

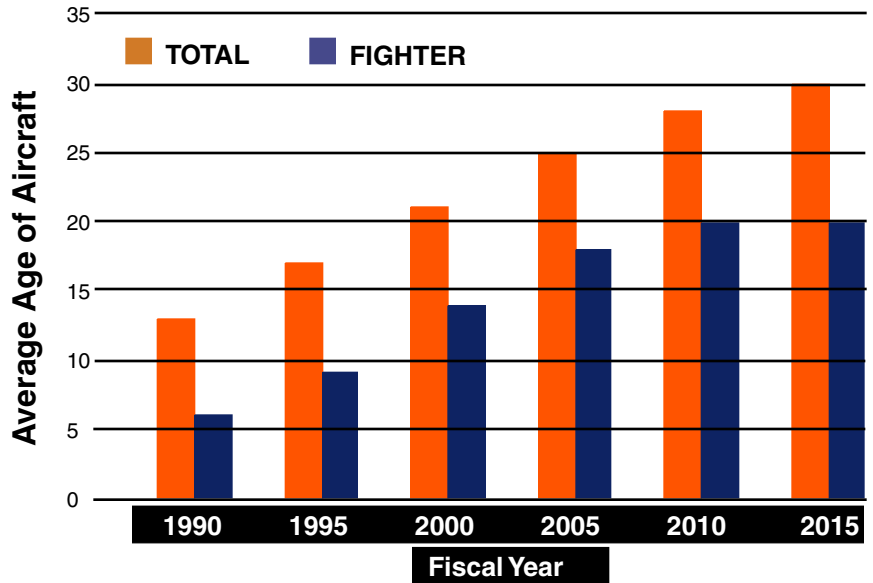
The Chart Page

By Tamar A. Mehuron, Associate Editor

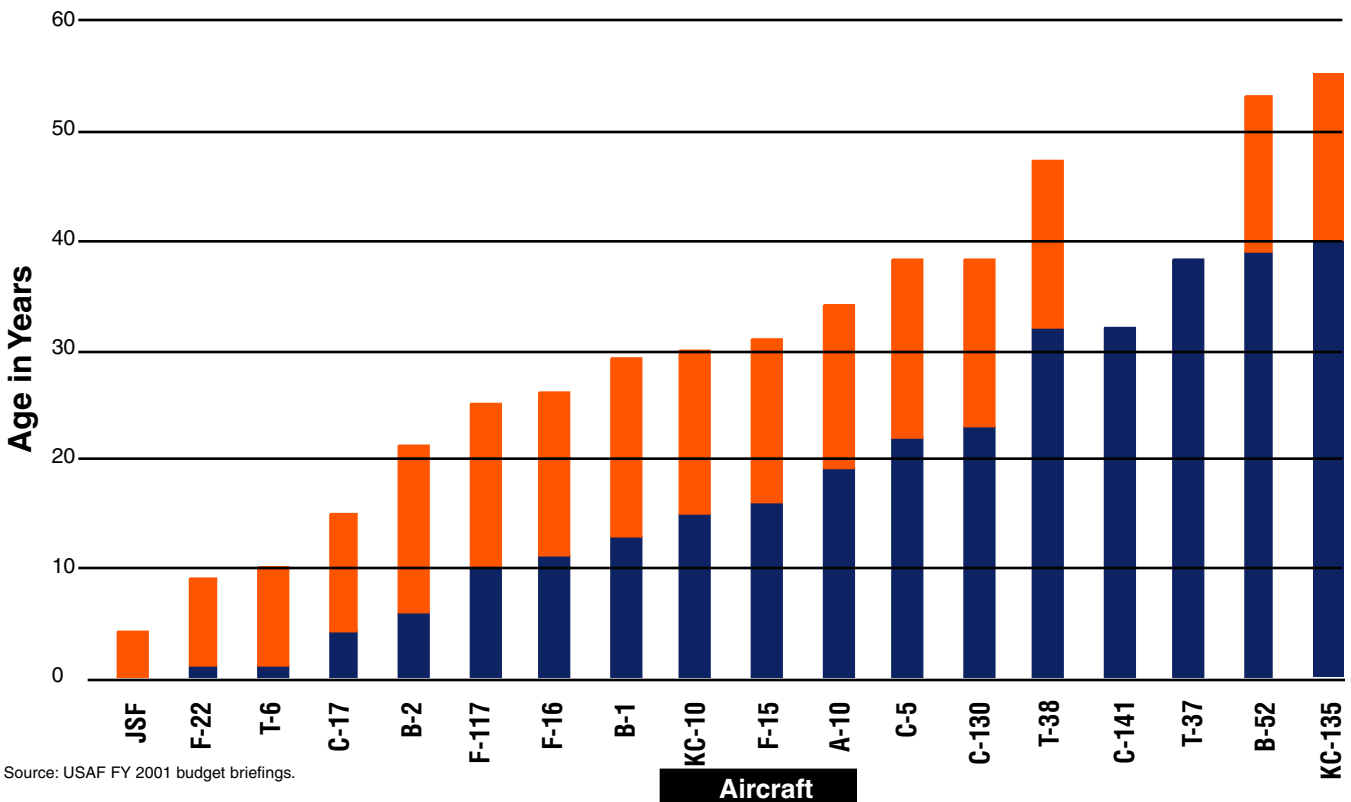
When the Air Force Goes Gray

Over the next 15 years, the Air Force aircraft inventory will age steadily, the result of slack production during the so-called “procurement holiday” of the 1990s. The chart at right shows aging trends of the total fleet and a subset of that fleet, the fighter force. During the 25-year period 1990–2014, the average age of USAF aircraft is expected to increase by 17 years, more than doubling its 1990 average age of 13 years. For fighters, the average age will more than triple, from six years in 1990 to 20 years by the end of 2014. The chart below illustrates the long-term aging trend of specific aircraft.

The Aging Fleet



Aging Trends by Aircraft Type



Source: USAF FY 2001 budget briefings.