gen. Darryl Roberson, commander of 3rd Air Force and the 17th Expeditionary Air Force.

Mulling the Military Option

The US is mulling economic sanctions against Russia for violating the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty, as well as potential military responses if Russia actually deploys nuclear cruise missiles in violation of INF, officials told members of the House Armed Services Committee.

"Russian possession, development, or deployment of a weapons system in violation of the treaty will not be ignored," said DOD Principal Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Brian McKeon, Dec. 10.

"We are actively reviewing potential economic measures in response to Russia's violation and the United States is assessing options in the military sphere to ensure that Russia will not gain a significant military advantage from its violation of the INF treaty," said Rose E. Gottemoeller, undersecretary of state for arms control, at the same hearing.

Russia has reacted to US negotiations since 2013 by accusing the US of treaty violations, which "we believe, are meant to divert attention from its own violation," McKeon added. "In our view, all of Russia's claims are categorically unfounded."

"Russia's lack of meaningful engagement on this issue, if it persists, will ultimately require the United States to take actions to protect its interests and security, along with those of its allies and partners," he said. This will without question "make Russia less secure."

The US aims to negotiate Russia back into compliance with the treaty but "the Joint Staff has conducted a military assessment of the threat, were Russia to deploy an INF Treaty range ground-launched cruise missile in Europe or the Asia-Pacific region," McKeon noted.

—Aaron M. U. Church

Participating units came from RAF Lakenheath, UK; Aviano AB, Italy; and Germany to practice SEAD skills along with Spangdahlem's 480th Fighter Squadron.

"We don't often get to plan, brief, fly, and debrief face-to-face with our fellow USAF fighter warriors," said Lt. Col. David Berkland, the 480th Fighter Squadron commander.

The F-16s of the 480th FS are the only SEAD assets based in Europe, and it was important that all three squadrons train together to sharpen skills and improve air readiness and combat capability, Roberson said.

Crumpled at Creech

An MQ-9 Reaper remotely piloted aircraft crashed during a routine training sortie from Creech AFB, Nev., early on Dec. 11, according to 432nd Wing officials.

The Reaper went down in an unpopulated area approximately one mile east of the base. Emergency responders were able to cordon off the wreck site, and no Air Force or civilian personnel were injured in the mishap.

The cause of the crash is under investigation.

JazziER and Ready

The extended-range variant of the stealthy Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile completed operational testing and has been cleared to enter full-rate production, announced builder Lockheed Martin in December.

"The full-rate production decision demonstrates that our customer, at all levels of the US Air Force, has confidence in JASSM-ER," said Jason Denney, the company's long-range strike systems director. The weapon successfully struck 20 out of 21 targets, scoring a 95 percent hit rate, in operational test and evaluation that wrapped up last year, according to the company.

By the Numbers

\$87.3 billion

Total US military aerospace sales last fiscal year, a largely flat 0.8 percent increase from the preceding year, according to the Aerospace Industries Association.

JASSM-ER boasts two-and-a-half times the range of the standard JASSM, providing combatants with "a first-day, first-strike capability in an anti-access, area-denial environment," said Denney.

It is cleared for use on the B-1B, while the baseline JASSM has been integrated with the B-1B, B-2A, B-52H, F-16, and F-15E.

The Air Force earlier this year tasked Lockheed Martin to build 100 extended-range JASSMs during JASSM production lots 11 and 12, which also include orders for the baseline variant.

And It's a Perfectly Fine Airplane, Too: A pararescue man from the 31st Rescue Squadron leaps from the back of a C-130 during Jump Week at Yokota AB, Japan, Jan. 6. During the training event, members of the 31st join up with the 36th Airlift Squadron to practice rescue tactics and maintain mission readiness in preparation for real-world emergencies.



