

United States Air Force



Presentation

Before the House Appropriations
Committee, Subcommittee on Military
Construction and Veterans Affairs

Impacts of Sequestration and a Full-Year CR

Witness Statement of
General Mark A. Welsh III
Chief of Staff, United States Air Force

March 5, 2013

March 5, 2013



BIOGRAPHY

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

GENERAL MARK A. WELSH III

Gen. Mark A. Welsh III is Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C. As Chief, he serves as the senior uniformed Air Force officer responsible for the organization, training and equipping of 690,000 active-duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian forces serving in the United States and overseas. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the general and other service chiefs function as military advisers to the Secretary of Defense, National Security Council and the President.

General Welsh was born in San Antonio, Texas. He entered the Air Force in June 1976 as a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy. He has been assigned to numerous operational, command and staff positions. Prior to his current position, he was Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe.

EDUCATION

1976 Bachelor of Science degree, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.

1984 Squadron Officer School, by correspondence

1986 Air Command and Staff College, by correspondence

1987 Master of Science degree in computer resource management, Webster University

1988 Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

1990 Air War College, by correspondence

1993 National War College, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.

1995 Fellow, Seminar XXI, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge

1998 Fellow, National Security Studies Program, Syracuse University and John Hopkins University, Syracuse, N.Y.

1999 Fellow, Ukrainian Security Studies, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

2002 The General Manager Program, Harvard Business School, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.

2009 Fellow, Pinnacle Course, National Defense University, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.

2009 Leadership at the Peak, Center for Creative Leadership, Colorado Springs, Colo.



March 5, 2013

ASSIGNMENTS

1. August 1976 - July 1977, Student, undergraduate pilot training, Williams Air Force Base, Ariz.
2. July 1977- January 1981, T-37 Instructor Pilot and class commander, Williams AFB, Ariz.
3. January 1981 - May 1981, Student, fighter lead-in training, Holloman AFB, N.M.
4. May 1981 - August 1981, Student, A-10 training, Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.
5. August 1981 - May 1984, Instructor pilot, Flight Commander and wing standardization and evaluation Flight Examiner, 78th Tactical Fighter Squadron and 81st Tactical Fighter Wing, Royal Air Force Woodbridge, England
6. May 1984 - June 1987, Commander, Cadet Squadron 5, later, executive officer to the Commandant of Cadets, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.
7. June 1987 - June 1988, Student, Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kan.
8. June 1988 - October 1988, Student, F-16 conversion training, Luke AFB, Ariz.
9. October 1988 - July 1992, Operations Officer, 34th Tactical Fighter Squadron, later, Commander, 4th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Hill AFB, Utah
10. July 1992 - June 1993, Student, National War College, Fort Lesley J. McNair, Washington, D.C.
11. June 1993 - June 1995, Chief, Defense and Space Operations Division, Operations Directorate (J3), Joint Staff, the Pentagon, Washington, D.C.
12. June 1995 - April 1997, Commander, 347th Operations Group, Moody AFB, Ga.
13. April 1997 - June 1998, Commander, 8th Fighter Wing, Kunsan Air Base, South Korea
14. June 1998 - June 1999, Commander, College of Aerospace Doctrine, Research and Education, Maxwell AFB, Ala.
15. June 1999 - September 2001, Commandant of Cadets and Commander, 34th Training Wing, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.
16. September 2001 - April 2003, Director of Plans and Programs, Headquarters U.S. Air Forces in Europe, Ramstein Air Base, Germany
17. April 2003 - June 2005, Director of Global Power Programs, Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C.
18. June 2005 - June 2007, Deputy Commander, Joint Functional Component Command for Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, U.S. Strategic Command, Bolling AFB, Washington, D.C.
19. July 2007 - August 2008, Vice Commander, Air Education and Training Command, Randolph AFB, Texas
20. August 2008 - December 2010, Associate Director of the Central Intelligence Agency for Military Support/Associate Director for Military Affairs, Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, D.C.
21. December 2010 - July 2012, Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe; Commander, Air Component Command, Ramstein Air Base, Germany; and Director, Joint Air Power Competency Center, Ramstein Air Base, Germany
22. August 2012 - present, Chief of Staff, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C.

