

During the 1990s,  
the Air Force's  
overall Mission  
Capable rate has  
fallen by almost  
10 percentage  
points.

# Eight Straight

A large, stylized, brown letter 'U' graphic that serves as a drop cap for the first paragraph of the main text.

SAF readiness, as measured by Mission Capable rates in the total Air Force, has declined for its eighth straight year.

Near-final figures for Fiscal 1999 show an average MC rate for all operational flying forces of 73.7 percent, the lowest in the decade. It means that, during the year, an average of less than three-quarters of the Air Force fleet was prepared to perform most of their missions. (Figures were available for the first 10 months of Fiscal 1999.)

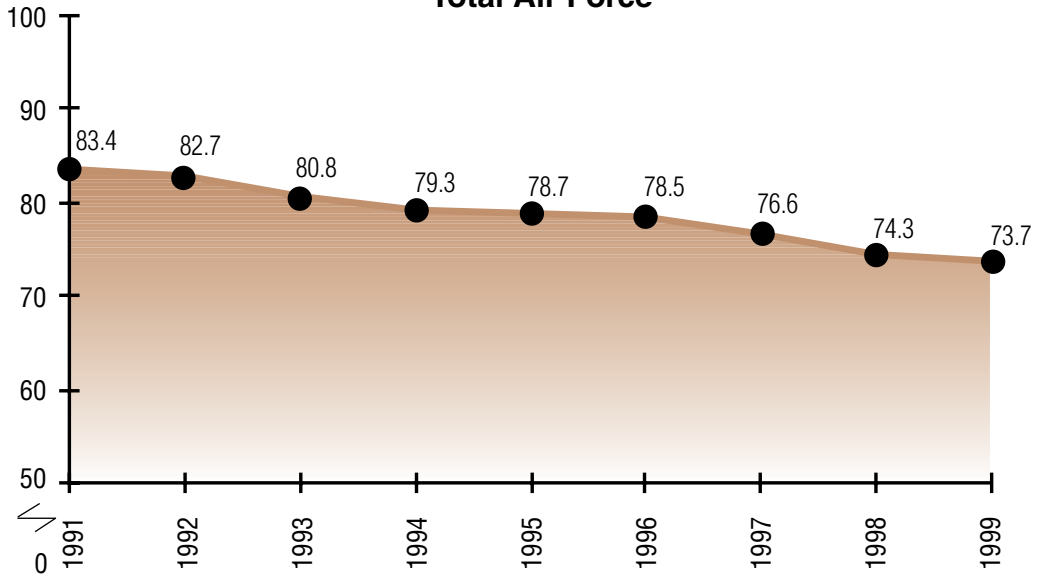
The problems seen in 1999 continue a broad, decade-long trend. The MC rate for USAF's combat forces has dropped nearly 10 percentage points from a high of 83.4 percent in 1991, despite the Clinton Administration's avowed determination to arrest and reverse the slide.

The trend has been generally downward in all four major categories—fighters, bombers, strategic airlifters, and “other” forces such as surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft.

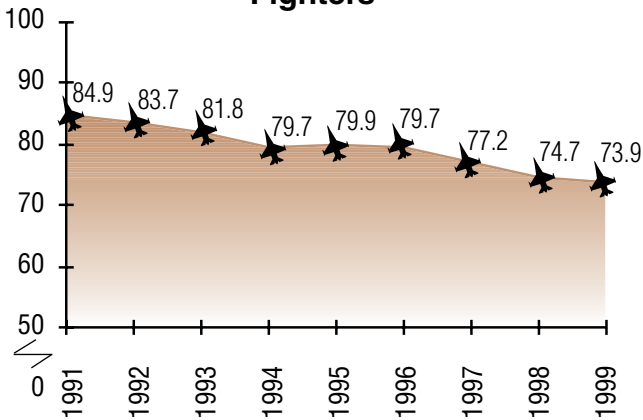
During the early and mid-1990s, MC rates in the bomber force registered a substantial increase. However, bomber MC rates have declined in the three most recent years. The MC rates for strategic airlifters, after a decline, have stayed more or less flat since the mid-1990s, a fact attributed mostly to the introduction of new C-17 airlifters.

In the first 10 months of Fiscal 1999, which ended Sept. 30, readiness went through numerous twists and turns. (See p. 70.) Overall MC rates fell through much of the year, picked back up during Allied Force, the air operation in the Balkans, and then started back down again when it was over.

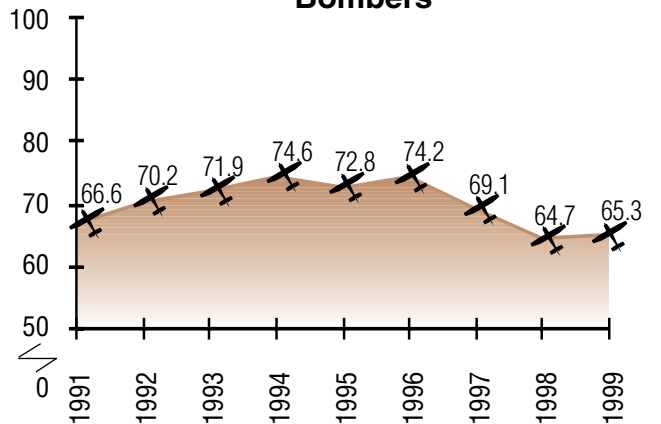
**Total Air Force**



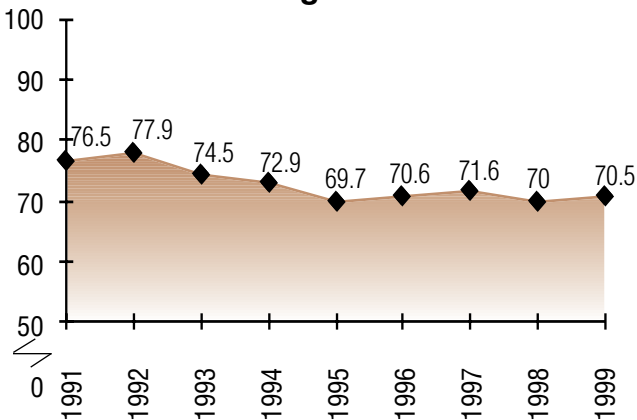
**Fighters**



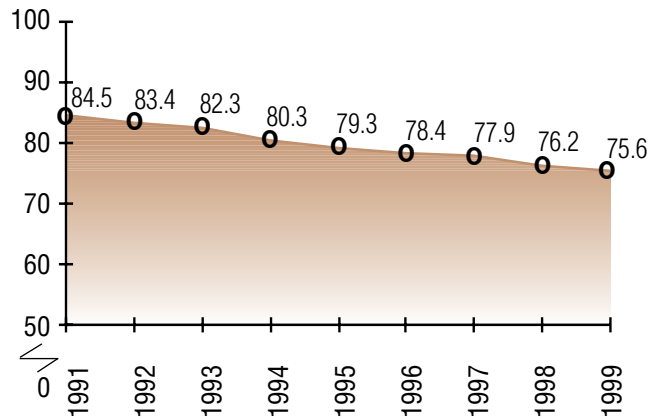
**Bombers**



**Strategic Airlift**



**Others**



Continued on p. 70

# THIS YEAR

