

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
PRESENTATION TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SUBJECT: AIR FORCE MILITARY PERSONNEL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

STATEMENT OF: LIEUTENANT GENERAL RICHARD Y. NEWTON, III
DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF, MANPOWER AND PERSONNEL
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

MARCH 17, 2010

NOT FOR PUBLICATION UNTIL RELEASED
BY THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

INTRODUCTION

Today, the United States confronts a dynamic international environment marked by extraordinary security challenges. Along with our Joint partners, the Air Force will defend and advance the interests of the United States by providing unique capabilities to succeed in current conflicts while preparing to counter future threats to our national security. We are committed to providing our enduring and distinctive capabilities to the Joint Force; prevailing on behalf of our Nation, shoulder-to-shoulder with our Joint teammates.

As the Air Force's Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower and Personnel, my primary focus is on providing a ready force of Airmen with the necessary skills our combatant commanders need to accomplish their mission, as well as providing first-class development and support to our Airmen and their families. I am driven by the need to attract, recruit, develop, and retain the highest quality and diverse fighting force for the world's most respected Air Force.

DEPLOYMENTS

The Air Force is fully engaged in the nation's fight across the globe. We currently have 38,875 Total Force Airmen deployed as of 25 February 2010. Fully 55% of these deployments are for greater than 179 days (up from 12% in 2004), including 6% for one year or longer. As you might suspect, these percentages are higher for certain highly stressed Air Force specialties such as Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Security Forces, Vehicle Operations, Construction, Tactical Air Control Party, and Office of Special Investigation. Moreover, we facilitated sourcing of 75,887 AEF requirements (31,861 120-Day; 40,951 179-Day; and 3,075 365-Day); plus an additional 2,301 Exercise and 49,300 Expeditionary Combat Support Consolidated Planning Schedule requirements during FY09. In addition, the Air Force filled a total of 7,317 Joint Expeditionary Taskings (JET) in FY09, and we have 5,305 Airmen currently filling JET taskings in support of Operations IRAQI FREEDOM and ENDURING FREEDOM as of 25 February 2010.

NUCLEAR ENTERPRISE

We stood up Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC) on 7 August 2009. Consolidating all of our Air Force assets in this critical mission area under a single command will enhance the ability to uphold the high standards required to operate, maintain, secure, and support nuclear deterrence and global strike forces. We continue to fill our key nuclear billets at AFGSC. Also, we are hard at work building a comprehensive plan for the professional development of personnel needed to sustain the nuclear enterprise beyond our watch. We've developed an integrated Human

Capital "Framework" to guide the design, execution, and integration of force management and force development processes for current and future mission needs. We've also developed an initial human capital management plan to include a Career Path Tool to identify, track, and manage expertise Air Force-wide that can be used by Career Field Managers to ensure they have the right person/capability in the right position within the nuclear enterprise. That said, the proof will be in the pudding when we enable AFGSC to reach full operational capability and the command is recognized as the center of nuclear excellence in the DoD. We will continue to follow through with our commitment to strengthen the Air Force nuclear enterprise.

AFGHANISTAN-PAKISTAN HANDS (APH)

Operations in Afghanistan have drawn considerable focus and energy, and we are committed as an Air Force to provide our combatant commanders with the necessary air, space, and cyberspace support, including intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, to meet their mission needs. We are moving out smartly to support the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's Afghanistan-Pakistan Hands (APH) program. Approximately half of the nearly 40,000 Airmen currently deployed are supporting Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. Our APH program is designed to provide Air Force personnel who are specially selected for their talent, experience and understanding of the language and culture of the AFPAC region. Fundamentally, their ability to apply their expertise to governance, stabilization, reconstruction and security will contribute to the effective implementation of the APH strategy. These dedicated officers and enlisted members come from a variety of Air Force specialties, including Operations, Intelligence, Civil Engineering, Judge Advocate General, Finance, Security Forces, Logistician, Communications, Contracting, Public Affairs, Acquisitions, and Personnel. Most officer and enlisted requirements come from Civil Engineering and Intelligence career fields. The total APH requirement for all Services is approximately 304 (including 75 for the Air Force), with a desired goal of three cohorts for each requirement (one downrange, one at "home base," and one assigned to a CONUS hub working AFPAC issues). This will require a total of approximately 912 members (225 for Air Force) formally enrolled in the AFH program. Our first group of APH warriors completed their training in February 2010 and is being assigned downrange. We have set the bar high and we will keep delivering.