SUMMARY OF JOINT ASSIGNMENTS

1. June 1993 - June 1995, Chief, Defense and Space Operations Division, Operations Directorate (J3), Joint Staff, the Pentagon, Washington, D.C., as a lieutenant colonel and a colonel
2. June 2005 - June 2007, Deputy Commander, Joint Functional Component Command for Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance, U.S. Strategic Command, Bolling AFB, Washington, D.C., as a major general
3. August 2008 - December 2010, Associate Director for Military Affairs, Central Intelligence Agency, Washington, D.C., as a major general and a lieutenant general
4. December 2010 - July 2012, Commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe; Commander, Air Component Command, Ramstein Air Base; and Director, Joint Air Power Competency Center, Ramstein Air Base, Germany, as a general

March 5, 2013

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Rating: Command pilot

Flight hours: More than 3,300

Aircraft flown: F-16, A-10, T-37 and TG-7A

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Defense Distinguished Service Medal with oak leaf cluster

Distinguished Service Medal with oak leaf cluster

Defense Superior Service Medal with oak leaf cluster

Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster

Distinguished Flying Cross with oak leaf cluster

Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters

Air Medal with oak leaf cluster

Aerial Achievement Medal

Joint Service Commendation Medal

Air Force Commendation Medal

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant June 2, 1976

First Lieutenant June 2, 1978

Captain June 2, 1980

Major May 1, 1985

Lieutenant Colonel June 1, 1989

Colonel Feb. 1, 1994

Brigadier General Aug. 1, 2000

Major General Aug. 1, 2003

Lieutenant General Dec. 9, 2008

General Dec. 13, 2010

(Current as of August 2012)

March 5, 2013

America's Air Force strives daily to be *The World's Greatest Air Force—Powered by Airmen, Fueled by Innovation*. However, the implications of sequestration continue to overshadow that vision, as well as the Department of Defense's efforts to organize, train, equip, and employ America's armed forces in the defense of our Nation, her allies, and her ideals. Designed as a forcing function to spur meaningful fiscal solutions for our country, sequestration has instead exerted incredible short- and long-term planning disruptions upon the military Services. It now threatens to carve crucial capability from America's military without thoughtful consideration of changes in the strategic environment, our Nation's defense strategy, or the conscious assumption of risk in the military instrument of national power.

Throughout this period of budgetary uncertainty, the Air Force has taken care to minimize disruption to Airmen and family support programs, while also protecting the distinctive capabilities of airpower—our enduring contributions—America expects. From air and space superiority—enabling joint and coalition forces to operate unhindered in the air domain while denying our adversaries the same—to global strike—holding any target on the planet at risk with either conventional or nuclear forces—to rapid global mobility, global intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, and the command and control architecture to integrate full-spectrum joint military operations, the Nation expects her Air Force to provide and employ these enduring contributions from a position of continuing advantage over potential adversaries. The arbitrary cuts of sequestration, along with the possibility of a year-long continuing resolution, put every aspect of the Air Force's suite of capabilities at risk, and jeopardize our ability to fulfill our role in executing the Nation's Defense Strategic Guidance.

We face three separate, but interrelated budget mechanisms this month that taken together inject significant risk to our global operations. The sequestration order issued on March 1, 2013, along with a second sequestration due to a breach in the fiscal year 2013 discretionary caps scheduled for March 27, together with a budget shortfall in operating accounts to support emerging requirements in overseas contingency operations and a protracted continuing resolution, all combine to render us unable to continue our current level of operations.

