

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
PRESENTATION TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES SENATE

SUBJECT: AIR FORCE PERSONNEL OVERVIEW

STATEMENT OF: LIEUTENANT GENERAL ROGER A. BRADY
DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, MANPOWER AND PERSONNEL
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED
BY THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES SENATE

Introduction

Mr. Chairman, distinguished Committee Members, thank you for the opportunity to be here today. Our Airmen have been continuously deployed and globally engaged in combat missions for more than sixteen straight years—since the first F-15 touched down in Saudi Arabia in August 1990. Today, Airmen are fully engaged in the interdependent joint fight and stand prepared for rapid response and conflict across the globe.

Our priorities are clear: winning the Global War on Terror (GWOT) and preparing for the next war; developing and caring for our Airmen to maintain our competitive advantage; and modernizing and recapitalizing our aircraft and equipment to meet 21st century challenges. As you know, we have been involved in a critical recapitalization and modernization effort for our aging air and space force. Budgetary pressures forced difficult choices to ensure that the Air Force would maintain the right balance across our personnel, infrastructure, readiness and investment portfolios.

The Air Force undertook significant personnel reductions to generate funds to reprogram toward systems recapitalization and modernization, congruent with our three key mission priorities. While this has been difficult, it has also provided the impetus for a hard look at our business processes and organizational structure. At the same time, we have placed equal emphasis on improving the education, training, and care of our Airmen.

Force Shaping

When the Air Force began to develop a long-term force structure plan, we started with divestment of legacy aircraft. While we have achieved some success, significant investment gaps remain. Moreover, the costs of personnel continue to rise. Personnel costs have increased significantly in the past decade. In early 2006, budget guidance directed additional end strength

reductions over the FYDP. We approached force shaping with two priorities. First, the reduction will result in a balanced force. We will increase manning in stressed career fields and expand opportunities for career development and training. Secondly, we will optimize voluntary actions before implementing involuntary reduction programs. Our goal is a lean, more capable, more lethal Air Force, organized, trained and equipped for our global, expeditionary mission.

We tailored our personnel mix to the new security environment by using a variety of force shaping tools across the personnel inventory. We authorized implementation of annual Force Shaping Boards (FSBs) for officers with less than 5 years of service. The FY06 FSB identified officers in overage career fields for separation while balancing career fields and officer commissioned year groups. Prior to the board, eligible officers were offered voluntary options to transition to other forms of service in and out of the Air Force. The Air Force also waived most Active Duty Service Commitments (ADSC) to allow officers to separate early. In addition, the Air Force is offering Voluntary Separation Pay to officers in overage career fields who have 6 to 12 years of service. The expanded authority granted in the FY07 National Defense Authorization Act gives us additional flexibility which we appreciate. We also convened a Selective Early Retirement Board to identify retirement-eligible officers for early retirement. Again, our goal was to shape the force by using a variety of tools across the officer force rather than have only one segment bear the brunt of reduction activity.

To achieve the required reductions of enlisted Airmen, the Air Force instituted a date of separation rollback for personnel with limitations on their assignment or enlistment eligibility. We also offered a limited number of ADSC waivers for eligible members in overage career fields. These initiatives to shape the enlisted force join the tools already in place: Career Job Reservations, reduction in accessions, and the Non-Commissioned Officer Retraining Program.

These reductions are difficult but necessary to ensure the Air Force maintains the right size and mix of forces to meet the fiscal and global challenges of today and tomorrow.

Our Airman & Family Readiness Flights stand ready to assist our Airmen and their families with the transition back to the civilian community. Preparation counseling provides information and referral for benefits, services, and resources. Assistance includes individual transition plans, federal and private employment resources and recruiting events, resume preparation, and electronic job searches. Our partnership with the Departments of Labor and Veterans Affairs also provide for seamless assistance for VA benefits claims, disability assistance and state employment assistance.

Personnel Services Delivery

To achieve the Secretary of Defense's objective to shift resources "from bureaucracy to battlefield," we are overhauling Air Force personnel services. Our Total Force (Active Duty, Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard, and Civilian) Personnel Services Delivery initiative dramatically modernizes the processes, organizations and technologies through which the Air Force supports our Airmen and their commanders.

Our goal is to deliver higher-quality personnel services with greater access, speed, accuracy, reliability and efficiency. The Air Force plans to program the resulting manpower savings to other compelling needs over the next six years. This initiative enhances our ability to acquire, train, educate, deliver, employ and empower Airmen with the needed skills, knowledge and experience to accomplish Air Force missions.

National Security Personnel System (NSPS)

Our civilian workforce is undergoing a significant transformation with implementation of the DoD National Security Personnel System. NSPS is a simplified, more flexible civilian personnel management system that improves the way we hire, assign, compensate, and reward our civilian employees. This modern management system enhances the Air Force's responsiveness to the national security environment, preserves employee protections and benefits, and maintains the core values of the civil service.

