

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
PRESENTATION TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
UNITED STATES SENATE

SUBJECT: HEARINGS TO EXAMINE THE ACTIVE, GUARD, RESERVE, AND CIVILIAN
PERSONNEL PROGRAMS IN REVIEW OF THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION REQUEST
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2013 AND THE FUTURE YEARS DEFENSE PROGRAM

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UNITED STATES SENATE

The Airmen of our great Air Force serve the Nation with distinction. They have performed valiantly during more than 20 continuous years of combat operations dating back to Operation DESERT STORM, while simultaneously supporting multiple broad-spectrum operations across the globe. Committed to meeting the requirements of the President's Defense Strategic Guidance, while confronting the realities of the current and future constrained fiscal environment facing our Nation, the Air Force remains committed to recruiting, developing and delivering to the battlefield innovative Airmen who can smartly and skillfully meet any task or mission. Our commitment as the Air Force's Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs and Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel and Services is to align the Air Force's greatest resource, our Airmen, to support the national security strategy. We must do so with fiscal responsibility, making extremely difficult resource priority decisions while at the same time demonstrating that we fully support our Airmen and their families. As we prioritize missions, it is critical we balance capabilities between our active and reserve components to maintain a robust national security posture in a dynamic global environment.

CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS

Our Airmen remain at the forefront of today's conflicts and contingency operations around the globe, serving proudly alongside our Soldier, Sailor and Marine counterparts. Today there are more than 80,000 Airmen either forward deployed or stationed abroad worldwide in our Nation's defense with an additional 134,000 Airmen providing direct support to our joint war fighters from the continental United States on a daily basis. That means 43 percent of our Total Force is directly supporting Combatant Commander requirements every day. In late 2010, the Air Force began a transition to a 6-month baseline deployment length. This will increase at-home time for Airmen between deployments and use pre-deployment training resources more

efficiently. We are on track to complete this transition by October 2012. At the same time, Air Force 365-day deployment taskings have increased to 2,300, up from 689 in 2005, and now represent 7% of the Air Force's total deployments.

MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PERSONNEL BUDGETS

The Air Force is committed to maintaining and sustaining the appropriate size and force mix to align with the new defense strategy, ensuring we meet mission requirements with acceptable personnel tempo and associated stress on the force. Detailed assessments of future conflict scenarios and deployment rotation requirements drove force structure adjustments resulting in the corresponding personnel reductions. By the end of FY13, end strength will be reduced a further 9,900 from 510,900 to 501,000. This will result in an Active Duty (AD) military end strength reduction from 332,800 to 328,900. Our Air Force Reserve (AFR) military end strength will decrease by 900 (increase in 200 full-time; decrease in 1,100 part-time, including 700 associated technician positions) to 70,500, and Air National Guard (ANG) military end strength will decrease by 5,100 (500 full-time; 4,600 part-time, including 1,400 associated technician positions) to 101,600. Approximately 80 percent of these reductions were driven by force structure changes.

During the development of the FY12 President's Budget, the Secretary of Defense released efficiency guidance to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of business operations. As part of this guidance, DoD civilian end strength funding was targeted at FY10 levels.

For the Air Force, this action effectively removed funding for 16,500 civilian positions that were planned growth between FY10 and FY12. To meet the DoD-directed civilian funded targets, the Air Force conducted an enterprise-wide review of efficiency initiatives, reducing

overhead and eliminating redundancies, while protecting areas of strategic importance such as the nuclear enterprise, intelligence, reconnaissance and surveillance. The reductions ultimately resulted in the Air Force divesting 3,000 positions of planned civilian growth and approximately 13,500 established positions, primarily from management and support staff areas.

The FY13 budget includes a total budget authority request of \$34.2 billion for AD, ANG and AFR military personnel. Included in this budget is a 1.7% military base pay increase, a 4.2% increase in the housing allowance and a 3.4% increase in subsistence allowance. We also project an 11.4% decrease in Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) funds. In addition, the civilian personnel budget requested for FY13 is \$12.4 billion for a programmed total force civilian strength of 185,900, and includes a 0.5% pay raise following a 2-year pay freeze.

