

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
PRESENTATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DEFENSE
UNITED STATES SENATE

SUBJECT: FISCAL YEAR 2008 AIR FORCE RESERVE ISSUES

STATEMENT OF: LIEUTENANT GENERAL JOHN A. BRADLEY
CHIEF OF THE AIR FORCE RESERVE

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UNITED STATES SENATE

Mr. Chairman, and distinguished members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today and I certainly want to thank you for your continued support of the Air Force Reserve. Today our country depends on the Reserve Components to an extent unprecedented in history. The men and women of the Air Force Reserve are making a significant impact to the joint warfighting capability of our nation's defense. The Air Force Reserve is proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our Total Force partners as we jointly execute the Global War on Terror (GWOT).

For over sixteen years the Air Force has been engaged in combat and the Air Force Reserve has been an integral part of our nation's combat efforts. Our participation has demanded sacrifices on the part of our families, employers and reservists themselves yet we remain dedicated and committed to the same priorities as the Regular Air Force: winning the GWOT; developing and caring for our Airmen; and recapitalizing and modernizing our aging aircraft and equipment.

As we fight the war on terrorism and implement our transformation initiatives we are faced with challenges that could adversely impact our overall combat capability. While we are ready today, I stress to you the urgent need to ensure we continue to be so. Readiness is the strong suit of the total Air Force and it is critical to ensure our combat capability is preserved during our transformational efforts and recapitalization of our fleets.

GWOT Mission Contributions

I am proud to say your Air Force Reserve is playing a vital role in the GWOT. We have flown over 104,850 sorties logging more than 448,202 hours of flying time all in support of the GWOT. The command supported the GWOT in most weapons systems, with crews both mobilized and performing volunteer tours. Our C-130 units maximized their mobilization authority, with the final units demobilizing at the end of fiscal year (FY) 2006. They continue to support the war effort in volunteer status, having already participated in the area of responsibility (AOR) a year longer than originally requested or envisioned. Our strategic airlift community stepped up with large numbers of volunteers providing essential support to the Combatant Commanders. In August 2006, we had 100 C-17 and C-5 crews on long term active duty orders in support of the GWOT. Twenty-two Reserve KC-10 crews have been on active duty orders supporting the airbridge and other aerial refueling requirements. Our Reserve A-10s have also been very heavily involved in AOR deployments. Although Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) and Total Force Integration (TFI) changes across the command disrupt our Reservists' daily lives, the Air Force Reserve remains a strong partner in the total force, and will be until the job is done.

Developing and Caring for Our Airmen

The backbone of the Air Force Reserve is our people because they enable our mission accomplishment. These Citizen Airmen comprised of traditional unit reservists, individual mobilization augmentees (IMAs), air reserve technicians (ARTs), active guard and reserve (AGRs) and civilians, continue to dedicate themselves to protecting the freedoms and security of the American people. The operations tempo to meet the

requirements of the Combatant Commanders remains high and is not expected to decline significantly in the near future. The coming years bring increased opportunities and greater challenges for our dedicated Airmen. The implementation of BRAC, Total Force Integration, and personnel cuts directed in the Air Force Transformation Flight Plan, may all have a negative impact on our recruiting and retention. Finding Airmen to fill our ranks may become increasingly challenging as we implement these initiatives. Similarly, retaining our highly trained Citizen Airmen will become more critical than ever.

Our People: Mobilization vs. Volunteerism

Our Reservists participate in the full spectrum of operations around the world at unprecedented rates. A key metric that reflects the operations tempo is the number of days our Reserve aircrew members perform military duty. The average number of duty days our aircrew members serve has increased three-fold since the beginning of the GWOT.

Having maximized the use of the President's Partial Mobilization Authority in some mission areas, the Air Force Reserve relies more heavily on volunteerism versus significant additional mobilization to meet the continuing Air Force requirements. Several critical operational units and military functional areas must have volunteers to meet ongoing mission requirements because they have completed their 24-month mobilization authority. These include C-130, MC-130, B-52, HH-60, HC-130, E-3 AWACS, and Security Forces. During calendar year (CY) 2006, the Air Force Reserve had 2,702 mobilizations and another 9,866 volunteer tours. As CY 2006 closed, the Air Force Reserve had 388 Reservists mobilized and 2,308 volunteers supporting the

GWOT. We expect this mix to become increasingly volunteer-based as combat operations continue.

