

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

SUBJECT: MILITARY PERSONNEL OVERVIEW AND DOD'S PROPOSED PERSONNEL  
EFFICIENCIES

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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In an era of evolving requirements, diverse mission sets and constrained budgets, our Air Force faces an ever increasing set of challenges as we seek balance between winning today's fight and countering the threats of tomorrow. This objective will not be achieved easily and will increase in complexity as we realize the cumulative impact of being at war continuously for the past decade. As the Air Force's Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel and Services, it is my mandate to help deliver fully-qualified and ready Airmen for the Joint warfighter while meeting the essential needs of these Airmen and their families. As part of this charge, I remain dedicated to ensuring we organize and develop our Total Force so we are prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

## **END STRENGTH**

The FY11 programmed Total Force end strength is 702,367 which is comprised of 332,200 active duty, 192,267 civilians, 71,200 Reserve, and 106,700 Air National Guard personnel. In the FY12 Budget, we have requested a Total Force end strength that will actually decrease to 693,099. Active duty end strength will only increase by 600 Airmen to 332,800, and our civilian end strength will decrease by just over 10,000 to 182,199 civilians. We will also increase the Reserve end strength by 200 to 71,400 while the Air National Guard remains unchanged at 106,700. Additionally, the FY12 budget captures efficiency efforts through reducing overhead and support functions, which will allow us to shift manpower resources to our warfighter and readiness programs. These programs include Combat Air Forces; Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance; Building Partnership Capacity; and Total Force Integration

associations while, at the same time, allowing us to continue building upon our cyberspace superiority and developing and caring for Airmen and their families.

## **FORCE MANAGEMENT**

Fiscal constraints and 16-year record high retention rates, compel the Air Force to develop voluntary and involuntary programs to manage our end strength levels. At the end of FY10, Air Force exceeded our end strength of 331,700 by approximately 2,300 officers while meeting enlisted end strength levels. We expect to exceed our FY11 end strength of 332,200 by approximately 1,500 officers and could reach well above this level by FY12 if we do not continue efforts to manage attrition. We must operate within our budget and we are committed to meeting our end strength by FY12. To do so, we have made tough decisions that will impact Airmen across the 30-year continuum of service. For new Airmen who fail to complete their initial skills training, we established Limited Initial Skills Training process that considers these officer and enlisted members for either retention or separation based on the needs of the Air Force. We encourage voluntary separations and retirements for more seasoned Airmen, both officers and enlisted, by offering both limited active duty service commitment waivers and time in grade waivers. Officer and enlisted personnel may also voluntarily apply to complete their service commitment in the Air Reserve Component through our PALACE CHASE Program or continue service in the Army through the Blue-to-Green Program. For prior enlisted officers, we implemented the recent authority granted in the FY11 NDAA, which authorizes officers to retire with 8 years of commissioned service rather than 10.

In an effort to manage the enlisted force within authorized end strength, we are continuing the Date of Separation (DOS) Rollback Program. This initiative identifies Airmen

who have chosen to transition from the Air Force for early separation. It also provides an avenue to accelerate the removal of Airmen who possess negative quality force indicators.

As the majority of our over strength is within our officer corps, we continue to expand force management initiatives through FY12. For FY11, we will conduct a Force Shaping Board for junior officers, a Reduction in Force (RIF) Board for mid-grade officers, and Selective Early Retirement Boards (SERB) for lieutenant colonels and colonels. Mid-grade officers eligible for the RIF Board will have the opportunity to apply for voluntary separation pay in lieu of meeting the board. Likewise, lieutenant colonels and colonels will have the opportunity to voluntarily retire in lieu of meeting the SERB.

We also re-instituted a Line of the Air Force captain promotion board for FY11 with a reduced promotion opportunity from “fully qualified” to 95%. In addition, the promotion rate for Line of the Air Force captains to the rank of major was reduced from 95% to 90%. For officers twice deferred for promotion to major and lieutenant colonel, we will limit the offers of selective continuation based on the needs of the Air Force. Along with these programs, we have reduced and delayed officer and enlisted accessions to control our total end strength.

Our force management strategy is not a quick fix, but a tailored, multi-year effect designed to manage the force along a 30-year continuum of service. Beyond existing force management legislative authorities, we are working with the Office of the Secretary of Defense to seek additional legislative authorities to provide us tools to better manage our force to authorized end-strength.