COMPENSATION REFORM

We support the President's plan to establish a military retirement commission, undertaking a thorough review of the current retirement system and make recommendations to modernize that system with input from the Department. We also support the recommendation that any changes be grandfathered. The costs for military pay, allowances and health care have risen significantly in the last decade. As part of a DoD-wide effort, we are participating in the development of multiple proposals to meet deficit reduction targets and slow cost growth. The adjustments to the TRICARE benefits included in the budget reflect the proper balance and the right priorities necessary to sustain the benefit over the long term. National health care costs continue to rise at rates above general inflation and DoD is not insulated from this growth as we purchase over 60 percent of our care from private sector. DoD beneficiaries' out-of-pocket costs

with the proposed changes remain far below the cost-sharing percentage they experienced in 1995.

MILITARY FORCE MANAGEMENT

The Air Force will continue to sustain excellence with a smaller, more agile and modernized force. We continue to realize record high retention and remain focused on tailored force management efforts as we continue to size and shape the force to meet congressionally mandated end strength. The Force Management Program is a targeted, multi-year program managing the force along the 30-year continuum of service, which leverages voluntary measures first, incentivized programs where needed, and implements involuntary measures as required to yield sustained support for combatant commanders across the globe.

The FY12 voluntary force management programs include active duty service commitment waivers; time-in-grade waivers; reduced enlistment contract waivers; 8 versus 10 commissioned years of service waivers for prior-service officer retirement, as granted in the FY11 NDAA; voluntary separation pay; and Palace Chase transfers to the Air Reserve Components. We plan to utilize the Temporary Early Retirement Authority granted in the FY12 NDAA by targeting a very limited and specific number of enlisted Airmen in selected skills.

The FY12 officer involuntary force management program resulted in 610 losses through use of a force shaping board for probationary officers with less than 6 years Total Active Federal Commissioned Service (TAFCS), a reduction in force board for Captains and Majors, and Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel selective early retirement boards. The FY12 enlisted involuntary force management program currently only calls for date of separation rollbacks.

In FY13, the Air Force's voluntary programs are similar to those in FY12 and the only involuntary action is a projected force shaping board for probationary officers with less than 6 years TAFCS. Additionally, the Air Force will continue use of limited selective continuation and reduced promotion opportunities to Captain (95%) and Major (90%).

While we must take proactive measures to manage the force to remain within end strength, the Air Force is also committed to ensuring an effective transition to civilian life for our Airmen. We have increased our focus on improving Transition Assistance Programs and are actively participating with the White House Veterans Employment Initiative Task Force, in an effort to reduce veteran unemployment. We are committed to providing appropriate resources towards increased transition assistance and veteran employment efforts as we continue to collaborate with OSD, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Department of Labor, the Department of Education, and other government partners.

CIVILIAN FORCE MANAGEMENT

The Air Force has initiated programs to achieve the necessary civilian force reductions while ensuring mission continuity to comply with the FY10 funding levels as directed by DoD. The Air Force has implemented force management programs such as hiring controls, a 90-day hiring freeze, and two rounds of voluntary separation initiatives (Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) and the Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay (VSIP)). More than 2,900 civilian employees have accepted VERA/VSIP incentives. A third round of voluntary separation initiatives are planned to begin 1 May and conclude on 31 August. During this time of reductions and reshaping the force, the Air Force's primary goal is to minimize the number of involuntary separations to the greatest extent possible.

RETENTION, RECRUITMENT, BONUSES AND INCENTIVE PAYS

The Air Force accesses, retains and grows motivated and uniquely qualified Airmen to meet the security threats of today and the future. We must carefully tailor accessions to meet current needs, while also considering the future, as not bringing in enough new recruits can impact the force for 30 years to follow. Therefore, while our force management plan includes reducing some officer and enlisted accessions, those reductions are considered against future requirements. We project reducing enlisted accessions for FY12 and FY13 by 1,030 and 1,232, respectively, and reducing officer accessions by 30 in FY12, but no planned reductions in FY13.