USAF photo by Osakabe Yasuo

The War on Terrorism

Operation Enduring Freedom

Casualties

By Jan. 20, 2015, a total of 2,356 Americans had died in Operation Enduring Freedom. The total includes 2,352 troops and four Department of Defense civilians. Of these deaths, 1,846 were killed in action with the enemy while 510 died in noncombat incidents.

There have been 20,066 troops wounded in action during OEF.

Freedom's Sentinel Begins

The US and its coalition allies on Jan. 1 handed off combat operations in Afghanistan to the 350,000-strong Afghan military and security forces, kicking off Operation Freedom's Sentinel, the US training and advising mission to support the Afghan government.

As part of OFS, the US will pursue two missions, said Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel. The first is to work with NATO's Operation Resolute Support mission to advise, train, and assist Afghan forces, while the second continues counterterrorism activities against "remnants" of al Qaeda.

The Pentagon has made clear it will not be targeting al Qaeda members or leaders, unless they are linked to specific threats against US forces or Afghan allies. The 13,000 troops left in country working with NATO's ORS will focus on specific areas at the "ministerial, operational, and institutional level," according to NATO.

This will include budgeting, transparency and oversight, civilian control of the military, force generation, sustainment, strategy and planning, intelligence, and strategic communications.

—Marc V. Schanz

Higher Troop Levels for 2015

The Obama Administration is adjusting its planned troop drawdown in Afghanistan and will keep an additional 1,000 US troops in the country into 2015, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel stated in a joint press appearance with Afghan President Ashraf Ghani.

Delays signing the US-Afghanistan bilateral security agreement (BSA) and new NATO status of forces agreement caused NATO's postcombat training, advising, and assisting mission to fall behind. As a result, up to 10,800 US troops could remain in Afghanistan through the "first

few months" of 2015, he said, up from the planned 9,800.

Operation Resolute Support will focus primarily around Kabul and at Bagram Airfield, with a "limited regional presence," said Hagel on Dec. 8.

US forces will provide "limited combat-enabler support" to Afghan forces. They would also take "appropriate measures" against Taliban forces that directly threaten US and coalition troops, or that provide direct support to al Qaeda, he said. Taliban attacks in and around Kabul have spiked in the aftermath of the country's parliament approving the BSA and the ORS mission.

Operation Inherent Resolve

Casualties

By Jan. 20, 2015, a total of three Americans had died in Operation Inherent Resolve. All three troops died in noncombat incidents.

No troops have been wounded in action during OIR.

ISIS Leaders Fall to Air Strikes

Coalition air strikes have killed several senior ISIS leaders since November, negatively affecting the terrorist organization's operations and its ability to command and control forces, Pentagon officials said.

Since mid-November 2014, strikes have killed "multiple senior- and mid-level leaders within the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant," said Pentagon spokesman Rear Adm. John Kirby in a Dec. 18 statement.

The loss of these leaders has degraded ISIS and its ability to command and control operations against Iraqi Security Forces and Kurdish fighters. Kirby did not specify individual leaders killed in the strikes, noting DOD would not discuss intelligence and targeting aspects of ongoing operations.

ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi is not among the dead, but unnamed DOD officials told Al Jazeera and other media outlets those killed included Haji Mutazz, one of Abu Bakr's deputies in Iraq, as well as Radwan Taleb al-Hamdouni, who was a senior ISIS leader involved in the occupation of Mosul.

The success of these air strikes are a clear sign of the coalition's resolve in enabling the Iraqi security forces to disrupt and degrade ISIS, as the Iraqi's prepare to retake control of contested areas of the country, Kirby said.

—Marc V. Schanz

South Korea Buys Global Hawk

South Korea signed a hybrid \$657 million foreign military sales contract for four RQ-4B Block 30 Global Hawk remotely piloted aircraft after extensive negotiations, according to the Pentagon.

Deliveries will begin in 2017 and conclude by June 2019. The contract with Northrop Grumman Systems Corp. includes four RQ-4Bs, two spare engines, and applicable "ground control environment elements," each of them featuring an enhanced integrated sensor suite.