## **ACCESSIONS**

We must protect accessions while taking care of our people as the impact of under-accessing Airmen is felt for the next twenty years. As previously mentioned, our force

management efforts include reducing officer and enlisted accessions. Although below desired sustainment levels, reductions are manageable within the short and long-term health of the force. For FY11, this included 2,135 enlisted accession reductions and 439 officer reductions. Reductions were realized in all officer competitive categories—with our rated force at 94% sustainment; non-rated line at 88% sustainment; and non-line at 93% sustainment. In FY12, our reductions are deeper for both our officers and enlisted. Enlisted accession reductions are set at 2,407 while officer reductions are set at 639. For the officer competitive categories, the rated force accessions were reduced to 90% sustainment; non-rated line reduced to 84% sustainment; and non-line to 89% sustainment.

## **RECRUITING, RETENTION, BONUSES, AND INCENTIVE PAYS**

America deserves the very best Air Force in the world, and it takes recruiting, developing, and retaining the highest quality Airmen to maintain that status. To do so, our FY12 budget request includes \$30.5B in military personnel funding, to include a 1.6% pay increase. Although our recruiting quality and retention levels are at the highest in 16 years, we are obligating \$630M for bonuses to recruit the right skill sets and retain experienced Airmen for today's fight and the emerging missions of tomorrow. Without these funds we will handicap our commanders in their ability to efficiently and effectively carry out the full range of missions America demands of its Air Force.

Air Force recruiting continues to need high quality recruits, even during periods of high retention. Higher quality recruits increase the probability of success during their initial training. Basic Military Training attrition went from a high of 10.7% in FY07 down to 6.8% in FY10 due to higher caliber recruits. Additionally, as a Service, we need a continuing flow of high quality recruits to fill entry-level positions as current members progress into advanced positions and

eventually separate or retire. Continued support for maintaining high quality now will allow the Air Force to compete for the best and brightest along a broad spectrum, especially when unemployment improves and current retention returns to normal levels.

The Air National Guard (ANG) is focusing its recruiting efforts on precision recruiting to existing vacancies. Special emphasis is on the officer corps vacancies as the ANG continues its efforts to balance its officer and enlisted end strength levels. The ANG is currently projecting to be at or near its authorized end strength of 106,700 at the end of FY11.

The Air Force Reserve uses its bonus program to meet the demand for critical skills deemed vital to Air Force Reserve mission. Its bonus program has been pivotal to recruiting and retaining the right people to meet Combatant Commander requirements. Development of these skills usually requires long training courses. Members with these skills are normally in high demand within the private sector. With continued funding, the Reserve will be able to offer the appropriate combination of bonuses for enlistment, reenlistment, affiliation, and health professionals. Current indications illustrate the bonus program is positively benefitting recruiting and retention.

The Air Force has a relatively small budget for recruiting special skills into the service. On the enlisted side, these skills range from ground and airborne cryptologic language analyst; combat control; tactical air control party; survival, evasion, resistance, and escape; pararescue; special operations weather; and explosive ordnance disposal. The remainder of the Air Force's recruiting bonuses attract experienced health professionals in critical wartime specialties, such as physicians and dentists, and to meet specific experienced health care needs in nursing, pharmacy, public health, clinical psychology, and social work.

Even with high retention for the active duty officer force as a whole, there are still manning shortfalls and retention deficits in high-demand and new and emerging specialties that require bonuses as a part of a gap-closing strategy. These specialties, which contribute significantly to the joint fight, include contracting, control & recovery, public affairs, civil engineering, intelligence, logistics readiness and many of our medical professionals, including mental health and other critical wartime skills.

