DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

PRESENTATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
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SUBJECT: Reserve Issues

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Mr. Chairman, and distinguished members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today. I want to thank you for your continued support, which has helped your Air Force Reserve address vital recruiting, retention, modernization, and infrastructure needs. Your passage of last year's pay and quality of life initiatives sent a clear message to our citizen Airmen that their efforts are appreciated and supported by the American people, and also by those of you in the highest positions of government. Wherever you find the United States Air Force, at home or abroad, you will find the active and Reserve members working side-by-side, trained to one tier of readiness, seamlessly integrated into a military force that is READY NOW!

TOTAL FORCE

The Air Force Reserve (AFR) continues to address new challenges in 2005. Although Partial Mobilization persists, demobilizations have increased significantly. In spite of the strains that mobilization has placed on the personal and professional lives of our Reserve members, volunteerism continues to be a significant means of contribution. Volunteerism is the preferred method of fulfilling requirements for future Global War On Terror (GWOT) actions. While dedicated members of the Air Force Reserve continue to meet validated operational requirements, the AFR, in cooperation with the Air Force Personnel Requirements division is exploring ways to enhance volunteerism, including use of volunteer Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) members. Recruiting and retention of quality service members are top priority for the Air Force Reserve and competition for

these members among other services, as well as within the civilian community has reached an all-time high.

Recruiting

In FY04, and for the last four consecutive years, Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC) exceeded its recruiting goal. This remarkable feat is achieved through the outstanding efforts of our recruiters and with the superb assistance of our Reserve members who help tell our story of public service to the American people. Despite the long-term effects of high Operations and Personnel (OPS/PERS) Tempo, AFRC only fell short of its FY04 end-strength by .7 percent, reaching 99.37 percent, or merely 578 assigned short of congressionally funded requirements.

Recruiting continues to face significant challenges. The pool of active duty separatees continues to shrink due to force reductions over the last decade, and the competition for these members has become even keener. The active duty is intensifying its efforts in retention and the National Guard is competing for these assets as well. Additionally, the current high OPS/PERS Tempo and a perceived likelihood of activation and deployment are being routinely cited as significant reasons why separating members are declining to choose continuing military service in the Reserve. These issues further contribute to the civilian sector's ability to attract these members away from military service. One consequence of the reduced success in attracting separating members from active duty is the need to make up this difference through attracting non-prior service (NPS) members. Historically, Reserve Recruiting accesses close to 25 percent of eligible separating active duty Air Force members (i.e. no break in service), which accounts for a significant portion of annual accessions. While having enough Basic Military Training and

Technical Training School quotas has long been an issue, the increased dependence on NPS accessions strains these requirements even further. To meet training requirements, 4,000 training slots per year are now allocated and funded for the Air Force Reserve.

A new forecasting tool developed by our training division allows everyone, from unit level to wing training managers, to Numbered Air Force (NAF) and AFRC Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) functional managers, to participate in the forecasting with the Chief of Recruiting Services providing final approval.

Finally, with overall end-strength of the Air Force Reserve dipping below 100 percent, some career-fields are undermanned. In order to avoid possible readiness concerns, recruiters will continue to meet the challenge of guiding applicants to critical job specialties.

The Reserve is taking advantage of an active duty Force Shaping initiative. Beginning in FY04 and ending in FY05, the Air Force will offer active duty members the opportunity to use the Palace Chase program to change components. The Air Force Reserve is using this opportunity to access prior service members with critical career skills. In FY04, 1,200 AD members utilized Palace Chase to join the Air Reserve Component, with over half selecting the Air Force Reserve. This number may grow in FY05.

For recruits who have not served in a military component, the development of the "Split Training Option" which began in October 2003, provides a flexible tool for recruiters to use in scheduling Basic Military Training classes and Technical School classes at non-consecutive times.

Retention

Retention in both officer and enlisted categories has remained strong. FY04 ended with officer retention at 92.3% and overall enlisted retention at 88.4%. These retention rates are in line with averages over the last five years.