REMOTELY PILOTED AIRCRAFT (RPA)

The Air Force continues to press on all fronts to deliver high-demand ISR and other urgent capabilities for the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility (AOR) as well as all other combatant commands. Airmen are currently flying 41 RPA Combat Air Patrols (CAPs) in the AOR

and the President's FY11 budget supports growth in RPA CAPs to 50 by the end of 2011 and 65 by the end of 2013.

Therefore, it is critical for the Air Force to attract and retain talented officers and enlisted Airmen to operate today's RPAs in order to meet SECDEF combat air patrol requirements. For over 15 years, the Air Force has used rated pilots to remotely pilot its medium- and high-altitude RPAs. Today's operational requirements for both unmanned and manned aircraft demand an extremely high level of aviation professionalism to deliver air power worldwide. It is essential for the Air Force to rapidly grow a professional corps of RPA pilots and sensor operators.

Reaching the goal of 65 CAPs by 2013 will require significant numbers for both the rated and career enlisted aviator communities. For every CAP, it takes approximately 140 Airmen in the loop to operate and deliver actionable intelligence to those that need it. We are adding 2,600 additional professionals to meet the expanding requirements of our global net-centric ISR enterprise. Current resourcing methods of manning RPA authorizations with traditional undergraduate pilot training (UPT) pilots from other manned weapon systems is unsustainable in the long term. The Air Force created a new rated officer Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) to categorize RPA pilots in a distinct career field and created a unique RPA training pipeline, currently being refined through BETA test classes. The RPA "BETA Test" is a potential future alternative to the current UPT method. The first group of eight BETA test graduates completed their training in September 2009 and is currently in Combat Mission Readiness training at Creech and Cannon AFBs. Through June 2010, a total of 39 additional BETA test students are either currently or projected to be in training. The Air Force also created a new AFSC to categorize enlisted RPA sensor operators in a distinct career field. This career field is a mixture of prior Career Enlisted Aviators and intelligence Airmen who are being trained through a new RPA Sensor Operator Training pipeline.

END STRENGTH AND FORCE MANAGEMENT

As of the FY10 President's Budget (PB), our current approved total force end strength is 686,944 effective FY10. This includes 331,700 Active Duty (AD), 179,044 civilians, 69,500 Reserve; and 106,700 Air National Guard. Increases in AD, civilian, and Reserve end strength in the FY10 budget are a result of new and emerging missions and to support ongoing Air Force missions. These missions include Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance (Reaper, Distributed Common Ground Systems, and MC-12); Nuclear Enterprise (Air Force Global Strike Command); Cyber Numbered Air Force; Special Operations; Aircraft Maintenance; Acquisition Excellence; Defense Health Program; civilian administrative positions for Squadron Commander's Support Staff; and contractor to civilian conversions.

In the FY11 PB, our programmed total force end strength is 702,669 effective FY11. This includes 332,200 AD, 192,569 civilians, 71,200 Reserve, and Air National Guard end strength remaining at 106,700. The Air Force's FY11 budget request preserved end strength in the face of fiscal constraints, realigned AD and Reserve manpower within existing resources, and grew civilian end strength to meet Air Force priorities. Major manpower drivers include initial investment toward Remotely Piloted Aircraft fleet operational capability to 65 Combat Air Patrols; enhancing cyberspace/irregular warfare/command & control capabilities; and resourcing required Air Force priorities to include Acquisition Excellence, further enhancements to the Nuclear Enterprise, and developing and caring for our Airmen and their families while rebalancing our total force mix for agile combat support.

