

United States Air Force



Testimony

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Army and Air Force National Guard and Reserve Component Equipment Posture

Statement of
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Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today and discuss the state of the Air Force Reserve.

The 21st Century security environment requires military services that are flexible -- capable of surging, refocusing, and continuously engaging without exhausting their resources and people. Moreover, the 21st Century fiscal environment is becoming ever-more constrained as threats by rising nations and pressing national interests compete for limited resources.

In this challenging environment, the Air Force Reserve has never been more relevant. Reserve Airmen continue to support our Nation's needs, providing superb operational capability around the globe. We have sustained this operational capability for nearly twenty years -- at high operations tempo for the past nine years. The Air Force Reserve is accomplishing this while still providing a cost-effective Tier 1 ready force to the Nation available for strategic surge or ongoing operations.

Speaking of ongoing operations, U.S. Air Force C-130 aircrews were among the first U.S. military to respond to the earthquake disaster in Haiti, on the ground in Port Au Prince within twenty-four hours of the earthquake. This quick response was not simply fortuitous, but the result of planning, preparedness, and readiness. This rapid-response capability is available 24/7, 365 days a year through OPERATION CORONET OAK.¹

Since 1977, the OPERATION CORONET OAK mission has been manned primarily by Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard crews who rotate every two weeks, year-round. Crews from the Regular Air Force now perform about 1/3 of the mission. These OPERATION CORONET OAK crews are postured to respond within three hours of notification to any crises requiring airlift support within the U.S. Southern Command Area of Responsibility (AOR).

¹ In addition to Haitian relief support through OPERATION CORONET OAK, Air Force Reserve ISR personnel provided exploitation support to assess the damage and focus relief while Air Force Reserve airlift crew saved lives with much needed medical, water and food supplies flown into Haiti. Air Force Reserve members in fact planned, commanded and exploited Global Hawk derived exploitation missions in order to provide situational awareness on infrastructure status and guide relief efforts during one of the worst earthquakes to hit Haiti on over 200 years. The professional expertise and capabilities of these seasoned Citizen Airmen demonstrates the flexibility and service inherent in the men and women of the Air Force Reserve as they shifted from supporting combat operations to humanitarian relief.

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This predictable-rotational mission allows Reservists to perform real-world operational missions and still meet their obligations to their full-time civilian employers. And, like Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) rotations, this operation leverages the Tier 1 readiness of Air Force Reserve Airmen in a way that works for the Combatant Commander, and the Reservist. Equally important, when Air Force Reserve Airmen are not training or performing an operational mission – they are not being paid; yet they remain ready to respond to any crisis within seventy-two hours should they be called upon. In this resource-constrained environment in which manpower costs are placing downward pressure on our budgets, I believe this full-time readiness/part-time cost is a great use of taxpayer dollars.

This next year brings new challenges and opportunities. Air Force Reserve Airmen are being integrated into a wider variety of missions across the full spectrum of Air Force operations. Indeed, the Department of Defense (DoD) is considering using Reservists from all services to perform missions utilizing their unique civilian skill sets.

The challenges we face are not unique to the Air Force Reserve or the Air Force as a whole. Each of the military services is being asked to shift capability and capacity across the spectrum of conflict--including irregular warfare--and to resource accordingly. Each has been asked to shift focus away from major weapon systems acquisitions and to the current fight.²

To do so, all three components of the Air Force must continually strive to improve the capability provided to the warfighter. Each service component must examine its existing business practices and explore new processes to make optimal use of personnel, platforms, and monetary resources. The Air Force Reserve is helping lead the way in improving Air Force capability as we approach Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 and beyond.

As the Nation looks for ways to strengthen its organizations and integrate all of the untapped resources it will need in facing the challenges of the 21st Century, we submit that a model by which ordinary people, dedicated to serving their country in ways that meet both their

² In Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, Reserve C-130 crews flew over 9,800 hours in FY 2009; Reserve F-16 and A-10 crews flew over 5,400 hours. The Air Force Reserve provides 24 crews and 12 fighter aircraft to USCENTCOM in their regularly scheduled rotations for the close air support mission.