The Air Force seeks the highest quality recruits to fill our ranks as current Airmen retire or separate through programmed attrition. To support these efforts, we have included \$82 million in the budget for the Air Force Recruiting Service to support Total Force recruiting operations, and an additional \$97 million for FY13 advertising, a slight reduction in the total recruiting budget from FY12. In 2011, the Air Force experienced great recruiting success, meeting all enlisted and officer recruitment goals for the active duty and reserve components. Just as notably, the quality of recruits entering the Air Force greatly increased. For our CAT I to IIIA recruits, the average score on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery increased from 90.5% in 2010 to 98.5% thus far in FY12, and we anticipate continued overall recruiting success in FY12 and FY13. However, there are nine Air Force career fields, to include linguist, special operations, and explosive ordnance disposal specialties where critical shortages remain due to high operational demand, manning shortages, or lengthy training pipelines. We budgeted

\$14.5 million in Initial Enlistment Bonuses in FY13 to attract Airmen into these critical skill areas. Active duty, non-line officer recruiters met 99% of their 2011 goal. We increased our efforts to recruit Fully Qualified Health Professionals (FQHP), meeting the goal of 25 FQHP officers in FY11 while increasing our FY12 goal to 55.

The ANG met their FY11 enlisted recruiting goal and are on track for FY12. However, ANG officer recruitment fell short in FY11 in both line officer and health professional areas. In response, the ANG is executing precision recruitment efforts in FY12 towards officer candidates using a standardized processing system, focused lead generation, and a heightened advertising campaign to help meet officer recruiting goals by FY13.

The Air Force Reserve continues to attract and retain qualified prior service and non-prior service recruits. For the 11th straight year, the AFRC Recruiting Service has led DoD in meeting recruiting goals. The Air Force's ability to attract and retain trained active component Airmen into the AFR greatly reduces training costs, and enhances the repository of talent and expertise available to meet the Air Force's surge and steady state requirements.

Retention remains at an all-time high in the Air Force as a whole, contributing to the need for multi-year force management programs to remain within authorized end strength. However, retention is still problematic for some skill sets and year groups, and we need investment to counter low accession year groups of the past and to retain critical war-fighting skills for the future. Bonuses have proven the most effective, responsive, and measurable tool for retention to encourage Airmen to remain in or retrain into career fields with high demand requirements. Training and replacement costs far exceed the amount invested in bonus programs, so the Air Force has allocated \$420.4 million in FY13 for Special and Incentive bonus pay. The Air Force

has portioned \$232 million of this amount for Selective Reenlistment Bonuses (SRB) for 78 Air Force specialties, down from 89 in FY11. SRB investments have shown to improve retention up to 1 to 8% per SRB increment, depending on the enlistment zone, and have proven to be a critical tool in retaining our needed specialties for the future.

Retention of senior non-commissioned officers (SNCO) in certain high-demand specialties such as combat control and pararescue is also challenging. CSRBs remain a vital tool to target specific year groups within specialties experiencing low retention, manning shortfalls, and high operational demand. Therefore, the Air Force targeted \$2.9 million in enlisted critical skills retention bonuses (CSRBS) towards retaining these SNCOs beyond retirement eligibility. Additionally, we are investing \$10 million in CSRBS towards officer specialties with retention and manning problems including contracting, special tactics, combat rescue officers and health professionals.

AIRMAN DEVELOPMENT

One of our primary initiatives in developing the force is an effort to better define, identify, and track institutional, occupational and cross-functional competencies. During FY13, we will continue to institutionalize a process allowing force development stakeholders at all levels to quantify and measure specific skills on both an individual and aggregate basis. Doing so will allow us to develop our Total Force Airmen more deliberately by matching training, education and experiential opportunities to real-world requirements. The Air Force is developing cross-cultural competence for all Airmen, in order to prepare them to deliver the global vigilance, global reach and global power our Nation expects. To support this requirement, we will focus our efforts on: 1) building expertise in foreign language, regional, and cultural

skills; 2) recognizing joint experience in an Airman's career; and 3) ensuring our educational offerings address current and anticipated requirements for language and regional expertise.

SUPPORT TO AIRMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Quality of life programs continue as one of our highest priorities. As our force changes, we must adapt our programs and services to ensure we meet the needs of today's Airmen and families. Additionally, we must tailor our offerings based on the utilization of services and the availability of suitable alternatives.

We recently completed the second generation of our *Caring for People Survey*. More than 100,000 Total Force Airmen voiced their opinions in this online survey conducted from December 1, 2010 to January 3, 2011. The survey measured satisfaction with quality of life across the Air Force community, to include Airmen, spouses, Air Force civilians and retirees across multiple areas like medical care, housing and support for families. The respondents expressed satisfaction with housing, installation schools, military benefits, dining facilities, fitness centers, child development centers and youth programs. Information, Tickets and Travel, along with the Air Force Food Transformation Initiative were standouts, competing with comparable industry leaders in the travel and food service industries. Some areas of concern include a sense of Air Force community, financial issues, medical care for families and job satisfaction.