A 16-year high in active duty enlisted retention has necessitated moderate reductions in accessions and additional force management actions to include Date of Separation (DOS) Rollbacks, initial skills training eliminee separations, waiver of active duty service commitments, time-in-grade requirements and enlistment contracts which will continue FY12. Without these actions in FY10, our overall retention would have exceeded the goal by more than 4%. The Air Force finished FY10 at 100% of its retention goal in Zone A, 17 months through 6 years of service (YOS), exceeded the goal in Zone B, 6 YOS through 10 YOS at 109%, and was under its retention goal in Zone C, 10 YOS through 14 YOS at 93%. Selective Reenlistment Bonuses (SRB) are our most effective, responsive and measurable tool for targeted retention. The FY12 budget for new SRB contracts does change from FY11's budget of \$145.9M as we expect to offer SRBs to fewer than 90 enlisted specialties in FY12. Increased operations tempo and outside competition are impacting our ability to retain Health Professions Officers. Air Force Recruiting Service (AFRS) recruits Fully Qualified (FQ) Health Profession (HP) officers and Health Professional Scholarship Program (HPSP) candidates. Over the last five years, the Air Force has chosen to "grow our own" HP officers by focusing on accessions from the HPSP program versus FQ accessions.

Based on current economic forecasting, the Air Force is expected to experience consistent retention rates over the next few years. The Air Force analyzes average career lengths as the overall prediction for how long Airmen will stay in the service. Current retention rates exceed the Air Force goal by 13% for officers, and are slightly under the goal at 97% for our enlisted Airmen. These rates include voluntary and involuntary losses due to ongoing force management programs.

While active duty officer retention as a whole remained strong through FY10, we still need higher retention in targeted year groups for specific specialties including contracting, control & recovery, public affairs, civil engineering, intelligence, logistics readiness and certain medical specialties. In order to address officer retention concerns, contracting, control & recovery were approved by OUSD (P&R) in FY09 as critical skills and are currently receiving a critical skills retention bonus (CSRB). The projected CSRB costs for FY12 are approximately \$9M (\$2.8M budgeted for control & recovery and \$6.2M for contracting). The Air Force continues to closely monitor public affairs, civil engineering, intelligence, logistics readiness and other specialties which could receive long-term benefit from higher retention in targeted year groups.

The Air Force also uses Cumulative Continuation Rates (CCR) to track retention by AFSC and by reenlistment zones. The CCR shows the expected rate an Airman is likely to remain in the service from year-to-year or zone-to-zone. SRBs are also an effective tool for measuring targeted retention by AFSC and by zone. In FY09, SRB costs were \$227.6M of the total Air Force budget of which \$70.4M were comprised of anniversary payments, \$156M in new bonuses, and \$1.2M in accelerated payments. Conversely, in FY10 funding for new

bonuses fell from \$156M to \$141M and fell even further in FY11 and is now down to \$129.9M. Currently, 89 AFSCs are receiving SRBs in FY11

Our Service will continue to experience high retention through FY12 and likely into FY13. However, we must still overcome several skill imbalances as a result of previous actions to reduce endstrength by deliberately under-accessing in FY05 and building larger AFSCs for new and emerging mission sets. Additionally, the Air Force will continue using CSRBs and SRBs to manage retention and address shortfalls in critical skills and levels of skill in various AFSCs while also implementing force management tools to target losses in overage skill sets as we appropriately shape the force.

## **DIVERSITY**

In a nation where about seventy-five percent of our youth are ineligible or unable to serve in an all-volunteer military, it is necessary to maintain a diverse Air Force to overcome today's increasingly complex challenges.

In the fall of 2010, we published strategic guidance to include a diversity policy directive and Diversity Roadmap, which provides priorities, goals and specific actions for implementation of diversity initiatives. Formalizing the Diversity Roadmap into an Air Force Instruction will provide the Total Force its final piece of strategic guidance. Woven into the instruction will be vetted recommendations of the Military Leadership Diversity Commission. We anticipate completion of the instruction by the end of September 2011.

We furthered the institutionalization of diversity by holding the inaugural Diversity Senior Working Group in October 2010. Showcasing senior leader commitment, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, Secretary and Chief of Staff of the Air Force, in addition to sixty senior leaders from the major commands and the Pentagon, participated. Participants were challenged

to promote diversity within their sphere of influence. For example, leaders can make diversity a personal commitment by participating in two outreach events per year, adding a diversity message in speeches, identifying key positions and implementing hiring practices with a diversity lens, analyzing mentoring programs and determining how to resource diversity within the major commands and wings.