The current economy has slowed attrition from the Air Force and had the effect of increasing our active duty inventory. As a result, the Air Force is projected to exceed end strength in FY10 by 4,800 personnel (2,200 officers and 2,600 enlisted). However, we will remain within the Secretary of the Air Force's purview of 2% above our authorized active duty end strength. Even though we are approximately half-way through the fiscal year and have reached about 50% of our force management goal as of February 2010, we do not expect to meet the goal of reducing the excess end strength without changes to our Force Management plan during the remainder of FY10. As a result, we plan to expand the existing force management program by decreasing officer and enlisted accessions; increasing USAFA, ROTC, and enlisted service commitment waivers; waiving some education cost recoupment; implementing a Career Intermission Program to allow up to a 3-year sabbatical for officers and enlisted; waiving enlisted time-in-grade requirements for retirement and executing an additional enlisted Date-of-Separation rollback. Fiscal Year 2011 force management initiatives are still under consideration.

RECRUITING, RETENTION, BONUSES, AND INCENTIVE PAYS

To support the efforts of Airmen and to recruit and retain the highest quality Air Force members, the FY11 budget request includes \$29.3B in military personnel funding, to include a 1.4 percent pay increase. Our recruiting and retention is strong, but we request \$645M for recruiting and retention bonuses targeted at critical wartime skills. These pays are critical as we shape the force to meet new and emerging missions and support the combatant commanders in today's fight.

Officer retention remained strong overall in FY09; however, rated officers and certain health professionals continue to be areas of long-term concern in FY10. The Air Force prudently employs Special and Incentive (S&I) pays to compensate for and incentivize the performance of hazardous and arduous duties, the acceptance of duty in hostile and undesirable locations, and the recruiting and

retention of personnel with specific skills or in specific career fields. Recruiting and Retention S&I pays total \$465.9M for active duty in FY10 and we have requested an increase to \$480.1M in FY11.

Contracting officers and Control & Recovery (special operations) officers were added to the Air Force's list of low-retained officer career fields. In order to address this issue we began paying them critical skills retention bonuses (CSRB). We project a need in FY11 for additional retention in skills such as Airfield Operations, Public Affairs, Civil Engineering, Intelligence, Logistics Readiness and Special Investigators (Cyber) due to personnel shortages in specific Commissioned Years of Service (CYOS) and high training investment costs. We continue to closely monitor these specialties that are trending towards critical levels and are taking appropriate force management actions to improve retention to appropriate levels.

The overall enlisted force exceeded FY09 retention goal by ~4%. However, we were slightly under in Zone A (17 months through 6 years of service (YOS)) where we hit 95% of our goal, and Zone C (10 YOS through 14 YOS), where we achieved 98% of our goal. Retention was above goal in Zone B (6 YOS through 10 YOS) at 104%.

We made some adjustments in FY10 to positively manage retention. Ninety-one Air Force Specialty Codes currently receive Selective Reenlistment Bonus (SRB) in FY10, up from 87 specialties in FY09. These include two new skills in particular – RPA Sensor Operators and Airborne ISR Operators. We continue to see retention issues in some of our most critical war-fighting skills, to include Tactical Air Control Party, Imagery Analysis, Pararescue, and Explosive Ordnance Disposal. The SRB budget remains consistent with the FY09 level of \$231.9M, which includes \$141.1M for new contracts. The FY11 SRB budget is \$248.2M, which includes similar funding for new contracts but is adjusted for higher anniversary payments.

Additionally, we've implemented several non-monetary initiatives to boost retention. We canvassed the Air Force, from commanders to junior enlisted members, to discover what we can do to improve mission focus, quality of life, and ultimately, retention. An Air Force retention survey was administered in September 2009 to provide Airmen an opportunity to provide feedback on how several elements of Air Force service influence their career decisions. Results from this survey are due by the end of March 2010. Our Civilian Readiness Program has reduced military deployment stress by increasing civilian utilization. And transferability of education benefits under the Post 9/11 GI Bill has been a resounding success.

