

Air Force World

Dunford, Selva Nominated for Top Joint Chiefs Spots

President Obama on May 5 nominated Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr. to replace Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey as the next Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Air Force Gen. Paul J. Selva to replace Adm. James A. "Sandy" Winnefeld Jr. as vice chairman.

Throughout his nearly 40 years in uniform, Dunford has held command positions at every level. He led marines during the initial invasion of Iraq, and he led American and coalition forces in Afghanistan as combat operations came to a close.

"I have been extraordinarily impressed by Joe," said Obama. "He's already proven his ability to give me his unvarnished military advice based on his experience on the ground."

Selva brings 35 years of military experience as both a pilot and commander. "As leader of Air Mobility Command, he

earned a reputation as a force for change and innovation," said Obama. As head of US Transportation Command, "he's been committed to the partnerships that are a core principle of our national security strategy," Obama added.

The Senate must still approve the nominations.

Nepal Disaster Relief Continues

US Pacific Command continued to support Nepal in the aftermath of a devastating earthquake, even as a second powerful tremor struck the country May 11.

The May 7.3-magnitude earthquake followed the 7.8-magnitude quake on April 25 that took the lives of some 8,000 people and injured thousands more in the Asian nation.

"The US Air Force's role is to expedite the arrival of aid and responders into Nepal by using strategic and intertheater



05.08.2015

Four vintage World War II P-51 Mustangs fly in formation as part of the Arsenal of Democracy flyover in Washington, D.C., commemorating the 70th anniversary of Victory in Europe day. Dozens of warbirds took part, including P-40s, B-25s, A-26s, and P-38s, among many others. Fifi, the only flying B-29 in existence, also participated. This photograph was taken from the roof of the James H. Doolittle Building, headquarters of the Air Force Association in Rosslyn, Va.

airlifts,” said Lt. Col. Glenn Rineheart, commander of the 36th Mobility Readiness Squadron at Andersen AFB, Guam.

A joint humanitarian assistance survey team deployed from Kadena AB, Japan, to Nepal on April 29 to assist with relief efforts. Kadena-based airmen loaded the 20-plus members and gear on a Marine Corps C-130, tasked with supporting a US Agency for International Development Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance response team in Nepal.

US Pacific Command’s Joint Task Force 505 grew to include some 300 personnel by mid-May, when airmen worked with Nepalese personnel to repair the damaged runway at the Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu, Nepal’s capital.

“This airfield is Nepal’s lifeline for relief supplies and for international travel, so these repairs will help the airfield keep

pace with the aid coming in,” said Capt. Ryan White of the 36th Contingency Response Group.

The 36th CRG helped the Nepalese army download four million pounds of relief materials from 80 aircraft since arriving May 5, according to a May 18 release.

Goldfein Nominated for USAF Vice Chief

President Obama nominated Lt. Gen. David L. Goldfein for a fourth star and appointment as Air Force vice chief of staff, service officials announced on April 21.

Goldfein, the Joint Staff’s director since August 2013, would succeed Gen. Larry O. Spencer, who has been vice chief since July 2012. Spencer is retiring from the Air Force after more than 35 years in uniform and will become the Air Force Association’s next president.

✪ screenshot



Staff photo by Heather Lewis

Longer Live the Raptor

The Air Force now plans to retain the F-22 Raptor fleet into the 2040s, the service said in response to a question from *Air Force Magazine*. “Based upon current projected fleet flying hour programs and actual aircraft usage, the predicted service life of the Raptor fleet goes into the 2040s without a SLEP [service life extension program] of the airframe,” USAF spokesman Ed Gulick said.

While the design life of the F-22 is 8,000 hours—roughly equating to a service life of about 22 years, at 360 hours of flying per year—each aircraft has data recorders measuring every stress and strain on the jet aircraft. These data are “used by the F-22 Aircraft Structural Integrity Program [ASIP] to apply a Fatigue Severity Ratio factor to actual aircraft hours and determine equivalent flight hours,” he said.