The deal is the culmination of extensive South Korean efforts to build up their own aerial intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities on the peninsula, as improved ISR sharing is a critical part of its efforts to build its own air and missile defense system, planned for initial operation by the mid-2020s.

Germany also announced it is considering reviving the RQ-4E Euro Hawk signals intelligence remotely piloted aircraft that was canceled last year, according to an *IHS Jane's* report.

The Luftwaffe identified airborne Sigint as a critical capability for security and is considering options for integrating Euro Hawk's sensor suite on one of several manned or unmanned platforms, stated *Jane's*.

Canadians Bide Time on the F-35s

Canada will remain an F-35 development partner "to keep all options open until a decision is made" on what aircraft, or mix of aircraft, will replace the Royal Canadian Air Force's CF-18 Hornet fleet, stated an annual summary released Dec. 10.

The RCAF now plans to stretch its aged Hornet fleet out to 2025, and "the project to replace the CF-18 is currently in the options analysis phase," according to an annual update to Parliament on fighter procurement.

The RCAF planned to acquire 65 F-35As, but relaunched its fighter replacement program in 2012 due to cost growth and political pressure, mandating annual cost-updates to Parliament.

Notional plans still call for a 65-strong fleet, if the F-35 is selected as the sole replacement. Canada has invested \$288.7 million (US dollars) in the F-35 program to date, and Canadian companies have gleaned \$587 million in F-35 contracts, according to the government's unclassified summary.

First International F-35 at Luke

A Royal Australian Air Force F-35 Lightning II touched

From Kandahar, With Valor

In a December ceremony, MSgt. Ivan Ruiz, a para-rescueman from the 56th Rescue Squadron at RAF Lakenheath, UK, was recently awarded the Air Force Cross—the military's second highest decoration for an airman—for his 2013 actions in Kandahar province, Afghanistan.

On Dec. 10, 2013, Ruiz, who was assigned to the 22nd Expeditionary Special Tactics Squadron at the time, conducted a raid in denied terrain along with a team of US Army Special Forces and Afghan commandos, according to his Air Force Cross citation.

Ruiz and two of his Special Forces teammates were confronted by four insurgents at point-blank range after being separated from the rest of their team. Although they quickly eliminated the threat, they became trapped in a courtyard by intense insurgent crossfire.

His two comrades were wounded, "rendering them immobile and exposed to enemy fire," states the citation. Ruiz "completely disregarded his personal safety and refused to withdraw to cover. Single-handedly suppressing enemy fire until reinforcements arrived."

Ruiz pushed through the crossfire to his wounded comrades, states the citation. The sheer volume of fire forced him to the prone position, but Ruiz refused to leave, "preventing enemy fighters from engaging his wounded teammates with direct fire weapons," according to the citation.

He is credited with saving the lives of his two teammates and killing 11 insurgents.

—Amy McCullough

down at Luke AFB, Ariz., becoming the first international F-35 partner to join the pilot training schoolhouse there on Dec. 18.

"Today, we take another tremendous step forward in our transition to the F-35 here at Luke," said 56th Fighter Wing Commander Brig. Gen. Scott L. Pleus in a news release.

"Australia is the first of 10 nations. ... Welcoming our first Australian F-35 is a special day for Luke," he commented.

RAAF F-35 pilots will train with the wing's 61st Fighter Squadron, as well as Italian and Norwegian F-35 pilots who are slated to begin training under Luke's future 62nd Fighter Squadron by next June, according to the wing.

Dutch and Turkish F-35 partners also will eventually train at Luke, in addition to current and potential foreign military sales customers. ✪

Senior Staff Changes

RETIREMENT: Maj. Gen. Paul H. **McGillicuddy**.