We have a project team developing base prototypes, technological innovations and efficiencies to address concerns not just from the *Caring for People Survey*, but a variety of other surveys and focus groups as well. The team will provide installation commanders with tools to help them determine how to shape quality of life programs according to the needs of their local

Air Force community. In that vein, another key focus area is strengthening partnerships within local communities to take advantage of the services they provide. In the end, we will consolidate or divest quality of life activities that are not financially viable or not well utilized in order to redirect resources to the places where they matter most to Airmen, their families and the mission.

Our successful Food Transformation Initiative (FTI) continues as a high priority through FY12 and FY13. A customer satisfaction rating of 75 at the six FTI installations, compared to 67 at other facilities, indicates we are on the right path as we work to improve the delivery of meal choices, food quality, speed of service, and the overall dining experience for our personnel. As another indicator of success in our first year, we served an additional 530,000 customers and provided 133,000 more meals to our junior enlisted members at FTI installations as compared to the previous year. Based on the initial success of this program and with congressional support, we anticipate expanding FTI to seven additional installations in FY13.

It is important to recognize the contributions of non-pay programs in enhancing the quality of life for our Airmen and their families. The Defense Commissary Agency operates as a nonprofit organization and can save a family of four an estimated \$4,500 a year. Providing groceries and household items “at cost” saved patrons a total of \$2.7 billion last fiscal year. Additionally, the Army Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) provides merchandise and services to military members and their families at competitively low prices. The 3,100 facilities located in over 30 countries provided an average 24% savings to customers compared to comparable retail stores. Additionally, AAFES gives back to the military community through significant dividend contributions, which amounted to \$90.6 million going back to the Air Force communities AAFES serves in FY10. AAFES also offers employment benefits as 31% of employees are military family members.

We continue to strengthen our Air Force community by meeting childcare needs through a robust construction effort to increase the number of available childcare spaces and reduce our shortfall by the end of FY12. We are also adding 74 accessible childcare playgrounds and 26 community nature parks in support of Air Force families with special needs. The Air Force Expanded Child Care program assists Airmen who need child care for unusual shifts, extended duty hours and drill weekends. Additionally, we funded our new respite childcare program for special needs children at seven bases and we will expand it to other locations throughout the upcoming year.

We are also expanding our Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) to support more than 18,400 Air Force families with special needs members, a 10% increase since the end of FY10. To do so, we placed 35 EFMP Family Coordinators at installations with the highest concentrations of families enrolled in the program. We are also adding 36 EFMP Medical Coordinators through FY16 to support families needing specialized medical care and included \$3 million starting in FY13 to fund respite care and other EFMP related programs.

The Air Force also recognizes the important role and sacrifices of our ANG and AFR Airmen and their family members. While many of the same family support programs are offered to our reserve components, we realize that ANG and AFR families have difficulty sometimes accessing those available resources. As a result, we have supported ANG and AFR unique programs such as the Home Community Care program, which provides fee-assisted, in-home quality childcare during scheduled drill weekends. Returning Home Childcare for deployed personnel is another ANG/AFR family program benefit, funding 16-hours of no-cost care per child following deployments of 30 days or more. Finally, a Defense Management Data Center survey administered to ANG/AFR families highlighted the high satisfaction with the

congressionally supported Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program (YRRP), with 83% of respondents expressing high satisfaction with the YRRP events. Additionally, 77% said the information presented increased their confidence in their ability to find and utilize vital resources that would prepare them and their loved ones for continued military service.

MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM (MHS) GOVERNANCE

The Air Force fully supports the MHS Governance Task Force recommendations. They are important because they represent the intense and informed deliberation of both line and medical professionals who were seeking the best solutions to maintain exceptional care for our service members while finding more effective and efficient ways to deliver that care.

The Air Force believes implementation of the task force recommendations will ensure the sustainment of this high level of mission success. We agree that a more effective and efficient joint medical solution can be attained without the expense of establishing a unified medical command. The Services should – and will -- continue integrating common medical platforms to reduce redundancy and lower costs. The task force recommendations will move us quickly to a construct that curtails expenses and achieves savings to the greatest extent possible while meeting our deeply important mission; providing quality health care to the military member and their families, while being good stewards of American taxpayer dollars.