Analytical models and engineering analysis of the data, taken along with “the Raptor’s projected flying hour program,” yielded the service life projection.

Air Combat Command started substituting more simulator hours for actual flying hours on the F-22 a few years ago as a way to husband the asset, and future Red Flag exercises also will be predominantly virtual, buying more F-22 airframe hours.

Previous service estimates forecast the F-22 would have to start to retire in the mid-2030s.

—John A. Tirpak

Goldfein is a command pilot with more than 4,200 flying hours in airplanes including the F-16, F-117, and MC-12.

As vice chief, he would assist the Chief of Staff organizing, training, and equipping airmen and Air Force civilian employees. He would also preside over the Air Staff and represent the Air Force on the Pentagon’s Joint Requirements Oversight Council and Deputy Advisory Working Group.

Russian Fighter Antics Prompt Complaint

A Russian fighter passed dangerously close to an RC-135 intelligence-gathering aircraft over the Baltic Sea, sparking a US diplomatic protest in April, according to US military officials.

“On the morning of April 7th, a US RC-135U flying a routine route in international airspace was intercepted by a Russian Su-27 Flanker in an unsafe and unprofessional manner” north of Poland, said Pentagon spokeswoman Eileen M. Lainez, according to a *Washington Free Beacon* report.

“The United States is raising this incident with Russia in the appropriate diplomatic and official channels,” she said.

A Russian military spokesman claimed Russian radar detected the RC-135 “making steady progress toward [Russia’s] national border,” alleging the aircrew was not employing the aircraft’s transponder.

US European Command officials denied that claim, asserting that the aircraft was operating in accordance with International Civil Aviation Organization flight rules.

The RC-135U is primarily equipped to detect, analyze, and gather technical data on foreign air defense radar systems. An RC-135U was involved in a similar incident with a Russian fighter north of Japan last year.

Texan Time-out

Air Education and Training Command officials briefly grounded the T-6A trainer fleet as a precaution before returning the bulk of the aircraft to flying status in April, command officials said.

The precautionary grounding began on April 10 following indications of an engine oil line malfunction. This prompted an inspection of all 445 T-6s in the fleet to determine the follow-up actions required. All T-6As that passed inspection and didn’t require further action were to immediately return to flying status.

“Safety of airmen is a top priority of the Air Force, and the stand-down gave maintainers the opportunity to verify proper function of the oil line on every T-6A,” said spokesman Capt. Jason Smith.

AETC operates T-6s at Columbus AFB, Miss.; JBSA-Randolph, Texas; Laughlin AFB, Texas; Sheppard AFB, Texas; and Vance AFB, Okla. The Air Force uses T-6s for training students in basic flying skills common to all Air Force pilots.

Pegasus’ Reserve Options

Grissom ARB, Ind.; Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.; Tinker AFB, Okla.; and Westover ARB, Mass., are the candidates to be the first Air Force Reserve Command-led KC-46A main operating location, announced Air Force officials.

Air Mobility Command and Air Force Reserve Command will soon survey each site and develop cost estimates for bedding down the new KC-46 tankers at each location.

Armed with that data, they will brief the Air Force leadership, leading to the announcement of the preferred site and reasonable alternatives this summer, officials stated. The base that wins out is expected to receive its KC-46s starting in Fiscal 2019, according to a release.

Already, the Air Force has identified McConnell AFB, Kan., as the first Active Duty-led KC-46 main operating base, Pease ANGB, N.H., as the first Air National Guard-led base, and Altus AFB, Okla., as home to the KC-46 formal training unit.

Eielson Stays Aggressive

Eielson AFB, Alaska, will retain the 18th Aggressor Squadron and the unit’s 18 F-16s that play the role of mock adversaries

Bone Transplant

The Air Force’s B-1 fleet, along with the Long-Range Strike Bomber program, is moving from the oversight of Air Combat Command to Air Force Global Strike Command, effective Oct. 1, the service announced.