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needs and the needs of the Nation, is already manifest in the US Air Force every day -- in the extraordinary Americans of the Air Force Reserve.

I'm proud to serve alongside these great Airmen and as Chief and Commander of the Air Force Reserve, I have made a promise to them that I will advocate on their behalf for resources and legislation that will allow them to serve more flexibly in peace and war with minimum impact to their civilian careers, their families and their employers. I will work to eliminate barriers to service, so that they can more easily serve in the status that meets their needs and those of the Air Force. And, I will work to efficiently and effectively manage our Air Force Reserve to meet the requirements of the Joint warfighter and the Nation.

Recruiting and Retention

Over the last nine years, the Air Force Reserve has exceeded its recruiting goals and is on track to meet FY 2010 recruiting and end-strength goals. Our success in great part has been due to the accessions of experienced Active Component members upon completion of their active duty commitments. Indeed, recruiting highly trained individuals is essential to lowering the training costs for the Air Force Reserve. For some of our most critical specialties, affiliation and retention bonuses have provided a greater return on investment versus recruiting non-prior service Airmen. However, due to lower Regular Air Force attrition rates, we no longer have the luxury of large numbers of experienced Airmen leaving Active service.

As the Air Force Reserve builds end strength to meet the needs of new and emerging missions, we are facing significant recruiting challenges. Not only will the Air Force Reserve have access to fewer prior-service Airmen; but, we will be competing with all other services for non-prior service (NPS) recruits. In fact, our non-prior service recruiting requirement has nearly doubled since the end of FY 2007. To improve our chances of success, we have increased the number of recruiters over the next two years.

Air Force Reserve retention is solid with positive gains in all categories in FY 2009, after rebounding from a slight annual drop from FY 2006-FY 2008. Both officer and enlisted retention are up; enlisted retention has returned to the FY 2006 rate. Career Airman retention is at its highest level in the last five years.

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Some of this success can be attributed to implementing several retention-focused initiatives such as developing a wing retention report card tool and General Officer emphasis on retention during base visits. With Air Force Reserve retention at its best for the last three years, this renewed focus on retention is expected to ensure that rates continue on a positive trend.

We can't take all the credit for this success. Congress has generously responded to our requests for assistance with improved benefits such as the Post-9/11 GI Bill, inactive duty training (IDT) travel pay, and affordable TRICARE for members of the Selected Reserve.

To date, under the conditions of the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefit, the Air Force Reserve has processed over 4,400 transferability requests impacting nearly 7,000 dependents. Under the Individual Duty Training travel pay benefit, more than 5,100 Air Force Reservists have received this benefit. This has helped us address those critical duty areas where we have staffing shortages.

Since October 2007 when the three-tier TRICARE plan was eliminated, the Air Force Reserve has seen an increase in covered lives from 4,541 to 14,982 through January 31, 2010, equaling a 330 percent increase in program usage. The current coverage plan has made TRICARE more accessible and affordable for members of the Selected Reserve at a critical time when healthcare costs are rising. In addition to these new benefits, the Air Force Reserve has taken advantage of the many tools that you have provided us including the bonus program, the Yellow Ribbon Program, and our Seasoning Training program.

The Bonus program has been pivotal to recruiting and retaining the right people with the right skills to meet Combatant Commander warfighting requirements. The Air Force Reserve uses the Bonus Program to fill requirements on our "Critical Skills List." Those skills are deemed vital to Air Force Reserve mission capability. Development of these skills usually requires long training courses and members who have these skills are in high demand within the private sector. We are able to offer a wide menu of bonuses for enlistment, reenlistment, affiliation, and health professionals.

Our Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Office is up and running and fully implementing Department of Defense directives. Our program strives to provide guidance and support to the

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military members and their families at a time when they need it the most, to ease the stress and strain of deployments and reintegration back to family life. Since the standup of our program from August 2008 to December 2009, we have hosted 113 total events across 39 Wings and Groups. 4,515 Reservists and 3,735 family members attended these events reflecting a 67 percent program usage rate for members deployed during this timeframe. From event exit surveys and through both formal and informal feedback, attendees indicated positive impressions, expressing comments about feeling “better prepared, (and) confident following events.”