Recruitment and retention of Health Professions officers continues to be a challenge. Air Force Recruiting Service (AFRS) recruits Fully Qualified (FQ) Health Profession (HP) officers and Health Professional Scholarship Program (HPSP) candidates. In FY06, the Air Force corporately

decided to "grow our own" HPs by focusing on HPSP program versus FQ accessions. In FY09, AFRS executed historic reorganization due to Programmed Budget Decision 720. This resulted in 80% fewer officers (115 down to 24) and 43% fewer HP recruiters (240 down to 136). To mitigate this significant loss, we have routinely employed our HP officers to actively recruit at their professional conferences and seminars.

AFRS accessed approximately 70% of SG FY09 requirements, exceeding FY08 production (62%). We met 100% of the Medical Service Corps goal, 84% for Nurses, and 82% of Dental FQ requirements. Financial incentives (accession bonuses) are key to recruiting FQ HPs. We only met 10% (12/118) of FQ Physician recruiting requirements in FY09; the FY10 requirement is 108. All 12 Physician recruits came in under the Physician Financial Assistant Program (FAP), which provides recipients a \$45K annual grant and a \$2K per month stipend. Physician recruiting continues to be challenging. The Critical Wartime Skills Accession Bonuses (CWSAB) is not viewed as a true accession bonus because physicians must accept CWSAB or multi-year specialty pay, but not both. Only 10 CWSAB are available versus 108 physician requirements. Additionally, the Air Force met 40% (129/321) of the FQ BSC requirement in FY09; the FY10 requirement is 325, though funding is only available for 81 accession bonuses. Psychology, Pharmacy, Optometry, and Public Health Officer (PHO) continue to be particularly challenging. For the first time this year, we are offering accession bonuses to Psychologists and PHOs.

Although recruitment and retention of medical specialties continues to be a challenge, overall we are well-positioned to meet FY10 retention goals.

YEAR OF THE AIR FORCE FAMILY

My role as the Air Force A1 enables me to serve as the Quality of Service champion for the Air Force. Focusing on providing quality services is vital to the way we take care of our Airmen and their families. The Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff designated July 2009 to July 2010 as the Year of the Air Force Family (YoAFF). It's our opportunity to recognize the sacrifices and contributions of the entire Air Force Family – Total Force Airmen, civilians, spouses, children, extended family members, retirees, and community partners. Our families play a vital role in mission accomplishment. We are actively working to reinforce and reaffirm successes in quality of services, identify potential gaps in developing and caring for Airmen and their families, and renew a sense of community throughout the Air Force.

During YoAFF, leaders at all levels are focusing their attention around four pillars of emphasis: Health and Wellness; Airman and Family Support; Education and Development; and Airman and Family Housing. We've taken significant steps to solicit feedback and gain insight on

common areas for concern. We conducted spread-the-word visits to engage senior leaders at 23 bases across 12 Major Commands, including Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve bases and units. We also conducted the first Air Force-wide survey of spouses in July and August 2009 that aimed to define spouse satisfaction with Air Force life and identify areas of concern. The 2010 Caring for People study, currently in progress, will be a comprehensive Air Force quality of life survey chartered to measure the opinions of our military members, civilians and retirees on a variety of issues. We also just chartered a Single Airmen Working Group in February 2010 and will be hosting a Single Airmen Summit in conjunction with our second annual Caring for People Forum coming up in April 2010. This special event will bring together over 200 helping professionals and representative groups to discuss issues and develop programs to better suit the needs of our single Airmen and the larger Air Force family as a whole.