AIRMAN AND FAMILY RESILIENCY

A key factor in maintaining the health of our Air Force is to increase the resiliency of our Airmen. Our efforts include a number of programs in the Comprehensive Airman Fitness (CAF) model designed on four pillars of resilience: Mental, Physical, Social and Spiritual. This program provides tools to help Total Force Airmen and their families withstand, recover or grow

in the face of stressors and changing demands. It is our goal to expand education and training of the CAF model to our accession and professional military education units first. Next, we will provide Master Resilience training Air Force-wide to individuals who provide face-to-face resilience skills training at the installation level. Further, the Leadership Pathway is a program incorporating basic resilience and life skills for Airmen and family members in utilizing existing resources offered at the Airman and Family Readiness Center, Health and Wellness Center, Air Force clinics/hospitals and base chapels.

The Deployment Transition Center (DTC) at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, was established to provide valuable decompression, reintegration and resilience training for returning service members who were exposed to significant danger and stress in combat zones. Since calendar year 2010, over 3,000 Airmen have completed the center's 2-day program and have reintegrated with their home units and families. The Air Force FY12 budget includes \$7 million for DTC operations, research, curriculum development, materials and intervention training.

SUICIDE PREVENTION

Suicide prevention remains a top Air Force leadership priority. The Air Force uses an integrated public health approach to suicide prevention, emphasizing leadership involvement, a supportive Wingman culture, and access to evidence-based care provided by Air Force helping agencies. The Air Force Suicide Prevention Program is one of only 15 evidence-based programs listed by The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Recent suicide prevention initiatives include requiring face-to-face suicide prevention training for all frontline supervisors in the three career fields with the highest suicide rates in 2010. Since implementation in November 2010, the suicide rates in these career fields dropped significantly.

Other initiatives include developing the *Airman's Guide for Assisting Personnel in Distress*, a new web-based resource to assist all Airmen with strategies and resources for a variety of behavioral concerns. We are also sponsoring a RAND study on the use of social media and its impact on relationships and emotional wellbeing, as well as research by the University of Rochester on specific clusters of risk factors associated with suicide. The Air Force Community Action Information Board/Integrated Delivery System (CAIB/IDS) links leaders and helping professionals at every level of the Air Force organization and monitors all our suicide prevention initiatives for continuity and completeness. An audit of its effectiveness will provide guidance on enhancing the functioning of these organizations and provide areas of further improvement in our evidence-based program.

Proper public messaging on suicide prevention is important. Public messages must avoid the impression that suicide is common, so the Air Force has revised memorial service and public affairs guidance shifting the focus toward the positive message of resilience, stressing the benefits of early help-seeking and effective Wingmanship.

Finally, the Air Force is working closely with our sister Services to implement recommendations made by the Defense Health Board's Task Force on Suicide Prevention and to clarify roles and responsibilities within the Department regarding suicide prevention.

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

The Air Force strongly supports the Secretary of Defense's commitment, focus, and initiatives aimed at eradicating sexual assault. Eliminating sexual violence is everyone's responsibility. Leaders, commanders and supervisors set the tone and must model zero tolerance and behaviors supporting zero tolerance. The goal of our Air Force Sexual Assault Prevention

and Response (SAPR) program is to prevent and respond to sexual assault through a balance of focused education, compassionate advocacy and accountability, promoting respect and dignity throughout the Air Force.

Prevention of sexual assault continues to be a high priority. Career long education and training creates a foundation for prevention. This education begins with accessions, continues through all phases of professional military education, and is refreshed during annual training. In February, we released a wing commander guide, *An Opportunity to Lead*, containing five core elements to help commanders provide immediate impact. The guide addresses personal leadership, climate and environment, community leadership, victim response, and offender accountability. In addition, Bystander Intervention Training has been established as a requirement for all Airmen, focusing on the importance of recognizing signs of inappropriate or unsafe situations and intervening appropriately.