Designed to build a “ready force,” our Seasoning Training Program allows recent graduates of initial and intermediate level specialty training to voluntarily remain on active duty to complete upgrade training. The results have been a larger pool of deployable Reservists at an accelerated rate through this program. As a force multiplier, seasoning training is ensuring the Air Force Reserve maintains its reputation for providing combat-ready Airmen for today’s joint fight. The Seasoning Training Program is also proving beneficial for recruiting, training, and retaining members in the Air Force Reserve. This program is a success story and one that we will build on in the next year.

The Air Force Reserve is working hard to increase Reservists' awareness of benefits and incentives associated with their service. Reservists are taking advantage of these programs because they are having their intended effect. These programs are helping to create the sustainable and predictable lifestyle that our members need to continue to serve in the Air Force Reserve.

I am confident that as we act on not only our Air Force Reserve priorities, but also on those of the Air Force and the Department of Defense with the continued support of this Committee and Congress, we will be able to continue to meet the needs of Combatant Commanders and the Nation with a viable operational and strategic Air Force Reserve.

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Maintain a Strategic Reserve while Providing an Operational, Mission Ready Force

The Air Force Reserve is first and foremost a strategic reserve leveraged to provide an operational, mission ready force in all mission areas.³ Air Force Reserve Airmen accomplish this by training to the same standards and currencies as their Regular Air Force counterparts. As indicated at the outset, Air Force Reserve Airmen continue to volunteer at high levels and

³ Airmen of the Selected Reserve are mission-ready, capable of performing ongoing operations. Collectively, they have met the operational needs of the Air Force for decades--largely through volunteerism, but also through full-time mobilization. Between 1991 and 2003, Reservists supported the no-fly areas of Operations Northern and Southern Watch. Since the attacks on 11 Sept 2001, 54,000 Reservists have been mobilized to participate in Operations Enduring Freedom, Noble Eagle, and Operation Iraqi Freedom—6,000 remain on active duty status today. It is a fact that the Air Force now, more than any other time, relies on members of the Reserve and Guard to meet its operational requirements around the globe.

The Air Force Reserve maintains 60% of the Air Force's total Aeromedical Evacuation (AE) capability. Reserve AE crews and operations teams provide a critical lifeline home for our injured warfighters. Our highly trained AE personnel fill 43% of each AEF rotation and augment existing USEUCOM and USPACOM AE forces in conducting 12 Tanker Airlift Control Center tasked AE channel missions each quarter--all on a volunteer basis.

In 2009, the men and women of our Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) forces have been heavily engaged in life saving operations at home and abroad. Since February, Airmen of the 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick Air Force Base, Florida, and their sister units in Arizona and Oregon, flew over 500 hours and saved more than 200 U.S. troops on HH-60 helicopter missions in support of U.S. Army medical evacuation operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. While mobilized for 14 months in support of combat missions abroad, the 920th continued to provide humanitarian relief in response to natural disasters at home, as well as provide search and rescue support for NASA shuttle and rocket launches. In addition, the 39th Rescue Squadron (HC-130s), also at Patrick AFB, flew rescue missions in Africa and provided airborne CSAR support during the rescue of the Maersk Alabama's Captain from Somalian pirates.

The Air Force Reserve provides 100% of the airborne weather reconnaissance (hurricane hunting) capability for the Department of Defense. Throughout the year, the Citizen Airmen of the Air Force Reserve's 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron "Hurricane Hunters", a component of the 403rd Wing located at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi fly over 1,500 operational storm hours. The Hurricane Hunters have 10 WC-130J Super Hercules aircraft that are equipped with palletized meteorological data-gathering instruments. They fly surveillance missions of tropical storms and hurricanes in the Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico and the central Pacific Ocean for the National Hurricane Center in Miami. The unit also flies winter storm missions off both coasts of the United States and is also used to perform advanced weather research missions for the DoD and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The life-saving data collected makes possible advance warning of hurricanes and increases the accuracy of hurricane predictions warnings by as much as 30%.