The 63 B-1s in the inventory and some 7,000 airmen will transfer to AFGSC under the move, joining the Air Force’s nuclear-capable B-2A and B-52H fleets under the command, officials stated.

The B-1s deliver only conventional munitions and are primarily spread across the 7th Bomb Wing at Dyess AFB, Texas, and the 28th BW at Ellsworth AFB, S.D. “With a single command responsible for the Air Force’s entire long-range strike fleet, the airmen in AFGSC will benefit from better coordination and increased sharing of expertise,” said Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III.

The consolidation will also “help provide a unified voice to maintain the high standards necessary in stewardship” of the bombers, said Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James.

When asked if the 7th BW and 28th BW would become part of 8th Air Force, AFGSC’s organization that oversees the B-2 and B-52 forces, AFGSC spokeswoman Capt. Michele Rollins said the detailed planning surrounding the realignment is still in progress.

—Aaron M. U. Church



Bones in the Gulf: A B-1B Lancer takes off from Al Udeid AB, Qatar, a strategic coalition air base on the Arabian Peninsula, headed for combat operations on April 8. Al Udeid hosts thousands of military members and the airmen stationed there support more than 90 coalition aircraft. Qatar is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council along with Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

in air-to-air combat training exercises, announced Air Force officials.

“Keeping them at Eielson proved to be the most operationally sound option, as well as the most cost-effective,” Mark A. Pohlmeier, the Air Force’s acting deputy assistant secretary for installations, said in April.

When the Air Force last August named Eielson its preferred site for hosting 48 F-35A strike fighters in the Pacific area, service officials decided to study whether to keep the aggressor mission there, too.

JB Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, and Nellis AFB, Nev., were identified as alternative homes for the 18th AGRS, but Eielson prevailed. Its proximity to the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex is “optimum to support” Red Flag-Alaska and Distant Frontier exercises, said Pohlmeier.

Keesler Keeps On

The Air Force has abandoned plans to inactivate Air Force Reserve Command’s 815th Airlift Squadron at Keesler AFB, Miss., members of the state’s congressional delegation announced. As a result, the unit’s 10 C-130J transports will continue to operate from the southern Mississippi base.

“Today’s announcement is a major win for the future stability of Keesler Air Force Base as well as the many communities and businesses that depend on it,” said Sen. Roger Wicker (R), in the joint release with Sen. Thad Cochran (R) and Rep. Steven Palazzo (R), April 14.

Wicker said he was grateful to Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James and Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III “for

recognizing the value that Keesler provides to the Air Force and the Gulf Coast.”

The Air Force in February 2012 proposed relocating Keesler’s C-130Js, a move the lawmakers opposed. In April 2014, the Air Force inactivated the 345th AS, the Active Duty associate unit that provided additional manpower for the C-130Js.

Next Gen AMRAAM Completes Testing

Raytheon, Air Force, and Navy testers recently completed operational test and evaluation of the latest Advanced Medium Range Air-to-Air Missile variant, paving the way for its initial operational capability, the company announced.

“The AIM-120D represents a significant improvement in air-to-air weapons capabilities and the technologies it brings

By the Numbers

700 The average number of live 750-pound general-purpose bombs dropped by B-52H bombers training during an average Continuous Bomber Presence rotation to Andersen AFB, Guam.





to the battlefield,” company program director Ron Krebs said in a release.

The missile performed outstandingly in a variety of challenging air-to-air scenarios across the spectrum of flight profiles, leading the Air Force to clear it for operational use, according to Raytheon.

The Navy already declared AIM-120D operational and plans to deploy the missile this year. The AIM-120D variant offers improved range, GPS-assisted guidance, updated data links, and jam resistance, in addition to greater lethality.

Operational testing resumed in 2013 after earlier software and hardware glitches were addressed.

F-15s Pick Up Icelandic Rotation

A deployment of USAF F-15Cs, a KC-135, and some 200 airmen recently began air surveillance and policing operations in Iceland, announced US Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa officials.