As a result of our commitment to advocate equity, diversity and inclusion at the US Air Force Academy (USAFA), a Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) position was created and filled in December 2010. The CDO directs all diversity initiatives, policies, and programs at USAFA to advance inclusion as a core institutional value and increase diversity in all dimensions across its faculty, staff, and cadets. The CDO also advises the USAFA Superintendent and senior leadership on diversity, and will work with Headquarters Air Force to keep Congress current on USAFA diversity issues.

## **NUCLEAR HUMAN CAPITAL STRATEGY**

Airmen must be specifically trained, educated, and experienced through professional development initiatives designed to create the capabilities and culture this no-fail mission demands, and our nation deserves. We implemented several new initiatives to enhance the development of our nuclear Airmen and improve the management of their assignments. Central to our efforts is the shift to assigning the most “qualified” Airman versus the most “eligible” Airman for our key nuclear billets.

Our new approach to managing enlisted talent gives us the capability to evaluate the entire pool of nuclear Senior Non-Commissioned Officers (SNCOs) and select the right Airmen for critical jobs, while also ensuring our nuclear SNCOs are vectored in the proper career sequence and that we are preparing them for future leadership roles in the Nuclear Enterprise.

This new approach, coupled with our new special experience identifier tracking codes, give our assignment teams the tools to identify Airmen with the requisite nuclear training and experience for key nuclear positions.

Our 2W2 (Nuclear Weapons Maintenance) and 21M (Munitions, Missile Maintenance) career fields have developed prioritization lists to ensure we assign the most qualified Airmen to positions by order of importance within the Nuclear Enterprise.

We also moved the screening of qualifications to serve in nuclear billets to earlier in our pipeline for our most stressed career fields. This led to greater efficiency in initial selection and training for nuclear-related positions, and more timely backfills for open positions.

## **DEPLOYMENTS**

As of 1 March 2011, we have more than 38,000 deployed personnel, approximately 5,000 of which are fulfilling Joint Expeditionary Taskings working with our sister services. In order to meet the growing demands of Combatant Commanders, Air Force 179-day tours increased from 12% of all deployments in CY04 to 60% of all deployments today. In October 2010, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force established the Air Force's baseline deployment tour length to be 179-days, normalizing this for all Airmen by October 2012. Still, approximately 1,800 of our deployment requirements, or 7% of all deployments, require members to be away for 365 days.

Continuing to fill both the deployed and home-station mission continues to take its toll on our units. The end-result of the new 179-day deployment standard will keep Airmen on a standard deployments for an additional 60 days but will also provide them and their families more time at home between deployments. Additionally, the longer standard deployment will reduce the amount of pre-deployment training required over a career.

The Total Force includes not only our Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, but also our Air Force Civilians. As the Department of Defense builds its civilian expeditionary workforce, Air Force civilians continue to be a part of the capability we offer to the Combatant Commander. Civilians are currently augmenting our Office of Security Investigations, intelligence, logistics, comptroller, as well as various headquarters support positions.

In total, more than 216,000 Total Force Airmen support daily Combatant Commander operations.

### **AIRMAN & FAMILY RESILIENCE**

We are committed to strengthening the resilience of our Airmen and their families. Our goal is to improve leadership commitment toward building resilient Airmen who have the ability to withstand, recover, and grow in the face of stressors and changing demands—regardless of time, challenge, or location.

To heighten the focus on this area, the Air Force established a Resilience Division within Headquarters Air Force. This division will build a corporate program with two distinct yet integrated focus areas: Airman Resilience and Family Resilience.

With the goal of enhancing Airman resilience, we established the Deployment Transition Center at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, in July 2010. Since the Center's inception, more than 1,200 selected Airmen have participated in this two-day reintegration and decompression program enroute home from deployment.

We are working with the RAND Corporation to develop a longitudinal study on families that will begin in Summer 2011. This study will follow more than 5,000 families while tracking their resilience across a full deployment cycle, before, during, and after deployment. The

information received from this study will be invaluable on how we treat and provide care for Airmen and their families in the future.

We have also seen tremendous dividends from our FitFamily program. FitFamily meets two of four goals of the White House Task Force on Childhood Obesity. This program raises the awareness of the importance of physical fitness and healthy meals for the entire family.

FitFamily encourages everyone to “Get Up, Get Out and Get Fit – Together” by registering online as teams, and achieving various participation levels through family fun activities, sports and fitness events, and healthy food selections.