The FY12 NDAA contained significant mandates addressing sexual assault including a requirement for full time Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) and victim advocates at brigade or equivalent level. The Air Force SAPR program has included full time SARCs at installation level since 2005, including the six primary U.S. Central Command area of responsibility AF locations. Air Force SARCs receive training that meets national advocacy credentialing standards. Victim advocates are military and Air Force civilian volunteers who receive comparable training. Currently, 3,159 fully trained volunteers are available to assist victims. The Air Force projected \$31.8 million to execute the SAPR program in FY13. The budget funds full time SARCs, twenty-four dedicated investigative agents specializing in sexual assault investigations, and operational program expenses for all first-responder agencies and field level activities. To meet the new FY12 NDAA requirement for full time Sexual Assault victim

advocates at brigade or equivalent level, the Air Force will need to add 89 new positions (60 DoD civilians and 18 officers from the Active Duty Component, and 11 Traditional Reserve Officers from the Air Reserve Component). The associated cost is \$7.5 million in FY13, increasing to \$8.4 million by FY17.

Prevention and response are critical elements of the SAPR program. Holding those who commit the crime of sexual assault accountable is equally important. The Air Force is committed to accountability through effective investigations, knowledgeable staff judge advocate advice, and strong commander and senior enlisted support. The Air Force has twenty-four Air Force Office of Special Investigations investigators dedicated to sexual assault investigations and funds ten DNA analyst salaries at the U.S. Army Criminal Investigations Laboratory to analyze Air Force sexual assault case evidence. Investigators and judge advocates participate in combined training and attend courses specifically addressing sexual assault crimes. The recent Air Force Judge Advocate General KEYSTONE annual leader summit provided a four-hour session for staff judge advocates facilitated by subject matter experts on investigation and evaluation of sexual assault cases. Executive Order MRE 514 provides victim advocate privilege against disclosure of certain communications by victims, SAPR victim advocates and family advocacy program victim advocates, and we feel certain this provision will encourage more victims to come forward and report sexual assaults and incidents of domestic violence.

In March, the Air Force launched the Defense Sexual Assault Incident Database (DSAID). The Air Force has worked closely with OSD from concept development to DSAID system design, so we look forward to implementing this valuable tool for enhanced reporting to Congress and to our leaders and commanders and we appreciate Congress's continued support in addressing this crime.

WOUNDED WARRIORS

The Air Force continues to strengthen its support for our wounded, ill and injured population through our Warrior and Survivor Care Division. Our wounded, ill and injured Airmen deserve our very best and the Warrior and Survivor Care Division is committed to providing them individualized and focused non-clinical support. Through the Recovery Care Coordinator (RCC) program, we have strategically placed 33 non-clinical care managers around the country and in Germany. This RCC network provides dedicated support and coverage from the moment Air Force Casualty reports that an Airman is placed in a seriously or very seriously ill or injured status; serving as independent advocates for each Airman and working to ease the burden of administrative and personal requirements as they navigate through their continuum of care.

Our Family Liaison Officers, or FLOs, also provide an invaluable service to the families of our seriously or very seriously wounded, ill and injured Airmen. The Air Force has taken the concept used to support families of the fallen and applied it to our wounded warrior families as well. The FLO coordinates all logistical support for family members to include arranging lodging, securing transportation, and seeing to the comfort and other arising needs of the family.

While we provide excellent care for all our wounded, ill and injured with RCCs and FLOs, the Air Force Wounded Warrior Program (AFW2) focuses exclusively on our combat wounded Airmen. This program provides long-term, non-clinical care management for combat wounded who must meet a Medical Evaluation Board or Physical Evaluation Board to determine

whether they are fit for duty. Focused, personal care from AFW2 allows our combat wounded Airmen the opportunity to make informed decisions when their future career path changes due to their injuries.

INTEGRATED DISABILITY EVALUATION SYSTEM (IDES)

The Air Force has collaborated with OSD and the VA to simplify the IDES process for service members by increasing transparency and reducing processing time to improve the transition for service members from DoD to VA. Overall, the IDES monthly progress report for February 2012 indicates Air Force active component case processing is averaging 360 days, down from an average of 540 days in recent years.

The Air Force Medical Evaluation Board (MEB) and Physical Evaluation Board (PEB) are working diligently to meet timeliness goals and ensure quality outcomes. We have directed considerable leadership attention and resources targeting improved MEB and PEB decision timeliness and are on target to meet review and decision guidelines by October 2012. These focused efforts will ensure our wounded, ill and injured personnel receive timely reviews and adjudications of their cases. Along with the Army and the Navy, the Air Force is working with the Wounded Warrior Care and Transition Policy Office to identify a methodology for accurately tracking each step associated with the transition phase.