For the United States Air Force, the effects of sequestration equate to a \$12.4 billion topline budget reduction, affecting every non-exempt account and program. Coupled with a potential year-long continuing resolution, and an estimated \$1.8 billion shortfall in overseas contingency operations funding due to higher than anticipated costs in theater, reductions of this magnitude have already driven disruptive actions in the near-term and promise devastating impacts over the long-term. The fiscal year 2013 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), authorizes \$460 million for Total Force Air Force military construction (MILCON).¹ This figure is

¹ \$460 million Total Force (Active, Reserve, and Air National Guard components) Air Force MILCON in the FY13 NDAA includes: \$324.3 million for 20 MILCON projects; \$25.5 million for MILCON planning and design; \$26.1 million for unspecified minor military construction; \$79.5 million for 3 Military Family Housing (MFH) MILCON projects; and \$4.3 million for MFH MILCON planning and design

March 5, 2013

about \$900 million less than fiscal year 2012 MILCON enacted funding, and about \$66 million less than our fiscal year 2013 budget request, reflecting an intentional deliberate pause in military construction to ensure resource availability in other areas necessary to fulfill our role in support of the Defense Strategic Guidance. Thus, the MILCON projects authorized by the fiscal year 2013 NDAA represent only the most critical of infrastructure improvements.

The Air Force considers its installations “power projection platforms” from which we employ our enduring airpower contributions, increase responsiveness, and ensure global access. Besides enabling the delivery of air, space, and cyber capabilities for America, Air Force installations also (1) contribute to the quality of life of our Airmen and their families, (2) enhance force readiness through training and maintenance facilities, and (3) facilitate modernization through beddown and infrastructure improvements designed for newer weapon systems. As expressed in prior congressional testimony in February 2013, the budgetary limitations of sequestration and a year-long continuing resolution will significantly disrupt the Air Force civilian workforce, undermine the Air Force’s readiness and responsiveness, delay necessary infrastructure improvements today, and—by hobbling modernization efforts—mortgage the Air Force’s future health for years to come. Because Air Force installations and infrastructure represent the foundation—literally—of Air Force personnel quality-of-life, force readiness, and beddown of recent modernization efforts, the consequences of sequestration and a year-long continuing resolution in this area generate significant second- and third-order effects throughout the others.

People

Beyond the civilian hiring freeze already in effect, and the strong likelihood of civilian furloughs starting in April 2013, sequestration and a year-long continuing resolution will also adversely affect Air Force Airmen and their families by delaying or cancelling several military housing and dormitory projects. Airmen are the Air Force’s greatest asset, and their recruitment, quality-of-life, and retention are some of my highest priorities. By delaying or cancelling critical military housing and dormitory improvement projects that were specifically retained in a dramatically-reduced MILCON budget request, we risk breaking faith with hundreds of unaccompanied Airmen and young Air Force families eager to begin their service in America’s military under the best conditions we can afford to provide.

Sequestration will reduce the military family housing portion of the fiscal year 2013 Air Force MILCON budget from \$79.5 million to approximately \$72.3 million.² Ongoing improvements to housing units and supporting infrastructure at Misawa AB and Kadena AB, both in Japan, may be delayed if we are unable to redistribute funds to execute the projects, or if we are unable to reduce the scope of the projects commensurate with the cuts exacted by sequestration. Additionally, due to the lack of “new start” authority under the continuing

² Figure does not include \$4.3 million for MFH MILCON planning and design

March 5, 2013

resolution, dormitory improvements at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, and Thule AB, Greenland are at risk of cancellation. At Thule AB, the current dormitory is an inadequate and inefficient 58-year old building—populated by our Airmen in a frozen, austere locale. Other projects included in our fiscal year 2013 Dormitory Focus Fund may also see delays, affecting 1,195 dorm rooms across nine installations. Together, these potential delays and cancellations affect over 1,600 Airmen and their families, most at locations far from their extended families in America. Furthermore, before sequestration the Air Force was on track to eliminate approximately 5,700 of 9,500 inadequate housing units and 1,650 of 5,700 inadequate dormitory rooms by the end of fiscal year 2014, and to meet the Department of Defense goal of ensuring at least 90 percent of units are rated adequate as early as 2017. The effects of sequestration and the potential for a year-long continuing resolution will slow our ability to achieve that milestone on behalf of our Airmen and their families.