In addition to our hurricane mission, the Air Force Reserve provides 100% of the aerial spray mission in support of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Centers for Disease Control, and state public health officials. Air Force Reserve aircrews and C-130s from the 910th Airlift Wing, Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, sprayed more than a million storm ravaged acres of land with pesticides to control the spread of disease.

Our intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance professionals are providing critical information as they answer the nation's call to service. Since Sep 11, 2001, 1,079 intelligence personnel have deployed in support of world-wide contingency missions to include Afghanistan and Iraq. For the foreseeable future, Reserve intelligence professionals will continue to be deployed throughout the Combatant Command theaters, engaged in operations ranging from intelligence support to fighter, airlift, and tanker missions to ISR operations in Combined Air Operations Centers and Combined/Joint Task Forces as well as support to the National Command Authority, such as, Defense Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency and National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency.

These are but a few examples of the dedication and contributions our Air Force Reserve Airmen have made and will continue to make around the clock, around the world, each and every day.

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provide superb operational capability around the globe, serving side by side with the joint team. These Airmen provide the insurance policy the Air Force and the Nation need: a surge capability in times of national crises. In fact, the Air Force Reserve is currently mobilizing our strategic airlift resources and expeditionary support to assist surge requirements in Afghanistan.⁴

The Air Force Reserve is a repository of experience and expertise for the Air Force. Air Force Reserve Airmen are among the most experienced Airmen in the Air Force. Air Force Reserve officers average roughly 15 years of experience, and enlisted members average 14 years of experience, compared to 11 years and 9 years for Regular Air Force officers and enlisted, respectively. In fact, roughly 64 percent of Air Force Reserve Airmen have prior military experience.

Reserve Airmen are a cost-effective force provider, comprising nearly 14 percent of the total Air Force authorized end-strength at only 5.3 percent of the military personnel budget. Put differently, Air Force Reserve Airmen cost per capita is 27.7 percent of that of Regular Air Force Airmen, or roughly 3.5 Reserve Airmen to one Regular Airman.⁵

However, we cannot take for granted the high level of commitment our Reservists have thus far demonstrated. We must do our best to ensure their continued service. Accordingly, we are undertaking enterprise-wide actions to make Air Force Reserve service more predictable.

In the Air Force Reserve, we are revising our management structures and practices to eliminate redundancies associated with mobilizing and deploying Reservists to meet Combatant Commanders' requirements. The intent is to create an integrated process that will be more responsive to the needs of Reservists, provide them greater predictability, make participation

⁴ Our Reserve community continues to answer our nation's call to duty with large numbers of volunteer Reservists providing essential support to Combatant Commanders. 46% percent of the Air Force's strategic airlift mission and 23% of its tanker mission capability are provided by Reserve Airmen. We currently have over 450 C-17, C-5, KC-135, and KC-10 personnel on active duty orders supporting the air refueling and airlift requirements.

⁵ FY 2008 Budget, figures derived from ABIDES (Automated Budget Interactive Data Environment System), the budget system currently in use by the Air Force and recognized as the official Air Force position with respect to the Planning, Programming and Budget Execution (PPBE) system. Inflation data used for any constant dollar calculations were based on average Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) rates for the past ten years: roughly 2.6% average annual rate of inflation. Medicare Eligible Retirement Health Care (MERHC) is an accrual account used to pay for health care of Medicare-eligible retirees (age 65 and beyond). Cost per capita figures were derived dividing cost of Selected Reserve program by Selected Reserve end-strength. When MERHC figures are included, the cost of Air Force Reserve Airmen to Regular Air Force Airmen increases to 30.4%.

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levels more certain, and ultimately provide Combatant Commanders with a more sustainable operational capability. This is still a work in progress.