Four F-15Cs from RAF Lakenheath, UK, deployed as part of the package, along with a KC-135 from RAF Mildenhall, UK, and some 200 airmen from various USAFE-AFA bases, kicking off 871st Air Expeditionary Squadron operations on April 17.

Since 2008, Keflavik Airport has hosted NATO partner nation aircraft for the Icelandic air security mission. The US removed its permanently stationed forces from the nation when it closed Naval Air Station Keflavik in 2006, but NATO has maintained its commitment to providing defense for Iceland by rotating air defense forces from its member states in the years since.

“It’s an extremely important relationship, an extremely important partnership, and a very, very important mission we do,” said 871st AES Commander Lt. Col. John Stratton.

Lightning’s Day Out

The 56th Fighter Wing at Luke AFB, Ariz., conducted its first training deployment with the F-35A strike fighter, sending airmen and 10 of its jets to Nellis AFB, Nev., for two weeks.

How Bulgar: TSgt. Charles Fenton, an F-15 crew chief with the Louisiana Air National Guard, signals the pilot of an F-15C to throttle up and begin to taxi at Graf Ignatievo AB, Bulgaria, during a Thracian Eagle exercise in April. The exercise brought US airmen flying and supporting F-15s together with Bulgarian troops operating MiG-29s and Su-25 ground support aircraft. The aim of Thracian Eagle is to enhance interoperability, improve preparedness, and practice procedures for logistics support.

The Luke F-35As flew training sorties alongside F-35s assigned to Nellis and Eglin AFB, Fla., over the Nevada Test and Training Range from April 4 to April 18, according to a release.

This exercise was an important indicator of the Air Force’s state of progress toward having its first unit of combat-ready F-35As available around fall 2016, said officials.

“Until now, the Air Force F-35 program had not moved this many jets and conducted sustained operations at another base,” stated Lt. Col. Michael Ebner, commander of Luke’s 61st Fighter Squadron.

“Operating away from Luke has been a huge success for the wing, Team Nellis, and the F-35 program,” said 56th FW Commander Brig. Gen. Scott L. Pleus. Luke, home to the F-35A schoolhouse, hosts 20 F-35As, including two Australian jets.

Commandos Down Under

Combat controllers from Kadena AB, Japan, along with MC-130J special-mission aircraft, conducted joint tactical training with their Australian counterparts at RAAF Richmond, northwest of Sydney, in April.

Two 17th Special Operations Squadron MC-130Js conducted tactical landings at nearby Warren Airfield in addition to airdropping special operators during the joint exercises April 15-17, according to the Royal Australian Air Force.

The War on Terrorism

US Central Command operations: Freedom's Sentinel and Inherent Resolve

Casualties

As of May 12, one American had died in Operation Freedom's Sentinel in Afghanistan, and four Americans had died in Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq and Syria.

The total includes five troops and no Department of Defense civilians. Of these deaths, one was killed in action with the enemy, while four died in noncombat incidents.

There have been 22 troops wounded in action during Operation Freedom's Sentinel and one in Operation Inherent Resolve.

Michigan A-10s Take Up the Fight

A dozen A-10s and some 350 airmen from the Michigan Air National Guard's 127th Wing deployed to the Persian Gulf region to take over the fight against ISIS in Iraq and Syria, unit spokesman TSgt. Daniel Heaton told *Air Force Magazine*.

This expeditionary contingent left Selfridge Air National Guard Base, northeast of Detroit, in early April on a six-month rotation to support Operation Inherent Resolve, the US-led air campaign against ISIS, according to a wing release.

The Michigan contingent relieved an expeditionary squadron of A-10s and airmen from the Indiana ANG's 122nd Fighter Wing in Fort Wayne that deployed last November, marking the first A-10 anti-ISIS rotation.

The Michigan unit is likewise assigned to the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing while deployed. This rotation is the 127th Wing's longest large-scale movement since deploying to Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, in 2011, said unit officials.