Readiness

Decreasing force structure and high operations tempo since 2001 have combined to increase stress on all the Services, and Air Force readiness levels have declined steadily since 2003. We have already been forced to put full-spectrum training on the back-burner to support the current fight, and now the arbitrary nature of sequestration threatens to put us even further into a readiness deficit. The Air Force's global range, speed, flexibility, and precise striking power are what make it one of America's premier asymmetric advantages. That strategic agility and responsiveness require a high state of readiness across the Total Force to meet the requirements of the Defense Strategic Guidance—the Air Force cannot execute the defense strategy from a tiered-readiness posture. Continuing to sacrifice Air Force readiness jeopardizes the many strategic advantages of airpower, and as the Service Chief charged with strengthening and advising on America's Air Force, I cannot stress strongly enough the devastating effects of remaining on that path.

Besides the negative impacts to Air Force readiness and mission preparedness through flying hour reductions, unit stand-downs, weapons system sustainment delays, and training disruptions that I expressed in congressional testimony last month, sequestration and a full-year continuing resolution will also harm Air Force readiness by jeopardizing flight simulator and maintenance facilities at several key installations. Weapons system sustainment delays will be exacerbated at Tyndall AFB, Florida, Holloman AFB, New Mexico, and Little Rock AFB, Arkansas, affecting the F-22, the MQ-9, and the C-130J. Maintenance facilities at all three locations could experience MILCON delays, including a low-observable coating facility for the F-22, that will slow or limit the fielding of key capabilities to combatant commanders downrange. Flight simulator installation and expansions slated for the C-130J at Little Rock AFB, Arkansas, as well as the C-130H at Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, New York, and Cheyenne Air National Guard Base, Wyoming, may also be delayed, depriving aircrew of valuable training at a time when we need it most, and in an environment of reduced flying hours. The Air Force would also have to pay to store the simulators during any facility construction delays. All of these

March 5, 2013

impacts from sequestration and a full-year continuing resolution negatively affect Air Force full spectrum readiness at a time when we have been striving to improve this critical area.

Modernization

Sequestration cuts to Air Force modernization investments, applied at the program, project, and activity level, impact every one of the Air Force's investment programs. Coupled with a year-long continuing resolution, sequestration disrupts weapon systems program strategies, cost, and schedules, creating significant impact across the Future Years Defense Program to programs like the F-35A, the KC-46, and efficient space procurement.

Infrastructure delays or cancellations from the effects of sequestration and a full-year continuing resolution can also affect Air Force modernization efforts. For example, the delay of MILCON F-35A hangars, munitions storage facilities, and flight simulators at Hill AFB, Utah, could delay the installation's ability to receive the aircraft on schedule. This delay will exert second-order effects into future year MILCON proposals, slipping F-35A beddown timelines accordingly. Similarly, an HC-130J personnel recovery simulator facility delay at Moody AFB, Georgia, would disrupt the maturation of a highly-sought, special operations niche capability for America's Joint military team. Furthermore, despite the high priority of the U.S. Strategic Command headquarters facility at Offutt AFB, Nebraska, construction of that vital command control node could also be delayed or disrupted by cutting its MILCON increment for fiscal year 2013. Any time delay of this \$564 million, four-year project could generate a stop-work action that at a minimum would drive costly workforce de-mobilizing and re-mobilizing efforts. All of these potential infrastructure delays disrupt the fielding of critical capabilities reflective of recent modernization expenditures; all are also potentially avoidable by averting sequestration, or by passing an appropriations measure for the current fiscal year.

Deferments

In addition to these impacts to fiscal year 2013 MILCON projects adversely affecting Air Force people, readiness, and modernization, the Air Force has already deferred all non-emergency facility sustainment, restoration, and modernization projects across its installations, amounting to a 50 percent reduction in annual spending in this area, or a 90 percent reduction in planned spending for the remainder of the fiscal year. These delays affect dozens of restoration, modernization, sustainment, and demolition projects at dozens of installations nationwide and overseas, including six airfield-specific projects such as runway or taxiway

March 5, 2013

repair.³ Although these actions are technically reversible should funding stabilize for the current fiscal year, they also magnify already-verified infrastructure risks, invite more costly repairs once conducted in the future, and bring economic hardship upon the civilian workforce in the affected communities.