The key to increasing volunteerism and enabling us to bring more to the fight is flexibility. To eliminate barriers to volunteerism, the Air Force Reserve has several ongoing initiatives to better match volunteers' desires and skill sets to the Combatant Commanders mission requirements. We must have the core capability to always match the **right** person to the **right** job at the **right** time. Reservists must balance the needs of their civilian employers, their families, and their obligation to the military. We are incredibly fortunate to have reservists who continue to volunteer and who put on the uniform for months at a time. Facilitating the reservists' ability to volunteer provides more control for the military member, their family, employer and commander. In turn, this predictability allows more advanced planning, lessens disruptions, and ultimately, enables more volunteer opportunities.

Base Realignment and Closure

The 2005 BRAC had a significant impact to the Air Force Reserve. BRAC directed the realignment of seven wings and the closure of one wing, General Billy Mitchell Field, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. To our Reserve Airmen, a base realignment, in many cases, is essentially a closure. When BRAC recommended the realignment of our wing at Naval Air Station New Orleans, our airplanes were distributed to Barksdale AFB, Louisiana and Whiteman AFB, Missouri, while the Expeditionary Combat Support was sent to Buckley AFB, Colorado. In another example, BRAC recommended realigning our wing at Selfridge ANGB, Michigan and directs the manpower be moved to

MacDill AFB, Florida to associate with the Regular Air Force. The commute from New Orleans to Denver and Selfridge to Tampa are challenging for even the most dedicated reservist, considering we do not have the authority to PCS (permanent change of station) personnel or pay for IDT (inactive duty training) travel. These are just a few examples of how base realignments impact our reservists. In the post-BRAC environment, we continually strive to retain the experience of our highly trained personnel. We are working closely with the Air Force and the Office of the Secretary of Defense on initiatives which encourage those impacted by BRAC decisions to continue serving their nation.

New Mission Areas (Total Force Integration)

Sharing the tip of the total force integration spear, our focus is on maximizing warfighter effects by taking on new and emerging missions that are consistent with Reserve participation. Reachback capabilities enable Reserve forces to train for and execute operational missions supporting the Combatant Commander from home station. In many cases, this eliminates the need for deployments. The Associate Unit construct will see growth in emerging operational missions such as: Unmanned Aerial Systems, Space and Information Operations, Air Operations Centers, Battlefield Airmen and Contingency Response Groups. The Active/Air Reserve Components mix must keep pace with emerging missions to allow the Air Force to continue operating seamlessly as a Total Force. This concurrent development will provide greater efficiency in peacetime and increased capability in wartime.

The Air Force Reserve continues to transform into a full spectrum force for the 21st Century by integrating across all roles and missions throughout the Air, Space and Cyberspace domains. Our roles and missions are mirror images of the Regular Component. These new mission areas provide additional opportunities for our Reservists to bring their expertise to the warfighting effort. Bringing Air Force front line weapon systems to the Reserve allows force unification at both the strategic and tactical levels and builds flexibility for a more vibrant and viable Air Force team -- we train together, work together, and fight together; and that's the way it should be.

Shaping the Reserve Force

As an equal partner developing the Air Force Transformation Flight Plan, the Air Force Reserve plans to realign resources to transform to a more lethal, more agile, streamlined force with increased emphasis on the warfighter. In this process, we are eliminating redundancies and streamlining organizations, creating a more capable force of military, civilians, and contractors while freeing up resources for Total Force recapitalization.

The Air Force Reserve programmed a reduction of nearly 7,700 manpower authorizations beginning in FY 2008. These actions affect all categories of Air Force Reservists; IMAs, TRs, ARTs, AGRs and civilians. Over the FYDP the Air Force Reserve is planning a reduction from 74,900 authorized personnel in FY 2007 to an end strength of 67,800 personnel at the end of FY 2011.

While the Air Force Transformation Flight Plan directed manpower reductions, the Air Force Reserve was given latitude to take these reductions in a way that

minimizes the impact to our wartime mission. Where mission requirements still exist, the experience of our Reservists will be maintained by transitioning members from the Selected Reserve into the Participating Individual Ready Reserve.