As the Reserve Component (RC) continues to surge to meet operational requirements necessary for the successful prosecution of the GWOT, we continue to examine existing laws and policies that govern enlisted incentives and related compensation issues. The reserve enlisted bonus program is a major contributor to attract and retain both unit and individual mobilization augmentee members in those critical unit type code tasked career fields. To enhance retention of our reservists, we work to ensure relevant compensation statutes reflect the growing reliance on the RC to accomplish active duty missions and provide compensatory equity between members of both components. The reenlistment bonus authority of the active and reserve components is one area we are working to change. We continue to explore the feasibility of expanding the bonus program to our Air Reserve Technician (ART) members. In addition, the Aviation Continuation Pay (ACP), the Career Enlisted Flyers Incentive Pay (CEFIP) and Aircrew Incentive Pay (ACIP) continue to be offered to retain our rated assets, both officer and enlisted.

The Reserve has made many strides in increasing education benefits for our members, offering 100 percent tuition assistance for those individuals pursuing an undergraduate degree and continuing to pay 75 percent for graduate degrees. We also employ the services of the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) for College Level Examination Program (CLEP) testing for all reservists and their spouses.

We will continue to seek innovative ways to enhance retention.

Quality of Life Initiatives

We expanded the AFR Special Duty Assignment Pay (SDAP) program by including an additional six Air Force Specialty Codes to enhance recruitment and retention, improve

program alignment, and provide parity to Reserve members. Where there is Reserve strength, the expansion authorizes the payment of SDAP to a reservist qualifying in the same skill and location as their active duty counterpart. The AFR SDAP program has continued to evolve and improve since Secretarial authority removed the tour length requirement for the Air Reserve Component in July 2000.

We appreciate the support provided in the FY 2005 National Defense Authorization Act that expanded the Reserve health benefits. At your direction, the Department is implementing the new TRICARE Reserve benefits that will ensure the individual medical readiness of members of the Guard and Reserve, and contribute to the maintenance of an effective Air Force Reserve force. The Department has made permanent their early access to TRICARE upon notification of call-up and their continued access to TRICARE for six months following active duty service for both individuals and their families. We are implementing the TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) coverage for Air Force Reserve personnel and their families who meet the requirements established in law. TRS is a premium-based healthcare plan available for purchase by certain eligible members of the National Guard and Reserves who have been activated for a contingency operation since September 11, 2001. This program will serve as an important bridge for all Reserve and Guard members as they move back to other employment and the utilization of the private health care market. We believe that the design of TRS in a manner that supports retention and expands health benefits is creative and should be studied before any futher adjustments are contemplated.

A change in the Joint Federal Regulation Travel policy authorized expenses for retained lodging for a member who takes leave during a TDY contingency deployment to be paid

as a reimbursable expense. This change became effective 24 February 2004, and has since alleviated the personal and financial hardship deployed reservists experience with regard to retaining lodging and losing per diem while taking leave.

FLEET MODERNIZATION

F-16 Fighting Falcon

Air Combat Command and AFRC are upgrading the F-16 Block 25/30/32 in all core combat areas by installing Global Positioning System (GPS) navigation system, Night Vision Imaging System (NVIS) and NVIS compatible aircraft lighting, Situational Awareness Data Link (SADL), Target Pod integration, GPS steered "smart weapons", an integrated Electronics Suite, Pylon Integrated Dispenser System (PIDS), Digital Terrain System (DTS), and the ALE-50 (towed decoy system). The acquisition of the Litening Advanced targeting pod (ATP) marked the greatest jump in combat capability for AFRC F-16s in years. At the conclusion of the Persian Gulf War, it became apparent that the ability to employ precision-guided munitions, specifically laser-guided bombs, would be a requirement for involvement in future conflicts. Litening affords the capability to employ precisely targeted Laser Guided Bombs (LGBs) effectively in both day and night operations, any time at any place. This capability allows AFRC F-16s to fulfill any mission tasking requiring a self-designating, targeting-pod platform, providing needed relief for heavily tasked active-duty units. These improvements, and recent funding to upgrade all Litening pods to the latest version (Litening AT), have put AFRC F-16s at the leading edge of combat capability. The combination of these upgrades are unavailable in any other combat aircraft and make the Block 25/30/32 F-16 the most versatile combat asset available to a theater commander.