One of the top priorities for our Airmen continues to be available and affordable child care and improve the transition between schools. We've identified a child care availability gap of 6,400 slots and we will eliminate that gap by FY12 and plans are in place to utilize \$80M of the President's stimulus package to design and construct eight additional Child Development Centers (CDCs). We will continue to focus on increased staffing, resourcing, and up-keep of our CDCs to ensure the gap does not resurface. Today, our Air Force Family includes 175K school-age children that generally move six to nine times during their school years. We've committed \$6M a year to increase the number of School Liaison Officer (SLO) positions from 28 to 82 by the end of FY11. SLOs develop and coordinate partnerships between local schools, installation leadership, and parents, working to "level the educational playing field" for mobile military families. On that front, we look forward to continued congressional support for the Interstate Compact for Educational Opportunity for Military Children, a partnership between DoD and states which addresses perceived inequities faced by military children when transferring from one school district to another. So far 28 states have adopted the compact, with New Mexico being the most recent just last month. We have also placed increased focus on the Key Spouse Program, and 95 percent of eligible units now have a Key Spouse assigned. Similar to the Ombudsman Program in the Navy and the Family Readiness Group in the Army, key spouses provide critical peer-to-peer support within a unit, helping to increase awareness of installation/community resources, enhance information flow, and improve sense of community among unit families.

EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY MEMBER PROGRAM (EFMP)

We conducted a top-to-bottom review of the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP). Approximately 15,000 Airmen have one or more exceptional family members (80% enlisted; 69% E-

5 through E-7). Thirty-five installations have at least 175 special needs families assigned. Special needs families require advocacy and support beyond identification and assignment processes, and the Air Force has identified a gap in services for these families. In early 2009, the Air Force Caring for People Integrated Process Team, and Caring for People Forum identified the need for dedicated support to coordinate a wide range of deployment support activities, including special needs families. Our priority moving forward is to boost manpower and resources to assist in delivery of additional support. We have earmarked staff in our Airman and Family Readiness Centers to provide specific, detailed information to special needs families. We are leveraging Community Action Information Board (CAIB) resources at all levels and assessing compliance standards. In July 2009, the Air Force conducted day-long training for 200 Air Force staff members attending the Special Education Leaders Institute in conjunction with the Military Child Education Coalition (MCEC) Conference. In August 2009 the Air Force, partnering with OSD, was able to support Respite Child Care for families with children enrolled in EFMP and finalized a \$7M contract to provide this service with a target implementation of June 2010. In September 2009, the Air Force conducted specialized training at six bases with the highest number of exceptional family members assigned: Langley, Travis, Scott, Wright-Patterson, Lackland, and Ramstein. We've also added a "Family Support" prong to the EFMP to augment the existing Assignments and Special Needs Identification and Assignment Coordination (SNIAC) prongs, bringing us in line with our sister services. The Family Support prong will provide information and referral services available on the base and in the local community, as well as assist with Permanent Change of Station transitions.

AIRMAN RESILIENCY AND CARE FOR WOUNDED WARRIORS

We are concerned about the stress on our Airmen and their families due to increased operations tempo. The Air Force seeks to establish a tiered program to support and enhance the psychological resiliency of Airmen, with initial focus on deploying Airmen. The Air Force Surgeon General sponsored the formation of a Deployment Support Review Group (DSRG), which identified groups of Airmen at elevated risk, based on a combination of Air Force specialty, duty location and deployed mission. Those at elevated risk based on their deployed mission will receive targeted and enhanced training, screening and support. Annually, about 4,000 to 5,000 Airmen would qualify for enhanced deployment support. The DSRG proposed several beneficial steps to augment current Air Force deployment support efforts. These steps include a 2-day transition and decompression program and the establishment of an Air Force Deployment Transition Center (DTC). Selected Airmen will attend a 2-day program at DTC while en-route home from theater. The program would allow for decompression, sleep recovery, weapons and equipment turn-in, counseling and

reintegration, and health screening to include Post-Traumatic Stress and Traumatic Brain Injury assessments. The Deployment Transition Center has been approved for Ramstein AB, Germany and should be ready in July 2010.