Recruiting and Retention

The Air Force Reserve met its recruiting, retention, and end-strength goals in FY 2006 and is on track to meet all these same goals in FY 2007. I am proud of the fact our Reservists contribute directly to the warfighting effort every day. When our Reserve Airmen engage in operations that employ their skills and training, there is a sense of reward and satisfaction that is not quantifiable. I attribute much of the success of our recruiting and retention to the meaningful participation of our Airmen.

That being said, the 10 percent reduction in personnel planned over the future years defense program (FYDP), coupled with the impact of BRAC initiatives, may present significant future recruiting and retention challenges for the Air Force Reserve. With personnel reductions beginning in FY 2008 and the realignment and closure of Reserve installations due to BRAC and Total Force Integration, approximately 20 percent of our force will be directly impacted through new and emerging missions, and mission adjustments to satisfy Air Force requirements. With the Regular Air Force personnel reductions already underway, there is an even smaller active force from which to draw qualified recruits. In light of all these changes, we expect the recruiting and retention environment will be turbulent, dynamic and challenging.

Unlike the Regular Air Force, the Air Force Reserve does not have an assignment capability with command-leveling mechanisms that assist in the smooth

transition of forces from drawdown organizations into expanding organizations. In drawdown organizations, our focus is on maintaining mission capability until the last day of operations, while also retaining as much of the force as possible and placing them in other Air Force Reserve organizations. To accomplish this, we need to employ force management initiatives that provide our affected units with options to retain our highly trained personnel.

This contrasts greatly with organizations gaining new missions and/or authorizations. It's important to remember, absent a pipeline assignment system, our Citizen Airmen are primarily a local force, living and working in the local community. Air Force Reserve Command must now recruit in new locations and for new missions, effectively increasing our recruiting requirements. We may face recruiting challenges, particularly when considering the availability of adequately qualified and trained personnel. As has always been the case, we will focus on maximizing prior service accessions. Regular Air Force reductions over the FYDP may provide some benefit to our recruiting efforts, but will not be the complete answer, since the Regular Air Force critical skills shortages closely match those in the Reserve. Other prior service+ individuals accessed by the Reserve will inevitably require extensive retraining which is costly. The bottom line is retaining highly trained individuals is paramount. Since 1993, Air Force prior service accessions have decreased 32 percent across the board. Only 9.5 percent of the officers departing the Regular Air Force join the Air Force Reserve, and of those, only 2.7 percent continue service to retirement. Retention must be considered from a total force perspective, and any force drawdown incentives should include Selected Reserve participation as a viable option. It is imperative legislation

does not include any language that provides a disincentive to Reserve Component affiliation. Likewise, any legislation regarding separation should encourage or incentivize continued active participation in the Reserve components. Experience is the strength of the Air Force Reserve, and recruiting and retaining our experienced members is the best investment the country can make because it ensures a force that is ready, and able to go to war at any time.

Recapitalizing and Modernizing Our Aging Aircraft and Equipment

The Air Force Reserve stands in total support of Secretary Wynne and General Moseley in their efforts to recapitalize and modernize our fleet. Weapon systems such as the KC-X, CSAR-X, Space Based Early Warning and Communications Satellites and Spacecraft, F-35 Lightning II, and the Next Generation Long Range Strike are critical to secure the advantage essential to combating future threats. The Air Force Reserve will directly benefit from this modernization since in many cases we fly the same equipment.

The AFR is assuming risk in Depot Programmed Equipment Maintenance (DPEM). Funding for DPEM in FY 2008 is 81 percent of total requirements, a level determined in coordination with the Air Force to be an acceptable level of risk. At this funding level, the anticipated impact is in the deferral of Programmed Depot Maintenance (PDM) for 9 aircraft and 14 engines.

One Tier of Readiness

We in the Air Force Reserve pride ourselves on our ability to respond to any global crisis within 72 hours. In many cases, including our response to natural

disasters, we respond within 24 hours. We train our Selected Reserve to the same standards as the active duty for a reason; we are one Air Force in the same fight. A single level of readiness in the Selected Reserve enables us to seamlessly operate side-by-side with the Regular Air Force and Air National Guard in the full spectrum of combat operations. As an equal partner in day-to-day combat operations, it is critical we remain ready, resourced, and relevant.