Tremendous work has been done to keep the Block 25/30/32 F-16 employable in today's complex and demanding combat environment. This success has been the result of far-sighted planning that has capitalized on emerging commercial and military technology to provide specific capabilities that were projected to be critical. That planning and vision must continue if the F-16 is to remain useable as the largest single community of aircraft in America's fighter force. Older model Block 25/30/32 F-16 aircraft require structural improvements to guarantee that they will last as long as they are needed. They also require data processor and wiring system upgrades in order to support employment of more sophisticated precision attack weapons. These models must have improved pilot displays to integrate and present the large volumes of data now provided to the cockpit. Additional capabilities are needed to eliminate fratricide and allow weapons employment at increased range, day or night and in all weather conditions. They must also be equipped with significantly improved threat detection, threat identification, and threat engagement systems in order to meet the challenges of combat survival and employment for the next 20 years.

A/OA-10 Thunderbolt

There are five major programs over the next five years to ensure the A/OA-10 remains a viable part of the total Air Force. The first is increasing its precision engagement capabilities. The A-10 was designed for the Cold War and is the most effective Close Air Support (CAS) anti-armor platform in the USAF, as demonstrated during the Persian Gulf War. Unfortunately, its systems have not kept pace with modern tactics as was proven during Operation Allied Force. Until the Litening II Advanced Targeting Pod (ATP) was integrated, the AGM- 65 (Maverick) was the only precision-guided weapon

carried on the A-10. The integration method used to employ the targeting, however, was an interim measure and the A-10 still lacks a permanent, sustainable means of integrating the Litening pod into its avionics. Additionally, there has been a critical need for a datalink to help identify friendly troops and vehicles, which will reduce fratricide. There has been a datalink solution available for the A-10 since 1996 and is currently employed on the F-16. Newer weapons are being added to the Air Force inventory regularly, but the current avionics and computer structure limits the deployment of these weapons on the A-10. The Precision Engagement (PE) and Suite 3 programs will help correct this limitation, but the AFR does not expect to see PE installed until FY08 and it still does not include a datalink. Next, critical systems on the engines are causing lost sorties and increased maintenance activity. Several design changes to the Accessory Gearbox will extend its useful life and reduce the existing maintenance expense associated with the high removal rate. The other two programs increase the navigation accuracy and the overall capability of the fire control computer, both increasing the weapons system's overall effectiveness.

Looking to the future, there is a requirement for a training package of 30 PRC-112B/C survival radios for 10th Air Force fighter, rescue, and special operations units. While more capable, these radios are also more demanding to operate and additional units are needed to ensure the aircrews are fully proficient in their operation.

One of the A-10 challenges is money for upgrade in the area of high threat survivability. Previous efforts focused on an accurate missile warning system and effective, modern flares; however, a new preemptive covert flare system may satisfy the requirement. The A-10 can leverage the work done on the F-16 Radar Warning Receiver and C-130 towed

decoy development programs to achieve a cost-effective capability. The A/OA-10 has a thrust deficiency in its operational environment. As taskings evolved, commanders have had to reduce fuel loads, limit take-off times to early morning hours and refuse taskings that increase gross weights to unsupportable limits. Forty-five AFRC A/OA-10s need upgraded structures and engines (two engines per aircraft plus five spares for a total of 95 engines).

B-52 Stratofortress

In the next five years, several major programs will be introduced to increase the capabilities of the B-52 aircraft. Included here are programs such as a Crash Survivable Flight Data Recorder and a Standard Flight Data Recorder, upgrades to the current Electro-Optical Viewing System, Chaff and Flare Improvements, and improvements to cockpit lighting and crew escape systems to allow use of Night Vision Goggles. Enhancements to the AFRC B-52 fleet currently under consideration are:

- Visual clearance of the target area in support of other conventional munitions employment
- Self-designation of targets, eliminating the current need for support aircraft to accomplish this role
- Target coordinate updates to JDAM and WCMD, improving accuracy
- Bomb Damage Assessment of targets

In order to continue the viability of the B-52, several improvements and modifications are necessary. Although the aircraft has been extensively modified since its entry into the fleet, the advent of precision guided munitions and the increased use of the B-52 in conventional and Operations Other Than War (OOTW) operation require additional

avionics modernization and changes to the weapons capabilities such as the Avionics Midlife Improvement, Conventional Enhancement Modification (CEM), and the Integrated Conventional Stores Management System (ICSMS). Changes in the threat environment are also driving modifications to the defensive suite including Situational Awareness Defense Improvement and the Electronic Counter Measures Improvement (ECMI).