Along the same lines, the Air Force is fully committed to care for our brave Airmen, and their families, who are wounded while defending freedom. We provide care, support and assistance through the Air Force Survivor Assistance Program, the Recovery Care Program and the Air Force Wounded Warrior (AFW2) Program – for as long as needed. As of 9 March 2010, there are 664 Air Force members enrolled in AFW2. We launched the Air Force Recovery Care Coordinator (RCC) program and hired 17 new RCCs with funding for an additional 10 RCCs later this year. RCCs provide personalized support to seriously wounded, ill, injured Airmen and their families; and guide Airmen through recovery, rehabilitation, and reintegration processes. We've ensured Family Liaison Officers (FLOs) are assigned to all families experiencing an active duty death and all seriously wounded, ill, and injured who are evacuated from Overseas Contingency Operations and provide personalized, one-on-one support to Airmen and their families. We've increased AFW2 program staff to 12 full-time positions at the Air Force Personnel Center to track and manage the cases of Wounded Warriors and families for life, and advocate for policy and operational practices that would benefit our Wounded Warriors.

In 2009, we conducted a thorough review of Air Force personnel policies on promotions, retraining, classification, assignments, and retention and developed new policies to address Wounded Warrior concerns. The Air Force Chief of Staff signed a policy letter paving the way for retention and retraining of seriously wounded Airmen who desire to remain on active duty. Incorporating Wounded, Ill and Injured Airmen and Families of the Fallen into training courses for Air Force wing and group commanders has proven to be a highly successful initiative. Each class has one wounded, and a family member of a fallen, speak to commanders about the importance of support, what the Air Force did right in their case, and what area could be improved. This is consistently rated the most valuable session for the entire course.

DIGNIFIED TRANSFER

On 6 January 2009, we stood-up the Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations (AFMAO) Center, consolidating Air Force Mortuary Affairs under a single command headquartered at Dover AFB, Delaware. AFMAO is charged with fulfilling our nation's sacred commitment of ensuring dignity, honor, and respect to our fallen and providing care, service, and support to their families. Its primary mission includes support for all fallen Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force members, but also extends to all other federal agencies whose members die as part of the war effort.

Additionally, AFMAO is currently supporting Operation UNIFIED RELIEF by providing identification and mortuary services to American citizens who were killed in Haiti during the earthquake. In 2009, AFMAO provided mortuary services for 1,042 of our nation's fallen. AFMAO also provided critical mortuary support to nine aircraft or mass fatality incidents in 2009, including the Fort Hood shootings.

AFMAO is the executive agent for the Secretary of Defense's new policy allowing media and family access to dignified transfers at Dover AFB. The policy went into effect 6 April 2009, and as of 2 March 2010, 435 DTs have taken place. About 74 percent of families have chosen to make the mournful journey with nearly 1,800 family members and friends witnessing the dignified transfers. In 81 percent of the cases, the family chose to allow media access to the event, with 55 percent inviting public media and 26 percent requesting internal DoD coverage only. In an effort to provide better care and support for these families while at Dover AFB, we were proud to open the Center for the Families of the Fallen on 6 January 2010. This facility provides a warm, inviting atmosphere to host family members, and also provides private meeting rooms, a children's room, and a kitchen. The Air Force's commitment to support families of the fallen doesn't end here. In January 2010, the Secretary of the Air Force accepted a gift of a Fisher House to be constructed on Dover AFB, providing lodging for families of the fallen who have traveled to witness the Dignified Transfers. We plan to have the facility constructed and operational by the end of 2010. The Dignified Transfer at Dover AFB is only the beginning of this process; the same meticulous care is constant throughout the continuum of the return of our fallen and care for their families.

CONCLUSION

Today's Airmen are doing amazing things to meet the needs of the joint warfighter, execute the Air Force mission and keep the Air Force on a vector for success against potential future threats in an uncertain world. We are ready and engaged today, but we must continue to invest to ensure tomorrow's air, space, and cyberspace dominance. Our aim is to improve capability while maintaining the greatest combat-ready Air Force in the world. Today's operational needs and fiscal constraints continue to force us to make tough choices about the investment priorities of our Air Force – not shy away from them. These choices drive greater balance into our force structure and skill sets. We must continue to do our part to provide robust support to our combatant commanders and continue to focus on addressing the work-life needs of Airmen and their families.

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