FY07 National Guard and Reserve Equipment

For the Air Force Reserve, the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA) is the lifeblood of our Reserve modernization. I appreciate the support provided in the 2007 NGREA. The money you provide makes a difference; increasing the capability and safety of our airmen, and ultimately the security of our nation. The fact is AFR NGREA procurement strategy fulfills shortfall equipment requirements. The items we purchase with NGREA are prioritized from the airmen in the field up to the Air Force Reserve Command Headquarters and vetted through the Air Staff. The cornerstone is innovation and the foundation is capabilities-based and has been for many years.

I am grateful for the National Guard and Reserve Equipment Account because it enables us to remain relevant to the fight. It is absolutely essential to the modernization of our weapon systems. In FY 2007, we received a total of \$35M in NGREA appropriations. A portion of those dollars is being used to modify all of our A-10 aircraft, enabling smart weapons employment and dramatically improving the precision with which we provide close air support to our joint and coalition partners. Another portion of

NGREA is being used to procure defensive systems for nine of our C-5A aircraft, providing much needed protection from infrared threats and increasing the safety and security of our strategic airlift crews. These are just a few examples of how NGREA is helping us modernize our weapon systems during FY 2007.

While NGREA dollars enable us to modernize our critical warfighting equipment, the challenge is the \$35M dollars in NGREA in 2007 only allows for 4.8 percent of our planned modernization. I genuinely appreciate the appropriation because we put every dollar received toward combat capability. Continued Congressional support is critical to ensure we can modernize our force with the necessary upgrades and retain the technological edge we've enjoyed in the past.

Transforming and Modernizing the Air Force Reserve

Equipment modernization is our key to readiness. The Air Force is transitioning to a capabilities-based force structure and the combination of aging and heavily used equipment requires across-the-board recapitalization. The United States military is increasingly dependent on the Reserve to conduct operational and support missions around the globe. Effective modernization of Reserve assets is vital to remaining a relevant and capable combat ready force. The Air Force recognizes this fact and has made significant improvement in modernizing and equipping the Reserve, yet the reality of fiscal constraints still results in accepting risk in our modernization and equipage programs. Funding our modernization enhances availability, reliability, maintainability, and sustainability of aircraft weapon systems and strengthens our ability to ensure the

success of our warfighting commanders while laying the foundation for tomorrow's readiness.

Reconstitution

With a much higher operations tempo over the past five years, our equipment is aging and wearing out at much faster than projected rates. Reconstitution planning is a process to restore units to their full combat capability in a short period of time. The GWOT is having a significant and long-term impact on the readiness of our Air Force Reserve units to train personnel and conduct missions. The goal must be to bring our people and equipment back up to full warfighting capability.

The rotational nature of our units precludes shipping equipment and vehicles back and forth due to cost and time-constraints, therefore, equipment is left in the AOR to allow quick transition of personnel and mission effectiveness. However, this impacts the readiness of our forces, which return to the United States without the same equipment they deployed with. We continue to address these equipment shortfalls with the help of the Air Force, the Administration, and Congress, but challenges remain.

Investments in new missions and other higher priorities continue to impact our ability to recapitalize our built infrastructure. Our recapitalization rate over the FYDP averages 151 years, falling far short of the 67-year goal. Our \$194M MILCON FYDP includes \$22M in recapitalization projects, the remaining dedicated to new missions or correcting existing deficiencies. Further challenging our ability to meet mission needs are potential shortfalls in BRAC funding; further delays in BRAC facility funding may jeopardize our ability to meet statutory deadlines for BRAC execution.

Closing

On behalf of all Air Force Reservists, I thank you for your continued interest and strong support of our readiness and combat capability. The Air Force Reserve is facing the challenges of the GWOT, BRAC, the Air Force Transformation Flight Plan, recapitalization, and modernization head on. While we maintain our heritage of providing a strategic reserve capability, today and into the future we are your operational warfighting Reserve, bringing a lethal, agile, combat hardened and ready force to the Combatant Commanders in the daily execution of the long war. We are immensely proud of the fact we provide the world's best mutual support to the United States Air Force and our joint warfighting partners.