—Aaron M. U. Church

Tikrit Template

The Iraqi offensive against ISIS in Tikrit, Iraq, showed that conventional and irregular Iraqi troops supported by

US air strikes and advisors can roll back terrorist advances, Pentagon officials said.

Tikrit marked the first time all the various parties and elements came together in this manner to defeat ISIS, Joint Chiefs Chairman Army Gen. Martin E. Dempsey said during a Pentagon press briefing in April.

"We were able to support that and ... let that campaign reach a successful conclusion," said Dempsey. He said he agreed with Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi's assessment that such operations could be a "model" to free other parts of Iraq under ISIS control.

Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter said US forces at rear command centers assisted Iraqi forward air controllers to ensure "valid targets" were hit and that air strikes were "effective and precise."

—Marc V. Schanz

The Raptors Remain

F-22 Raptors continued to lend their unique capabilities to the fight against ISIS since the campaign's opening days, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III said.

The Raptor is called on when the "scenarios and targets" call for its unique capabilities, he said in Washington, D.C., April 22.

The F-22 has been lauded by senior USAF officials for its ability to coordinate and improve the combat effectiveness of strike packages in Operation Inherent Resolve.

In addition to its ability to fly into defended airspace, its capabilities as a combat escort, its air tasking capabilities, and its significant sensor and dynamic targeting tools have exceeded expectations in the air campaign against ISIS, Air Combat Command's head, Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle, had noted in February.

Thirty-five combat controllers from the 320th Special Tactics Squadron and RAAF 4 Squadron parachuted onto a local farm and conducted both day and night tactical training in rural New South Wales.

Kadena's 17th SOS received its first MC-130J last December as part of an Air Force Special Operations Command-wide recapitalization.

After the United States and Australia signed and intensified a defense coordination agreement last year, the Air Force ramped up working with the Australians. This has included deploying aircraft for several Australian exercises and possibly establishing regular bomber rotations to the northern part of the country.

X-47B's Final First

The Navy's X-47B demonstrator completed the first independent, remotely piloted aircraft aerial refueling during a flight from NAS Patuxent River, Md., Northrop Grumman announced.

The X-47B refueled from a contract K-707 tanker over the Chesapeake Bay on April 22.

"Testing with the X-47B helps solidify the concept that future unmanned aircraft can perform standard missions like aerial refueling and operate seamlessly with manned aircraft," program manager Navy Capt. Beau Duarte said in a release.

The tanker trial concluded the service's Unmanned Combat Air System program to mature technology and concepts

for integrating unmanned aircraft into a carrier air wing, according to Naval Air Systems Command.

The two X-47Bs achieved several milestones over the course of the four-and-a-half-year test program, including the first autonomous catapult launch and arrested-carrier landing from USS *George H. W. Bush* in 2013.

The Navy is looking to field a separate, operational follow-on under its Unmanned Carrier-Launched Airborne Surveillance and Strike program.

MALD-J Completes Operational Testing

The jammer variant of the Miniature Air Launched Decoy

Index to Advertisers

Bradford Exchange.....	33, 74
FLIR.....	7
Gulfstream Aeronautical Systems.....	3
Nissan.....	Cover II
Northrop Grumman.....	Cover IV
USAA.....	Cover III

AFA Corporate Members.....	11
AFA Hangar Store.....	72
AFA Member Benefits Reference.....	39
Budget Car Rental.....	75
Budget Truck Rental.....	9
Promotive Expertcity.....	75
On Call Doctor.....	73

Senior Staff Changes

CONFIRMATIONS: To be Lieutenant General: Charles Q. Brown Jr., Timothy M. Ray. **To be Brigadier General:** Kyle W. Robinson. **To be ANG Major General:** James C. Balsarak, Steven J. Berryhill, Kevin W. Bradley, Peter J. Byrne, Gretchen S. Dunkelberger, Richard J. Evans III, Robert M. Ginnetti, Jeffrey W. Hauser, William O. Hill, Joseph K. Kim, Jerome P. Limoge Jr., Paul C. Maas, John P. McGoff, Brian C. Newby, Marc H. Sasseville, Michael E. Stencil, Carol A. Timmons.