NOMINATIONS: To be Brigadier General: Tony D. **Bauernfeind**, Vincent K. **Becklund**, Steven J. **Bleymaier**, Richard A. **Coe**, William T. **Cooley**, Barry R. **Cornish**, Christopher E. **Craige**, Andrew A. **Croft**, Allan E. **Day**, Trent H. **Edwards**, Andrew J. **Gebara**, Gerald V. **Goodfellow**, John R. **Gordy II**, Stacey T. **Hawkins**, Cameron G. **Holt**, Kevin A. **Huyck**, James A. **Jacobson**, Darren V. **James**, David J. **Julazadeh**, Kevin B. **Kennedy**, Chad T. **Manske**, Michael A. **Minihan**, Wayne R. **Monteith**, Daniel J. **Orcutt**, Lenny J. **Richoux**, Carl E. **Schaefer**, John E. **Shaw**, Brad M. **Sullivan**, Billy D. **Thompson**, Paul A. **Welch**, William P. **West**.

CHANGES: Brig. Gen. (sel.) Allan E. **Day**, from Assoc. Dir., Resource Integration, DCS, Log., Instl., & Mission Spt., USAF, Pentagon, to Cmdr., Defense Log. Agency-Aviation, Richmond, Va. ... Maj. Gen. Timothy J. **Leahy**, from Dir., J-3, SOCOM, MacDill AFB, Fla., to Cmdr., Curtis E. LeMay Center for Doctrine Dev. & Education, AETC, Maxwell AFB, Ala. ... Brig. Gen. (sel.) Chad T. **Manske**, from Dep. Dir., Operational Log., Jt. Staff, Pentagon, to Dir., CENTCOM Deployment & Distribution Ops. Center, CENTCOM, Southwest Asia ... Maj. Gen. John K. **McMullen**, from Cmdr., 9th Air & Space Expeditionary Task Force-Afghanistan, ACC, Southeast Asia, to Dir., Ops., Strat. Deterrence, & Nuclear Integration, USAF, Ramstein AB, Germany ... Brig. Gen. Mathew H. **Molloy**, from Dep. Dir., Ops. (Protection), NORTHCOM, Peterson AFB, Colo., to Cmdr., AFOTEC, Kirtland AFB, N.M. ... Maj. Gen. Jon A. **Norman**, from C/S, PACAF, JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, to Vice Cmdr., PACAF, JB Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii ... Maj. Gen. Scott D. **West**, from Cmdr., AFOTEC, Kirtland AFB, N.M., to Cmdr., 9th Air & Space Expeditionary Task Force-Afghanistan, ACC, Southeast Asia.

COMMAND CHIEF CHANGE: CMSgt. Lorraine F. **Regan**, from Supt., Natl. Guard Bureau, Manpower, Personnel & Svcs., ANG Readiness Center, JB Andrews, Md., to Spec. Asst., Total Force Enlisted Issues, USAF, Pentagon.

SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE CHANGES: David R. **Beecroft**, to Dep. Dir., Security Forces, DCS for Log., Instl., & Mission Spt., USAF, Pentagon ... Nancy J. **Dolan**, to Dep. Dir., Strategy, Concepts, & Assessments, DCS, Strat., P&P, USAF, Pentagon ... Michael T. **Eismann**, to Chief Scientist, Sensors Directorate, AFRL, AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... Mark R. **Engelbaum**, to Dep. Dir., Mil. Force Mgmt., DCS, Manpower, Personnel & Svcs., USAF, Pentagon ... Keith W. **Hoffman**, to Senior Intel. Engineer, Data Exploitations Directorate, Natl. Air & Space Intel. Center, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... Dennis M. **Miller**, to Dir., Engineering & Tech. Mgmt., Air Force Life Cycle Mgmt. Center, AFMC, Hanscom AFB, Mass. ... Charles F. **Nava**, to Tech. Dir., AF Rapid Capabilities Office, Office of the Administrative Asst. to SECAF, JB Anacostia-Bolling, D.C.

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