



Letter to Airmen

Honorable Michael W. Wynne
Secretary of the Air Force

Wednesday, September 06, 2006

Letter to Airmen: Energy Conservation

Much like your own household budget, increased energy costs have significantly impacted the Air Force's bottom line. For example, just a \$10 increase in a barrel of oil costs the Air Force almost \$600 million a year - money better spent fighting the GWOT or recapitalizing our aging fleet. Under the auspices of AFSO 21, I ask every Airman to make energy use a priority and bring forth ideas on how we can be more efficient in its use.

As the largest user of energy in the DoD, the Air Force has developed a two-pronged energy strategy to attack this problem. This strategy of assured domestic supply and aggressive energy conservation will benefit our entire Air Force, but we need all Airmen to do their part. Let me give you some examples of what your Air Force is doing.

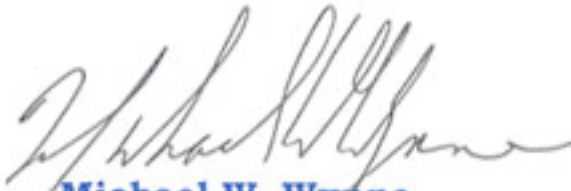
On the supply side, the Air Force continues to pursue cutting edge technology. As the Nation's largest purchaser of renewable energy, we used over one million-megawatt hours of green power in 2005 - enough to power 70,000 homes for a year! Green power accounts for 11% of all Air Force electric consumption, which includes thirty-seven Air Force installations. Just recently, we won the 2006 Environmental Protection Agency's Climate Protection Award for our green power initiatives - a monumental achievement!

We also generate renewable power at several installations using solar, wind, and biomass (plant-derived) sources. Our research labs are hard at work developing synthetic hydrocarbon fuels made from coal, oil shale, and biomass. Look for our first test flight, on a B-52 using synthetic fuel, later this month!

On the demand side, we continue to look for ways to reduce energy consumption in our facilities, vehicles, and aircraft operations. We reduced facility energy usage by 30% over the last twenty years by incorporating energy conservation into our operations - without impacting the mission or quality of life. We are currently testing and developing several innovative methods of powering ground vehicles with alternative fuels, such as E-85 ethanol, hydrogen, and hybrid fuel cell-electric power systems. Additionally, our Aviation, and Acquisition & Technology communities are aggressively looking for ways to increase aircraft fuel efficiencies through engine and airframe design.

These examples demonstrate our commitment to increasing efficiency and eliminating wasteful practices in all areas of our work. To assist in our efforts to communicate our energy strategy, every Airman should develop new ways to personally and organizationally conserve energy. Your efforts in making energy conservation a part of your day-to-day activities will benefit our entire Air Force, and free up precious dollars for other critical programs. I thank you all!




Michael W. Wynne
Secretary of the Air Force