Another venue of disability appeals administered by the Air Force is the Department of Defense Physical Disability Board of Review (PDBR). As the lead component operating this Wounded Warrior Board, the Air Force recently partnered with the VA in its outreach efforts to ensure every PDBR-eligible Veteran is made aware of their opportunity to have their service assigned disability ratings reviewed. The goal of this interdepartmental effort is to reach all 77,000 eligible Veterans within the year.

OPERATIONAL RESERVE

We appreciate the opportunity to also share information about the highest quality, most cost efficient reserve component in history. As the new Department of Defense strategy is implemented and planning occurs to conform with an increasingly austere budget environment, the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard will continue to maximize the advantages of Associations. Associate units have proven themselves as a solid solution that exploits the strengths each component offers. They ensure that the experience and cost effectiveness of the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard reach their full potential. This effort is critical to mission success in an environment wrought with fiscal challenges.

Recently, Congress passed much-needed legislation allowing service secretaries to involuntarily mobilize up to 60,000 members of the Reserve Component without a national emergency. The use of this authority still needs to be planned, programmed and budgeted before it can be implemented. The Air Force is working with OSD to develop the policies and procedures to offer the fastest, most enduring support to not only the combatant commanders around the world, but to all our members; balancing their time between Service to our country, their families, and their employers.

The Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard are currently sustaining combat operations in conjunction with our active duty colleagues on five continents—lengthy operations which have produced strains on our airmen and our equipment. We will continue to define the most efficient mix of Active, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard forces best suited to the strategy in terms of cost, operational requirements, surge or regeneration capability, and employment of Total Force assets. By ensuring optimal mix between the Regular Air Force, the Air Force Reserve, and the Air National Guard the Total Force will not only preserve previous

investments in readiness, capability, and capacity, but also protect the operational expertise of the force for future use while ensuring a rapidly expandable, trained and ready military.

MILITARY PERSONNEL APPROPRIATION (MPA) MAN-DAYS

The MPA man-day resource enables the Air Force to leverage Air Reserve Component capabilities supporting military missions beyond the active component's level of capability. In late 2009, a decision was made to implement a requirements-based MPA man-day process as part of the Air Force Corporate Structure (AFCS) FY12 Program Objective Memorandum (POM) development process. Since the FY12 POM build, Air Force MAJCOMs have worked closely with the combatant commanders to identify requirements. Once submitted, requirements are staffed, verified and vetted through the AFCS based on priorities established in the Annual Planning and Programming Guidance. Additional criteria such as mission impact, critical skills, active duty manning and level of support are also weighted to finalize the prioritization. The Air Force is committed to continuing this transparent process, which is designed to ensure appropriate deployment of Reserve Component forces, enabling the Total Force to properly respond to COCOM requirements.

INTEGRATION OF AIR FORCE COMPONENT PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

We are committed to fully integrating personnel management policies, organizations, systems and processes across the Air Force enterprise, with the outcome of providing more effective and improved service to our Airmen, reducing barriers to continuum of service, and increasing emphasis on unified Total Force decision-making. This is not only the right thing to do for our Air Force; it will drive greater operational efficiencies and allow transfer of resources from tail to tooth.

Since the Secretary of the Air Force directed the integration of the three Air Force Component Personnel Management Systems into one, personnel from across the Air Force headquarters have been working to facilitate the integration and standardization of human resource management with Total Force directives and instructions. As of this date, analysis is underway on more than two dozen human resource activities, with the high-level policy analysis phase on track for completion in May 2012. We are looking closely at existing policy guidance to standardize or consolidate management across components wherever practical and where allowed by law. This effort has a targeted implementation work plan of CY12, with follow-on actions through the Future Years Defense Plan (FYDP).

DIVERSITY

Diversity remains a top priority of Air Force senior leadership. The Air Force recognizes that a diverse force is a military necessity, and we continue on a strategic path to attract, recruit, develop and retain a diverse and inclusive workforce of highly qualified individuals who reflect the rich tapestry of the Nation we serve. In October 2011, a Declaration on Diversity signed by the Secretary of the Air Force, Chief of Staff of the Air Force and Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force was distributed across the Air Force to highlight the importance of diversity to the mission. Additionally, we increased senior leader involvement in the Air Force Diversity Committee by adding the Major Command (MAJCOM) Vice Commanders, who provide invaluable insight on best practices throughout their respective commands. We are well on the way to institutionalizing our Strategic Diversity Roadmap, *A Journey to Excellence throughout the Total Force*.