NOMINATIONS: To be General: David L. Goldfein. **To be Lieutenant General:** Jeffrey G. Lofgren. **To be Brigadier General:** William M. Knight. **To be AFRC Major General:** Robert N. Polumbo.

CHANGES: Maj. Gen. Warren D. Berry, from Dir., Log., AMC, Scott AFB, Ill., to Vice Cmdr., AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... Brig. Gen. (sel.) Steven J. Bleymaier, from Dir. of Staff, AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, to Cmdr., Ogden ALC, AFMC, Hill AFB, Utah ... Lt. Gen. (sel.) Charles Q. Brown Jr., from Dir., Ops., Strat. Deterrence & Nuclear Integration, USAFE, Ramstein AB, Germany, to Cmdr., AFCENT, ACC, Al Udeid, Qatar ... Brig. Gen. Carl A. Buhler, from Cmdr., Ogden ALC, AFMC, Hill AFB, Utah, to Dir., Log., ACC, JB Langley-Eustis, Va. ... Maj. Gen. (sel.) Clinton E. Crosier, from Dep. Dir., Global Ops., STRATCOM, Offutt AFB, Neb., to Dir., Plans & Policy, STRATCOM, Offutt AFB, Neb. ... Maj. Gen. (sel.) Timothy G. Fay, from Dir., Current Ops., DCS, Ops., P&R, USAF, Pentagon, to Dir., Strat. Plans, DCS, Strat. P&P, USAF, Pentagon ... Gen. (sel.) David L. Goldfein, from Dir., Jt. Staff, Pentagon, to Vice C/S, USAF, Pentagon ... Maj. Gen. Jerry D. Harris Jr., from Dir., Strat. Plans, DCS, Strat. P&P, USAF, Pentagon, to Vice Cmdr., ACC, JB Langley-Eustis, Va. ... Brig. Gen. Darren E. Hartford, from Cmdr., 379th AEW, ACC, Southwest Asia, to Cmdr., Natl. War College, NDU, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C. ... Brig. Gen. (sel.) William M. Knight, from Dep. Dir.,