At the Pentagon, the Air Force Reserve is examining its processes to improve Reserve interaction among the Air Force Headquarters staff to better support the Chief of Air Force Reserve, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, and the Secretary of the Air Force in discharging their service responsibilities. Through the Air Reserve Personnel Center, the Air Force Reserve is also taking action to improve Reserve and Air National Guard personnel administrative and management capabilities. Collectively, these actions will contribute to the overall health of the strategic reserve and improve the sustainability of the Air Force Reserve and the Air Force operational capability required by the warfighters in this new century.

Preserve the Care and Viability of the Reserve Triad

Reservists have relationships with three basic entities: family, civilian employer, and military employer--what I like to call "The Reserve Triad." Helping our Airmen preserve these relationships is critical to our sustainability. In this Year of the Air Force Family, our policies and our actions must support the viability of these relationships--especially the one Reservists have with their families. Open communication about expectations, requirements, and opportunities will provide needed predictability and balance among all three commitments.

To that end, we are now consistently and actively surveying Reserve and Regular Airmen to better understand why they come to serve and why they stay. We are continually learning and gaining a better understanding of attitudes toward service and issues associated with employers and family. From their feedback, I can better advocate for benefits that help us recruit and retain Airmen for the Air Force Reserve.

Military services must be flexible: capable of surging, refocusing, and continuously engaging without exhausting resources and people. That is sustainability. Approaching FY 2011 and beyond, it is imperative that we preserve the health of our strategic Reserve and improve our ability to sustain our operational capability. Going forward, we need to continuously balance capabilities and capacity against both near-term and long-term requirements.

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Clearly, in a time of constricted budgets and higher costs, in-depth analysis is required to effectively prioritize our needs. We must understand the role we play in supporting the warfighter and concentrate our resources in areas that will give us the most return on our investment. Optimizing the capability we present to the warfighter is a top priority, but we must simultaneously support our Airmen, giving them the opportunity to have a predictable service schedule and not serve more than they can sustain.

Broaden Total Force Initiative Opportunities

As weapons systems become increasingly expensive and more capable, their numbers necessarily go down. Aging platforms are being retired and not replaced on a one-for-one basis. The Air Force is required to make the most of its smaller inventory. To this end, the Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard, and Regular Air Force are integrating across the force, exploring associations wherever practical. The Air Force is aggressively examining all Air Force core functions for integration opportunities.⁶

⁶ The Air Force uses three types of associations to leverage the combined resources and experience levels of all three components: “Classic Association,” “Active Association,” and “Air Reserve Component Association.”

Under the “Classic” model, so-called because it is the first to be used, a Regular Air Force unit is the host unit and retains primary responsibility for the weapon system, and a Reserve or Guard unit is the tenant. This model has flourished in the Military Airlift and Air Mobility Commands for over 40 years. We are now beginning to use it in the Combat Air Forces (CAF): our first fighter aircraft “Classic” association at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, attained Initial Operational Capability in June of 2008. This association combined the Regular Air Force’s 388th Fighter Wing, the Air Force’s largest F-16 fleet, with the Air Force Reserve’s 419th Fighter Wing, becoming the benchmark and lens through which the Air Force will look at every new mission. The 477th Fighter Group, an F-22 unit in Elmendorf, Alaska, continues to mature as the first AFR F-22A associate unit. This unit also achieved Initial Operating Capability in 2008 and will eventually grow into a two-squadron association with the Regular Air Force.

The Air Force Reserve Command is establishing its first Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Group Association at Langley AFB, VA, this year. This Group and assigned Intelligence Squadrons of Reserve Airmen will partner with the Regular Air Force to provide operational command and control of units delivering real-time, tailored intelligence to combat forces engaged in missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, with data derived from theater Predator/Reapers, Global Hawks and U-2s, in partnership with the Total Force team. The Air Force has also programmed additional associate intelligence squadrons for Beale and Langley Air Force Bases for distributed support to global ISR operations to include USEUCOM, and USPACOM theaters. Once these units have reached full operational capability, Air Force Reserve exploitation and analysis surge capacity of Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPAs) will be approximately 10% of the Air Force’s capability based on 65 orbits. Additional Command and Control Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance capability is being stood up with an AFRC associate Air Forces Forces Command (AFFOR) unit at Beale AFB, CA, to support USPACOM and one at Hurlburt AFB, FL to support USSOCOM global Special Operations Forces. These new capabilities create a strategic reserve force ready to respond to the call of our nation, capable of being leveraged as operational crews ready and willing to support the