Some of these deferrals elevate operational risk by interrupting runway or nuclear enterprise sustainment, while others require us to maintain unneeded and energy-inefficient infrastructure—all will require additional future funding to rectify. Deferred repair generally costs much more than the expense of timely and preventive maintenance, and the necessity to retain unneeded infrastructure can add up to \$4 million per year in avoidable costs. To better position the Air Force to meet the many challenges of providing the effective airpower America expects, further base re-alignment and closure authority would generate significant infrastructure savings that might alleviate risk assumed in other areas. The Air Force supports the Department of Defense's position of the need for additional BRAC actions. Projected energy consumption savings of \$23.7 million will also not be realized due to disruptions of the \$157 million fiscal year 2013 Air Force Facility Energy Program. Relative to the nuclear enterprise, pushing off identified infrastructure improvements will also elevate risk to intercontinental ballistic missile payload transporters and transporter erectors due to failing pavements and inadequate fire detection and suppression systems. Missile silos will remain overly-vulnerable to water intrusion, and weapons storage areas will continue to function with antiquated security systems. Delayed infrastructure improvements like these only worsen should we continue to operate under a continuing resolution—military construction requirements totaling \$460 million scheduled for fiscal year 2013, many highlighted in this testimony, will not begin.

Considerations for the Future

None of the actions the Air Force has taken in anticipation of sequestration have been easy, but the actions now necessary as it has become a reality will be devastating. The combined effects of sequestration and a year-long continuing resolution will generate substantial risk throughout Air Force personnel, readiness, and modernization programs, some as a direct result of installation and infrastructure MILCON delays or project cancellations. Sequestration could also deplete the contingency funds associated with each project of the Air Force MILCON program, severely restricting our flexibility to respond to emergent infrastructure requirements such as storm damage. These collective effects will inhibit the Air Force's ability

³ 93 restoration and modernization projects at 52 installations nation-wide and overseas, 14 sustainment projects at 12 installations, and 82 demolition efforts across 39 locations have been delayed. Twelve dormitory upgrade and repair projects affecting 1,195 dorm rooms for Airmen at nine installations are also delayed, as are 220 energy focus fund projects at 70 installations, as well as some installation moves toward utility privatization and automated metering.

March 5, 2013

to fulfill its role within the current Defense Strategic Guidance, as well as exert painful, palpable, and ultimately pricey disruptions to each of these areas.

To avert some of the infrastructure and installation impacts as a result of sequestration and a full-year continuing resolution, congressional support for reprogramming actions would be necessary. The ability to re-align funds in a prioritized manner would enable the Air Force to preserve those projects most beneficial to lessening the widespread degradation to Airmen and family quality-of-life, readiness, and modernization efforts sequestration will soon produce. Without reprogramming, the Air Force will continue to defer MILCON projects in a prioritized fashion to the maximum extent, and only cancel programs as a last resort. Regardless, the Air Force will continue to scrutinize carefully the expenditure of every taxpayer dollar, and we will strive to find additional efficiencies, right-size every installation, and derive a smaller, more agile force while still preserving quality in order to provide the airpower America expects.

At a time when the Air Force is long-overdue for vital reconstitution following two decades of war, our inventory relies upon hundreds of aircraft as old as I am, and our force is at its smallest since its inception. Sequestration forces us into the untenable trade space of accepting further risk to our Nation's defense by sacrificing key elements of the effective provision of airpower—people, readiness, modernization, and their foundational infrastructure.

The absence of a fiscal year 2013 defense appropriations act thrusts each military Service into a planning purgatory of sorts, clouding near- and long-term fiscal programming with a fog of ambiguity that limits our collective ability to organize, train, and equip our forces to counter future threats to our Nation, her allies, and her interests. I urge Congress to do all that is necessary to pass an appropriations measure for the current fiscal year that considers our requirements and priorities. I ask you to support our efforts to re-align funds to our highest priorities, and to provide relief from other restrictions that limit our ability to mitigate the significant impact of the ongoing continuing resolution. We recognize that no amount of flexibility will substantively mitigate the damaging effects of sequestration. We owe it to America's sons and daughters, who put their lives on the line whenever and wherever their Nation asks, to care for them and their families, provide them with sufficient training, and equip them to a position of advantage over all potential adversaries.