Ops., AMC, Scott AFB, Ill., to Dep. Dir., Ops., Ops. Team Two, Natl. Jt. Ops. & Intel. Center, Jt. Staff, Pentagon ... Lt. Gen. (sel.) Jeffrey G. Lofgren, from Dep. Cmdr., AFCENT, CENTCOM, Southwest Asia, to DCS, Capability Dev., Supreme Allied Command Transformation, Norfolk, Va. ... Brig. Gen. Russell L. Mack, from Vice Cmdr., 7th AF, PACAF, Osan AB, South Korea, to IG, ACC, JB Langley-Eustis, Va. ... Brig. Gen. Chad T. Manske, from Dir., CENTCOM Deployment & Distribution Ops. Center, CENTCOM, Southwest Asia, to Dep. Cmdr., Canadian NORAD Region, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada ... Brig. Gen. Mary F. O'Brien, from Dep. to the DCS, Intel., Intl. Security Assistance Force, US Forces-Afghanistan, CENTCOM, Southwest Asia, to Spec. Asst. to the DCS, ISR, USAF, Pentagon ... Brig. Gen. (sel.) Aaron M. Prupas, from Sr. Mil. Asst. to the USD, Intel., Office of the SECDEF, Pentagon, to Dep. to the DCS, Intel., Intl. Security Assistance Force, US Forces-Afghanistan, CENTCOM, Southwest Asia ... Lt. Gen. (sel.) Timothy M. Ray, from Dir., Global Power Prgms., Office of the Asst. SECAF, Acq., Pentagon, to Cmdr., 3rd AF, USAFE, Ramstein AB, Germany ... Brig. Gen. (sel.) Randall Reed, from Dir., SECAF/C/S of the AF Exec. Action Group, USAF, Pentagon, to Dep. Dir., Strat. Plans, Rqmts., & Prgms., AMC, Scott AFB, Ill. ... Lt. Gen. Darryl L. Roberson, from Cmdr., 3rd AF, USAFE, Ramstein AB, Germany, to Cmdr., AETC, JBASA-Randolph, Texas ... Brig. Gen. (sel.) Kyle W. Robinson, from Dir., C/S of AF Strat. Studies Gp., CSAF, USAF, Pentagon, to Vice Cmdr., 7th AF, PACAF, Osan AB, South Korea ... Brig. Gen. Brian S. Robinson, from Vice Cmdr., 618th Air Ops. Center (Tanker Airlift Control Center), AMC, Scott AFB, Ill., to Cmdr., 618th Air Ops. Center (Tanker Airlift Control Center), AMC, Scott AFB, Ill. ... Brig. Gen. (sel.) John E. Shaw, from Cmdr., 21st SW, AFSPC, Peterson AFB, Colo., to Dep. Dir., Global Ops., STRATCOM, Offutt AFB, Neb. ... Maj. Gen. David D. Thompson, from Dir., Plans & Policy, STRATCOM, Offutt AFB, Neb., to Vice Cmdr., AFSPC, Peterson AFB, Colo. ... Maj. Gen. (sel.) Giovanni K. Tuck, from Dir., Ops. & Readiness, DCS, Ops., USAF, Pentagon, to Dir., Ops. & Plans, TRANSCOM, Scott AFB, Ill. ... Brig. Gen. Christopher P. Weggeman, from Dep. Dir., Future Ops., USCYBERCOM, Fort Meade, Md., to Dir., Plans & Policy, USCYBERCOM, Fort Meade, Md. ... Maj. Gen. Timothy M. Zadalis, from Cmdr., 618th Air Ops. Center (Tanker Airlift Control Center), AMC, Scott AFB, Ill., to Vice Cmdr., USAFE, Ramstein AB, Germany.

SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE CHANGES: Joo Y. Chung, to Dir., Oversight & Compliance, Office of Dep. Chief Mgmt. Office, Washington, D.C. ... Shirley L. Reed, to CIO (Financial Mgmt.), Office of the Asst. SECAF, Financial Mgmt., & Comptroller, JB Andrews, Md. ... Kathryn J. Sowers, to Dir., Financial Mgmt., & Comptroller, AFLCMC, AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. ☉

Women in Special Ops?

Approximately 200 Air Force male and female volunteers will undergo physical evaluations as part of the final stage of assessing whether to open to female airmen the remaining careers fields closed to them, announced service officials.

"This testing and evaluation phase will develop the final physical test components that best predict operational success for these specific career fields," said Brig. Gen. Brian T. Kelly, the Air Force's director of military force management policy, April 21. "This effort marks the most stringent process yet by which we are developing occupationally specific physical standards, scientifically measured against operational requirements to match mission needs."

The Air Force has already conducted observational studies and discussions to judge what would be required to open the final 4,300 combat billets to women, in compliance with the Pentagon's 2013 directive.

Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James will consult with US Special Operations Command officials following the evaluation, before making her recommendation.

The Defense Department plans to announce in 2016 which of the remaining closed careers across the services will become open to women applicants, states the release.

The Marine Corps concluded a two-and-a-half-year trial period in April with a gender-integrated infantry officer course; no female candidates successfully completed it, reported *USA Today*.

—Aaron M. U. Church

cleared Air Force operational testing, the last major hurdle before the service may declare it ready for use in combat, announced manufacturer Raytheon.

"MALD-J's unique capabilities have been proven in 42 successful flight tests during the last two years and brought us closer to full-rate production," said Mike Jarrett, Raytheon's vice president of air warfare systems, in the company's April 14 release.