Recently, the B-52 began using the Litening Advanced Targeting Pod to locate targets and employ precision weapons. The targeting pod interface has adapted equipment from an obsolete system. The system works but requires an updated system to take full advantage of the targeting pod capability.

Like the A-10, it also requires a datalink to help reduce fratricide as its mission changes to employ ordinance closer and closer to friendly forces. The Litening pod continues to see incremental improvements but needs emphasis on higher resolution sensors and a more powerful, yet eye-safe laser, to accommodate the extremely high employment altitudes (over 40,000 feet) of the B-52.

The B-52 was originally designed to strike targets across the globe from launch in the United States. This capability is being repeatedly demonstrated, but the need for real time targeting information and immediate reaction to strike location changes is needed. Multiple modifications are addressing these needs. These integrated advanced communications systems will enhance the B-52 capability to launch and modify target locations while airborne. Other communications improvements are the Global Air Traffic Management (GATM) Phase 1, an improved ARC-210, the KY-100 Secure Voice, and a GPS-TACAN Replacement System (TRS).

As can be expected with an airframe of the age of the B-52, much must be done to enhance its reliability and replace older, less reliable or failing hardware. These include a Fuel Enrichment Valve Modification, Engine Oil System Package, and an Engine Accessories Upgrade, all to increase the longevity of the airframe.

MC-130H Talon

In 2006, AFRC and Air Force Special Operations Command will face a significant decision point on whether on not to retire the Talon I. This largely depends on the determination of the upcoming SOF Tanker Requirement Study. Additionally, the MC-130H Talon II aircraft will be modified to air refuel helicopters. The Air Force CV-22 is being developed to replace the entire MH-53J Pave Low fleet, and the MC-130E Combat Talon l. The CV-22 program has been plagued with problems and delays and has an uncertain future. Ultimately, supply and demand will impact willingness and ability to pay for costly upgrades along with unforeseeable expenses required to sustain an aging weapons system.

HC-130P/N Hercules

Over the next five years, there will be primarily sustainability modifications to the weapons systems to allow it to maintain compatibility with the remainder of the C-130 fleet. In order to maintain currency with the active duty fleet, AFRC will accelerate the installation of the APN-241 as a replacement for the APN-59. Additionally, AFRC will receive two aircraft modified from the 'E' configuration to the Search and Rescue configuration. All AFRC assets will be upgraded to provide Night Vision Imaging System (NVIS) mission capability for C-130 combat rescue aircraft.

HH-60G Pave Hawk

Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) Mission Area modernization strategy currently focuses on resolving critical weapon system capability shortfalls and deficiencies that pertain to the Combat Air Force's Combat Identification, Data Links, Night / All-Weather Capability, Threat Countermeasures, Sustainability, Expeditionary Operations, and Para rescue modernization efforts. Since the CAF's CSAR forces have several critical capability shortfalls that impact their ability to effectively accomplish their primary mission tasks today, most CSAR modernization programs/initiatives are concentrated in the near-term (FY00-06). These are programs that:

- Improve capability to pinpoint location and authenticate identity of downed aircrew members/isolated personnel
- Provide line-of-sight and over-the-horizon high speed LPI/D data link capabilities for improving battle space/situational awareness
- Improve Command and Control capability to rapidly respond to "isolating" incidents and efficiently/effectively task limited assets
- Improve capability to conduct rescue/recovery operations at night, in other low illumination conditions, and in all but the most severe weather conditions
- Provide warning and countermeasure capabilities against RF/IR/EO/DE threats
- Enhance availability, reliability, maintainability, and sustainability of aircraft weapon systems

WC/C-130J Hercules

The current fleet is being replaced with new WC-130J models. This replacement allows for longer range and ensures weather reconnaissance capability well into the next decade.