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Over the past 40 years, we have established a wide variety of associate units throughout the Air Force, combining the assets and manpower of all three components to establish units that capitalize on the strengths each component brings to the mix. We recently partnered with Air Mobility Command to create three more active associate flying squadrons in 2010 and beyond. About 500 Regular Airmen will associate with Air Force Reserve flying units at Keesler AFB, MS (C-130J); March Air Reserve Base, CA (KC-135); and Peterson AFB, CO (C-130H) by 2012.⁷

But associations are not simply about sharing equipment. The goal is to enhance combat capability and increase force-wide efficiency by leveraging the resources and strengths of the Regular Air Force, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve while respecting unique component cultures in the process. To better accommodate the Air Force-wide integration effort, the Air Force Reserve has been examining its four decades of association experience. With Regular Air Force and Air National Guard assessment teams, we have developed analytical tools to determine the optimal mix of Reserve, Guard, and Regular forces in any given mission. These tools will give the Air Force a solid business case for associating as we go forward.

Regular Air Force in everyday missions around the world. This model has proven itself and is the basis for the growth of associations over the last five years.

⁷ Under the “Active” model, the Air Force Reserve or Guard unit is host and has primary responsibility for the weapon system while the Regular Air Force provides additional aircrews to the unit. The 932nd Airlift Wing is the first ever Operational Support Airlift Wing in the Air Force Reserve with 3 C-9Cs and 3 C-40s. Additionally, the Air Force Reserve will take delivery of an additional C-40 in FY 2011, appropriated in the FY 2009 Consolidated Security, Disaster Assistance and Continuing Appropriations Act. This additional C-40 will help to replace the 3 C-9Cs, which are costly to maintain and fly. To better utilize the current fleet of C-40s at the 932nd, the Air Force created an Active Association. We also are benefitting from our first C-130 Active Association with the 440th AW at Pope AFB.

Under the “Air Reserve Component (ARC)” model, now resident at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station (ARS) in New York, the Air Force Reserve has primary responsibility for the equipment while the Guard shares in the operation of the equipment and works side by side with the Reserve to maintain the equipment. The Air National Guard has transitioned from the KC-135 air refueling tanker to the C-130, associating with the 914th Reserve Airlift Wing. The 914th added four additional C-130s, resulting in 12 C-130s at Niagara ARS. This ARC Association model provides a strategic and operational force for the Regular Air Force while capitalizing on the strengths of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve. Additionally, in this case it provides the State of New York with the needed capability to respond to state emergencies.

The Air Force Reserve has 9 host units and is the tenant at 53 locations. There are currently more than 100 integration initiatives being undertaken by the Air Force and Air Reserve Components.

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Air Force Reserve Manpower

The Air Force is balancing Reserve forces across the full spectrum of conflict. We are leveraging the experience of Reservists to alleviate stressed career fields. And we are improving our ability to retain experienced Airmen by providing them a means to stay in the service following any life-changing decisions they make regarding full-time participation. Over the next decade, the Air Force Reserve will grow into many new mission areas, including nuclear enterprise, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, unmanned aerial systems, space, and cyberspace.

However, rebalancing a force can take time, and the fight is now. To meet the more pressing needs of the Air Force, such as easing strain on stressed career fields and taking on new mission sets, the Air Force Reserve is growing by 2,100 Airmen in FY 2010. This will bring Air Force Reserve authorized end-strength to 69,500. By FY 2013, Air Force Reserve end-strength is planned to grow to 72,100.