NSPS design and development has been a broad-based, participative process that included employees, supervisors and managers, unions, employee advocacy groups and various public interest groups. As of 18 March 2007, the Air Force has implemented the human resource and performance management provisions for 38,918 eligible non-bargaining unit employees.

NSPS is the most comprehensive new federal personnel management system in more than 50 years, and it's a key component in the DoD's achievement of a performance-based, results-oriented Total Force.

Recruiting

As we prepare for an uncertain future, we are transforming the force to ensure we have the right sized and shaped force to meet emerging global threats with joint and battle trained Airmen. We are becoming a smaller force, with a critical need for specific skills. We recruit, train and educate our Airmen for the complex, multinational, and interagency operations of today, and with an eye on tomorrow.

Our recruiting force has met our recruiting mission through great persistence and dedication. From 2001 through 2006, we had a recruiting mission of 158,533 and accessed 160,603 for 101% of mission accomplishment. For 2007, the active duty mission requirement is 27,800 and 6,486 new Airman have accessed up to this point with 12,122 waiting to enter Basic

Military Training. We're on track to meet our goals. To date for FY07, we've accessed 100% of our active duty goal, and accessed 101% and 104% of our Reserve and Guard accession goals, respectively.

Our Recruiting Service continues to find the right person, for the right job, at the right time and this is ever evident in our most critical warfighter skills. Recruiting Service has filled every requirement for Combat Controller (CCT), Pararescue (PJ), Tactical Air Control Party (TACP), Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape (SERE), and Linguist since 2001. This has been accomplished through hard work and the significant assistance of the Congress. These individuals are offered an Initial Enlistment Bonus (IEB) ranging from \$3K to \$12K, depending on the job and length of enlistment.

The majority of our officer programs have met with mission success, but medical recruiting and retention remain a challenge. We are exploring options such as accession bonuses and enhanced college loan repayment programs, to better attract healthcare professionals.

Retention

In FY07, we continued to manage and shape the force across and within skill sets to meet Air Force needs. Maintaining retention at acceptable levels through targeted retention programs such as Critical Skills Retention Bonus, Selective Re-enlistment Bonus, Initial Enlistment Bonus and Special and Incentive pays continues to be critical to this effort. Force shaping ensured active duty end strength met our long-term requirements. This effort is successful in no small measure because of your budgetary support.

Active duty Air Force and ANG met their overall officer and enlisted retention goals for FY06. The AF Reserve met its officer retention goal but fell slightly short of its enlisted

retention goal by 0.8%, attaining 99.2% of its goal. Even with these successes, some enlisted specialties in the active Air Force such as Air Traffic Control, Linguist, and Survival Evasion Resistance and Escape, for example did not achieve their overall retention goal. We will continue to offer these specialties a myriad of bonuses in addition to enhanced promotion opportunity.

Our most critical warfighting skills require a special retention focus to maintain combat capability due to critical manning and increased operations tempo demands placed on career fields including Pararescue, Combat Control, and Explosive Ordnance Disposal. Your budgetary support for these retention programs is critical to effectively manage the force and retain needed warfighting capability. Critical Skills Retention Bonus programs are judiciously and effectively targeted to provide the most return-on-investment in both dollars and capability.

Our warfighting Airmen are committed to serving, including those experiencing high deployment rates. Combatant Commander requirements and the GWOT place high demands on pilots, intelligence, maintenance, civil engineers, and communication officers as well as enlisted Airmen in aerospace maintenance, supply, transportation, munitions and weapons, fire protection, services, and security forces. Despite an increased operations tempo and deployment rate, retention statistics for these career fields mirror the Air Force average. A key element for our overall success in retention is our ability to continue to offer bonuses and incentives where we have traditionally experienced shortfalls.

Force Development

Spanning six decades of Air Force history, particularly over the past sixteen years, our Airmen have proven themselves as the global first responders in times of crisis – taking action anytime, anywhere. The foundation for this well-deserved reputation is the quality and

frequency of the training and education we provide. Our Air Force training initiatives continue to evolve, improving our ability to develop and retain the world's best air, space and cyberspace warriors – expeditionary, knowledge-enabled, ethical, and prepared for the interdependent fight.

As part of our Air Force Transformation, we changed Air Force Basic Military Training (BMT) curriculum to stress an expeditionary mindset in all phases of training, providing Airmen with more expeditionary capability from day one. These changes are the most significant in BMT history. The Air Force basic training experience now mirrors the AEF cycle with pre-deployment, deployment and reconstitution phases. We emphasize basic war skills and practical application throughout BMT. Finally, we have added “Airman's Time,” mentoring sessions in which our veteran instructors share their real world experiences, relate daily training events to warrior and Airmanship qualities, and reinforce the Core Values expected of all Airmen.