Once conversion is complete, the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron will consist of 10 WC-130J's. Presently, there are ten WC-130J models at Keesler AFB, MS undergoing Qualification Test and Evaluation (QT&E). Deliveries were based on the resolution of deficiencies identified in test and will impact the start of operational testing and the achievement of Interim Operational Capability (IOC). Major deficiencies include: propellers (durability/supportability) and radar tilt and start up attenuation errors. AFRC continues to work with the manufacturer to resolve the QT&E documented deficiencies.

C-5 Galaxy

Over the next four years, there will be primarily sustainability modifications to the weapons systems to allow the C-5 to continue as the backbone of the airlift community. Several major modifications will be performed on the engines to increase reliability and maintainability. Additionally, the remainder of the fleet will receive the avionics modernization that replaces cockpit displays while upgrading critical navigational and communications equipment. Also, consideration is being made to install Aircraft Defensive Systems on C-5A aircraft. Installation of Aircraft Defensive Systems will increase the survivability of the C-5A in hostile situations.

C-17 Globemaster

In the summer of fiscal year 2005, the first AFRC Unit Equipped C-17 squadron will stand up at March AFB. This new squadron will enhance the mobility capabilities for the United States military in peacetime and in conflict by rapid strategic delivery of troops and all type of cargo while improving the ability of the total airlift system to fulfill the worldwide air mobility requirements.

C-141 Starlifter

For the past 31 years, the C-141 has been the backbone of mobility for the United States military in peacetime and in conflict. In September 2004 the C-141 retired from the active-duty Air Force; however, Air Force Reserve Command will continue the proud heritage of this mobility workhorse and will fly the C-141 through the third quarter of fiscal year 2006. AFRC remains focused in flying the mission of the C-141 and looks to the future in transitioning to a new mission aircraft.

C-130 Hercules

AFRC has 127 C-130s including the E, H, J and N/P models. The Mobility Air Forces (MAF) currently operate the world's best theater airlift aircraft, the C-130, and it will continue in service through 2020. In order to continue to meet the Air Force's combat delivery requirements through the next 17 years, aircraft not being replaced by the C-130J will become part of the C-130X Program. Phase 1, Avionics Modernization Program (AMP) program includes a comprehensive cockpit modernization by replacing aging, unreliable equipment and adding additional equipment necessary to meet Nav/Safety and GATM requirements. Together, C-130J and C-130X modernization initiatives reduce the number of aircraft variants from 20 to two core variants, which will significantly reduce the support footprint and increase the capability of the C-130 fleet. The modernization of our C-130 forces strengthens our ability to ensure the success of our war fighting commanders and lays the foundation for tomorrow's readiness.

KC-135E/R Stratotanker

One of Air Force Reserve Command's most challenging modernization issues concerns our unit-equipped KC-135s. Eight of the nine air refueling squadrons are equipped with

the KC-135R, while the remaining one squadron is equipped with KC-135Es. The KC-135E, commonly referred to as the E-model, has engines that were recovered from retiring airliners. This conversion, which was accomplished in the early- to mid-1980s, was intended as an interim solution to provide improvement in capability while awaiting conversion to the R-model with its new, high-bypass, turbofan engines and other modifications. The final KC-135E squadron is currently transitioning to the KC-135R/T Model aircraft which is scheduled to be completed in FY05.

The ability to conduct the air-refueling mission has been stressed in recent years. Although Total Force contributions have enabled success in previous air campaigns, shortfalls exist to meet the requirements of our National Military Strategy. Air Mobility Command's (AMC) Tanker Requirements Study-2005 (TRS-05) identifies a shortfall in the number of tanker aircraft and aircrews needed to meet global refueling requirements in the year 2005. There is currently a shortage of KC-135 crews and maintenance personnel. Additionally, the number of KC-135 aircraft available to perform the mission has decreased in recent years due to an increase in depot-possessed aircraft with a decrease in mission capable (MC) rates.

I would like to close by offering my sincere thanks to each member of this Committee for your continued support and interest in the quality of life of each Air Force Reservist. The pay increases and added benefits of the last few years have helped us through a significant and unprecedented time of higher operations tempo. This is my first opportunity to represent these fine young men and women as the Chief of Air Force Reserve, and I know that we are on the right path in establishing a stronger, more

focused, force. It is a force no longer in Reserve, but integrated into every mission of the Air Force.