



Letter to Airmen

**Honorable Michael W. Wynne
Secretary of the Air Force**

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Letter to Airmen: Recognizing the Total Force

Congratulations! As a leader in the Total Force Integration the Air Force continues to benefit from one powerful, cohesive team formed by our Active Duty Airmen, Air National Guardsmen, and Air Force Reservists. In my travels around the Air Force, I see this synergy firsthand and realize our training and operations make it impossible to differentiate between the three components. Whether it is the C-17 landing in the combat zone or the mechanic working on F-16s in Vermont, the Total Force is making it happen.

We simply could not accomplish today's dynamic mission without the Total Force integration of our Guard, Reserve and Active Duty force. Gone are the "strategic reserve" days of the Guard and Reserve. Today, our total force sacrifices daily through extended deployments in the most challenging missions we have. As an integral part of this highly skilled team, the Guard and Reserve train to the same high standards set by our Active Duty, operate the latest equipment and participate in every mission across the spectrum of operations.

Our Active Duty, Guard and Reservists stand side by side in the fight in the Global War on Terrorism. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the recent airstrikes that killed the leader of Al-Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Al Zaraqawi. In Balad, the 332nd Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron mirrors where our Air Force is going: an Active Duty Commander, an Air National Guardsman as Operations Officer, and a Reservist as First Sergeant. The collective efforts of Active, Guard and Reserve forces continue to yield tremendous successes for the Joint Team and our Nation.

So what does this mean for you, the individual Airman? First, this means that we have a healthy respect for those Total Force Members that support our mission. Second, we need to adhere to the set standards, to ensure that as we assemble the total force we remain prepared to execute the assigned mission. Third, we need to use the diversity represented by the Total Force to continually look for better ways to accomplish our mission.

Total Force has moved from a future concept to today's reality. One team, one fight, with a shared, disciplined combat focus. The continued dedication and service of all Airmen -- Active, Guard, and Reserve -- make a grateful Nation proud. Thank you for all you do.




**Michael W. Wynne
Secretary of the Air Force**