We are moving beyond traditional Air Force and Joint warfighting skills development. Our educational programs provide increased opportunities for Airmen to receive focused cultural and language training, facilitating greater professional interaction, deeper understanding, and more effective operations.

The expanded instruction includes cultural awareness, regional affairs, and foreign language proficiency. All Air Force Academy cadets and Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) non-technical scholarship cadets will be required to take language courses. Additionally, both Academy and ROTC cadets have increased opportunities for Foreign Language and Area Studies degrees and have expanded Cultural Immersion and Foreign Exchange Programs. Our enlisted basic military training also will provide instruction on cultural sensitivity.

Once in the Air Force, each level of Officer and Enlisted professional military education (PME) provides additional cultural/regional instruction and some foreign language instruction, developing leaders who can articulate US policy and operate effectively in foreign settings. Furthermore, we will increase Developmental Educational opportunities for global skills, including overseas professional military education and the Olmstead Scholars Program. We will then vector these Airmen into Political-Military Affairs or Regional Affairs Strategist career tracks, maximizing America's return-on-investment.

Caring for Airmen

The Air Force is wisely shifting a portion of funding from manpower and base operating support to address our critical recapitalization requirements. However, we understand that to maintain combat capability we must continue to balance our modernization of our weapons systems with development of Airmen who are ready, willing, and able to employ them. To that end, we are finding innovative ways to transform our community support services and programs while avoiding unnecessary impacts to services delivered. One way we are transforming is through the headquarters realignment of Air Force Services from Logistics to Manpower and Personnel. This transition opens the door to increased efficiencies and a more seamless approach to customer service. We remain committed to ensure the needs of our Airmen and their families are met.

Taking care of our seriously wounded, injured or ill Airmen is a top priority. We continue to expand the Air Force Survivor Assistance and Palace HART Programs in an effort to provide the best possible individual service to these Airmen and their families. The heart of the Survivor Assistance Program is the Family Liaison Officer (FLO) who is assigned to each patient for the duration of their need. The FLO serves as a single point of contact between the

Airmen and the numerous helping agencies. Our FLOs provide a critical resource to deal with the unfamiliar routine of the recovery process and prevents the Airman from being lost in the bureaucracy.

Similarly, the Palace HART Program assigns a Community Readiness Coordinator (CRC) when a service member casualty notification is made. The CRC works closely with the FLO to ensure the combat related injured or ill service member and their family receives complete information and entitlements. Later, if the member is not returned to active duty, the Palace HART Program assists with federal employment, entitlements and benefits information, financial resources, family support, and more. The member is tracked monthly for five years after separation or retirement.

Our Fit to Fight program and food service operations are cornerstones of combat capability. Airmen who are well-fed and physically fit are healthier, think more clearly, handle more stress, and are better able to complete the mission despite reduced sleep and extended hours. This translates directly to increased combat capability from our most important weapon system—our people.

We are also focused on providing quality, available and affordable child and youth development programs to Airmen and their families through an extensive system of programs and services both on and off the installations. A recent national study highlighted the DoD child care program as leading the nation in quality standards and effective oversight. We are proud of the Air Force's contribution to this program and believe that our child care program is a critical factor in helping Airmen remain focused on the mission.

Our Airman and Family Readiness professionals are helping Airmen and their families adapt to the realities of life in an Expeditionary Air Force. They do this through personal and

family readiness counseling, personal financial management, Air Force Aid assistance, spouse career planning, and transition and relocation assistance. Experts in the Equal Opportunity and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response arenas help every Airman exercise positive and productive interpersonal relationships, in both professional and personal interactions. The Air Force is a family, and our clubs and recreation programs foster and strengthen those community bonds, and promote high morale and an esprit de corps vital to all our endeavors.

Additionally, we are equally committed to ensuring that all Airmen are well trained and provided with modern, safe and efficient equipment and facilities to complete their mission. We provide life-sustaining support, such as food service and lodging, to our troops in the field and essential community programs to our Airmen and their families back home. Through innovative systems and programs and the hard work of our dedicated personnel we continue to provide critical mission capability for our commanders and vital support for our members and their families.

Conclusion

Today's Airmen are performing at the high standards that have been our hallmark for as long as there have been American Airmen. Our Airmen are fully prepared and engaged today, and we must continue to invest to ensure tomorrow's air, space, and cyberspace dominance. We have taken prudent actions to ensure your Air Force remains the most respected air and space force in the world.

We appreciate your unfailing support to the men and women of our Air Force, and I look forward to your questions.