The Air Force recently tasked Raytheon with building 250 MALD-Js during the weapon's eighth production lot. The company began delivering the jammer variant to the Air Force in 2012.

MALD-J adds radar-jamming capability to the basic MALD platform that confuses enemy air defenses by duplicating the flight profiles and radar signatures of friendly aircraft. MALD is already available for combat. It is integrated on the B-52 and the F-16.

Mannerly Muscle

Four B-52 bombers flew simultaneous long-distance power-projection training flights over the Arctic and North Sea from Barksdale AFB, La., and Minot AFB, N.D., on April 2, Air Force Global Strike Command announced.



“Exercises and operations, such as these bomber flights, enable and enhance relationships with our allies and partners and allow others to understand what capabilities US Strategic Command brings to the equation,” STRATCOM Commander Adm. Cecil D. Haney said in a release.

NATO aircraft, including British Typhoons, Canadian F-18s, and Dutch F-16s, practiced dissimilar air intercepts with the B-52s en route. Each of the B-52s operated in “compliance with national and international protocols and due regard for the safety of all aircraft sharing the airspace,” Haney said.

Exercise Polar Growl afforded crews polar-navigation training and tested command and control of simultaneous deterrence sorties. B-52s also participated in several NATO exercises and deployments in and around Europe last year.

Ski-borne Sovereignty

A pair of New York Air National Guard LC-130 ski-equipped transports supported Operation Nunaliut, a Canadian Arctic exercise, for the second consecutive year, announced Air Guard officials.

In light of Russian belligerence toward NATO and increased military activity in the Arctic, “we feel that these exercises are ever-more important to exert our sovereignty and our ability to respond,” said Canada’s associate defense minister Julian Fantino, according to the Canadian *Nunatsiaq News*.

“We’re looking to continue standing up against any threat to our sovereignty and stand ready at any moment to defend our people, land, and interests,” he said.

The LC-130s practiced operating from ice runways and working with Canadian Forces during the exercise. It concluded on April 22.

Approximately 200 Canadian troops and 30 US airmen from the 109th Airlift Wing at Schenectady County Arpt., N.Y., took part.

California Trades Predator for Reaper

Members of the California Air National Guard’s 163rd Reconnaissance Wing flew the unit’s final mission with the

Providing Aid: **USAF airmen offload relief supplies from a C-17 in Kathmandu, Nepal, on April 28. A massive earthquake on April 25 devastated the region, causing thousands of deaths and injuries and leaving many more thousands without food, water, or shelter. USAF has delivered supplies and scores of personnel to the city, including search and rescue teams, a disaster assistance response team, and working dogs to aid in the search for survivors. A second major quake shook the capitol city of Nepal on May 13.**

MQ-1 Predator remotely piloted aircraft in April.

After more than eight years of consecutive Predator flights for US forces overseas and also helping civil authorities during wildfires and floods at home, these airmen are now flying MQ-9 Reapers in similar roles, states an April 16 release.

In July 2014, the wing conducted its first local Reaper flight, and 163rd RW Commander Col. Dana A. Hessheimer piloted the unit’s final MQ-1 sortie on April 1.

The wing, headquartered at March Air Reserve Base in southern California, became the first Air Guard unit to operate the MQ-1 in August 2006.

“We are the most experienced wing in the world flying remotely piloted aircraft,” said Hessheimer. “Our pilots fly combat air patrol missions and have both training and operational experience with over 6,500 sorties.”

NORAD Requests F-16 AESA

US Northern Command recently issued an exigent request for F-16 active electronically scanned array radars to equip alert fighters defending the homeland.

“I actually submitted that urgent need today,” NORAD-NORTHCOM Commander Adm. Bill Gortney said in an April 7 Pentagon briefing. “We have some boxes, we have the airplanes, and we should be able to marry them up.”

District of Columbia Air National Guard alert F-16s, tasked with defending the National Capital Region from JB Andrews, Md., are slated for the first AESA upgrades, Gortney said. ★