These manpower increases are placing a premium on recruiting highly qualified and motivated Airmen and providing them the necessary training. The Air Force Reserve recruiting goal for FY 2010 is 10,500. While we met our goal of 8,800 new Airmen for FY 2009 in August, nearly two months before the end of the fiscal year, our forecast models indicate we will continue to face challenges in both recruiting and retention.

Each of these measures—Total Force Integration (TFI), expanding into new mission areas, rebalancing of forces, and, where needed, increasing manpower--will help the Air Force more closely align force structure to current and future DoD requirements, as well as provide increased capability to the combatant commanders.

Air Force Reserve Modernization

The Air Force Reserve is an organization of extraordinary working people, wedded to the fabric of our great Nation. Our Citizen Airmen support all Air Force mission areas in air, space, and cyberspace. They are trained to the same standards and readiness as their Regular

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Component peers and are among the most highly-experienced members of the United States Air Force.

A number of trends continue to influence dependence on Air Force Reserve forces to meet the strategic and operational demands of our nation's defense: sustaining operations on five continents plus surge efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan and the resulting wear and tear on our aging equipment; increasing competition for defense budget resources; and increasing integration of the three Air Force components.

The Air Force leverages the value of its Reserve Components through association constructs in which units of the three components share equipment and facilities around a common mission. Increasing integration of all three Air Force components requires a holistic approach be taken when modernizing. To ensure our integrated units achieve maximum capability, the precision attack and defensive equipment the Air Force Reserve employs must be interoperable not only with the Guard and Regular Component, but the Joint force as well.

As Chief of the Air Force Reserve, I am dedicated to ensuring that Air Force Reservists have the training and equipment available to them required to provide for our Nation's defense. I appreciate the attention and resources provided to the Reserve thus far, and I ask for your continued support.

The National Guard Reserve Equipment Account (NGREA) appropriation has resulted in an increase in readiness and combat capability for both the Reserve and the Guard. For FY 2010, the Air Force Reserve Command received \$55 million in NGREA appropriations. This resulted in the ability to purchase critical warfighting requirements for Reserve-owned equipment including critical upgrades to targeting pods, aircraft defense systems for C-5s and C-130s, and personnel protective equipment like security forces tactical weapons. These new capabilities are directly tied to better air support for our Soldiers and Marines in Iraq and Afghanistan. NGREA funding has helped the Air Force Reserve to remain relevant in today's fight as well as the ability to remain ready and capable in future conflicts. We truly appreciate and thank you for your support with this critical program.

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Military Construction (MILCON) and Infrastructure Modernization

Along with challenges in modernizing our equipment, we face challenges modernizing our infrastructure. During the FY 2011 budget formulation, both the Regular Air Force and the Air Force Reserve took risk in military construction in order to fund higher priorities. Over time, this assumption of additional risk has resulted in a continuing backlog exceeding \$1 billion for the Air Force Reserve. I would be remiss if I didn't take this opportunity to sincerely thank you for the \$112 million that we received in last fiscal year's military construction authorization and appropriation. This allowed us to address some of the most dire needs that exist in our backlog.

We will continue to work within the fiscal constraints and mitigate risk where possible to ensure our facilities are modernized to provide a safe and adequate working environment for all of our Airmen.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman and members of this Committee, I am excited to have these roles as Chief of the Air Force Reserve and Commander of the Air Force Reserve Command. I take pride in the fact that when our Nation calls on the Air Force Reserve, we are trained and ready to go to the fight. As a strategic reserve, over 68,500 strong, we are a mission-ready reserve force serving operationally throughout the world every day with little or no notice.

As we approach FY 2011 and beyond, it is clear the Air Force Reserve will play an increasingly vital role in meeting national security needs. The actions we initiated in 2009 and those we advance in 2010 will preserve the health of the Air Force Reserve but also help Congress address the more pressing issues we will face as a Nation in the years to come.

I sincerely appreciate the support of this Committee for the authorization and legislation it provides to our readiness and combat capability. I desire to continue working with each of you on the challenges facing the Air Force Reserve, the Air Force, and Our Nation. Thank you.