### **EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY MEMBER PROGRAM (EFMP)**

We continue to focus attention this year on supporting our 17,000 Airmen with exceptional family members. These Airmen and their families require more comprehensive support beyond the identification and assignment process. To address this gap, we have designated a staff member from the Airman & Family Readiness Center at each installation to provide information, referral and assistance to families with special needs. We have hired additional staff at 35 installations with the highest numbers of EFMP families to provide targeted focus on family member support. Additionally, to improve on the coordination of care for high-risk families, the Air Force will add 36 active duty social work billets beginning in FY12. Furthermore, we have increased our communication and marketing efforts at our Airman & Family Readiness Centers and Medical Treatment Facilities to ensure Airmen and families are aware of the enhanced resources available to them.

### **WOUNDED WARRIOR AND SURVIVOR CARE**

We remain fully committed to caring for our brave Airmen who are wounded in battle, who contract serious illness or are injured while defending the nation’s freedoms. We also

recognize the importance of family to the healing process and continue to embrace the families of our brave men and women in uniform. The Air Force continues to provide non-medical case management, support, and assistance through the Air Force Survivor Assistance Program, the Recovery Care Program, and the Air Force Wounded Warrior Program – and will do so for as long as needed in partnership with our medical community. With your support, our Warrior and Survivor Care programs continue to prosper. As of February 28, 2011, we have 975 Air Force members enrolled in the Air Force Wounded Warrior Program. In keeping pace with our growing Wounded Warrior population, the Air Force has hired 33 Recovery Care Coordinators to support 31 locations across the Air Force. We have also increased our Air Force Wounded Warrior Program consultants from 12 to 21 positions.

Our Family Liaison Officers, Recovery Care Coordinators, Air Force Wounded Warrior Program consultants, and Community Readiness Consultants provide immediate and direct care for our Airmen and their families through recovery, rehabilitation and reintegration. Our partnerships with the Department of Defense and the Veteran Affairs are improving opportunities for our Airmen to continue as active duty Airmen or as civilians within the Air Force and Department of Defense. These partnerships support education and employment opportunities geared toward successful reintegration within the civilian communities.

Once again, we will celebrate the achievements of our Wounded Warriors during the 2011 Warrior Games scheduled for May 17 – 21, 2011 at the Olympic Training Center and United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The Warrior Games provide a focal point for our recovering Airmen to incorporate athletics back into their day-to-day lives by preparing them mentally and physically to get back to their military service. During the

competition, Airmen will compete in shooting, swimming, archery, volleyball, cycling, track and field, and basketball.

### **DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL**

As the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel and Services, I am responsible for many post Don't Ask, Don't Tell repeal actions, including the education and training of our Total Force. Every Airman must understand what is expected in the post-repeal environment and that standards of professional conduct will not change. To achieve this goal, we are aggressively implementing a systematic training program and updating numerous Air Force Instructions to implement policy changes on separations, accessions, and recruiting. The dignity and respect of our Airmen will remain a top priority.

In the Air Force, all Airmen receive the opportunity to reach their highest potential in an environment free from personal, social or institutional barriers—sexual orientation will be no different.

### **SEXUAL ASSAULT, PREVENTION AND RESPONSE**

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response remains a top priority as we work toward providing safe environments for our Airmen and families to work and live. We are focused on instilling a prevention-based program so these sexual offenses cannot and do not occur.

As part of our approach, consistent top-down messaging is critical. These messages continue to emphasize Air Force Core Values and the need for active Wingmen watching out for one another. Likewise, we have spent the last year building community empowerment through bystander intervention education. We provide training that ensures Airmen understand when to act if they observe behaviors or actions that may lead to sexual assault. An additional prevention

effort includes the development of a risk reduction guide which will be provided to senior commanders by fall of this year to assist them in providing safe environments.

As a service, from our most senior leaders to our newest Airmen, we remain committed to a zero-tolerance standard of sexual assault.

## **CONCLUSION**

Today's Airmen possess an unsurpassed commitment and dedication to service and are a credit to the Joint warfighter and the U.S. Air Force. They enable our competitive advantage against our adversaries and deliver dominance in air, space, and cyberspace. For these reasons, we will continue to recruit, train, and retain America's finest to serve our great nation, and for their solemn devotion we have an obligation to provide the care and service they and their families deserve.