Results from our 2011 Internal Communication Assessment Group Diversity survey indicated 75 percent of Airmen agreed it is important for the Air Force to attract, recruit, develop

and retain a qualified, diverse workforce as a way to maintain our edge as a superior military organization. Furthermore, 88 percent of Airmen surveyed believe the Air Force is doing a good or excellent job creating diversity within the Total Force.

Focus on Air Force outreach programs remains central to attracting and recruiting diverse talent. To that end, in partnership with OSD's Office of Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity, the Air Force plans, coordinates and oversees national-level diversity outreach programs supporting our diversity goals and objectives. Further, to maximize resources, we utilize a Total Force perspective to determine which events and opportunities provide the best return on investment. We have 80 outreach events planned for 2012, including the Black Engineer of the Year Awards, Joint Women's Leadership Symposium and the Hispanic Engineer National Achievements Award Corporation Conference. We continue to place emphasis on education, health, and mentoring in the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics disciplines through our community engagements, and feedback from community influencers has proven very positive thus far.

Finally, the Air Force supports the Military Leadership Diversity Commission recommendations and is poised to support Executive Order 13583, *Establishing a Coordinated Government-wide Initiative to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in the Federal Workforce*. Upon OPM's release of the government-wide *Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan*, we will work with OSD to develop a plan of action and milestones to support the President's goal of using the talents of all segments of society by enhancing our ability to recruit, hire, promote, and retain a more diverse workforce and creating a culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness to enable individuals to participate to their full potential.

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY (USAFA)

The US Air Force Academy continues to provide an exceptional environment for educating, training and inspiring men and women to become outstanding officers, motivated to lead the United States Air Force in service to our nation in a challenging global environment. Senior Air Force leadership continues to energetically engage in the Academy's oversight, ensuring cadet train, study and live in a safe and productive environment. We continue our close working relationship with the USAFA Board of Visitors, enjoying frequent interactions with Ambassador Susan Schwab, USAFA BOV Chair, who is keeping the BoV vitalized and actively engaged in providing external Academy oversight.

In the past year, USAFA cadets received numerous accolades for their undergraduate work, including one Rhodes scholar and two Marshall scholars, recognition by US News & World Report as having the #2 Aerospace/Aeronautical/Astronautical Program in the nation and #1 undergraduate-only institution in research funding-over \$70M, and being ranked by Forbes as #10 of 610 of America's Best Colleges. In addition to outstanding academics, the cadets have also excelled in athletics, being #2 of 120 NCAA Division I football programs in academic progress rates, #1 of 9 academically in the Mountain West Conference, and for the second consecutive year, the Academy's football team will visit the White House to receive the Commander-in-Chief's Trophy from the President. The President will also give this year's commencement address at the Academy.

Respect for human dignity is at the core of the USAFA environment. USAFA is a leader in developing programs for the prevention of and responding to incidents of sexual assault and sexual harassment, gender relations issues, and religious tolerance. The Academy is currently conducting Religious Respect Training, which involves cadets, faculty and staff, using training

scenarios designed to spur critical thinking on religious tolerance and actions. While the Academy had an uneventful “Don’t-Ask/Don’t-Tell” transition, it is unfortunately in the midst of investigating several cases of alleged sexual assault and illegal drug use.

USAFA is working hard to preserve an outstanding training and educational environment in a fiscally challenging environment. As part of the AF response to the requirements of the SECDEF’s August 2010 Efficiency Memorandum, USAFA is reducing its civilian workforce by 67 positions (~4% of its current workforce). The Academy is currently in the process of selecting members for the Class of 2016 while focusing efforts to ensure the size of that class supports the 1 Oct 2012 cadet wing end strength target of 4,000.

CONCLUSION

The hallmark of the United States Air Force’s success has always been, and will remain, our people. Nearly two decades of sustained combat, humanitarian and stability operations have imposed extraordinary demands on our forces. Yet our Airmen continue to contribute significant capabilities to the joint team and do so with the integrity and excellence familiar to the global community. We will continue to size and shape the force through all necessary means while retaining an intrinsic value that attracts and keeps the highest quality Airmen. We are a smaller force, but a ready force. By sustaining accessions for the long-term and balancing the total force to meet operational requirements, your United States Air Force, with its joint partners, provides unmatched capabilities across the spectrum of operations.