

General Robin Rand
"AETC Update"
AFA - Air & Space Conference and Technology Exposition
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General Rand: Thanks Lynn, I appreciate it. Thank you.

Good afternoon, everyone. I didn't get as big a crowd as the Chief. What's that about? [Laughter]. Was he good or what? I love listening to him. It's an honor to serve, be one of his wingmen.

Thank you everyone. I thought what I'd quickly do is kind of walk through priorities and maybe some of the things that have changed recently in AETC or some of the hot rocks that we're working. Then I thought I would then finish up with questions and answers. How does that sound?

Next slide, please.

This is a briefing that the Command Chief -- Chief Tapia, would you stand up please? My wingman right here. [Applause]. We get around and in fact it's been actually took command in early October and last, two weeks ago I finished the last of the 23 wings and six detached groups that we had, so it's been a busy ten months. We get around and I try to share with folks the priorities -- mission, Airmen, families. It needs to be based on something. Those are our core values. You want to reinforce those core values with our rich heritage. So I thought I'd just kind of share some of the things that we're working in these areas and then we'll do the questions.

Next slide, please.

It's a great mission. I feel like I'm the luckiest guy in the Air Force, and I'm not kidding. I love being in AETC. I started my career like almost every Airman does, a little over 35 years ago at Williams Air Force Base. And I have every reason to believe I'll finish my career at AETC, and it's been a really cool two bookends and a great career. It's so good to be back doing what we do. And it's simple. We recruit. We train. Our technical training, our flying training. And we educate Airmen. That's our weapon system, is our Airmen, to deliver air power to different MAJCOMs and the combatant commanders around

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the world. And the Chief and I really feel that we have a good deal going here. So a little bit on the mission, if you will.

Next.

It starts with recruiting. We're really proud of these recruiters. Exceptional NCOs and officers that we have. We have them in three groups. Twenty-four squadrons. We've got about 1100 of them and they're scattered all around the United States.

Next slide.

This is one of the things that if I were to stay up at night this would be one of the things that would keep me up. We've got 70 percent of our recruiters are singletons, by themselves in these offices. So we're going to work on changing that. We're going to go to a flight centric kind of a hub and spoke and start consolidating some of these different recruiting offices so we can be more efficient and actually provide better support for those that are out there doing the duty.

Last year we had about 1100 offices. As I mentioned, 70 percent are covered by a single person. We're on a road map to get to roughly about 400 offices by the time we get to 2018. We've already started that. Some would say why do you want to consolidate? Well, if you gave me more recruiters we wouldn't need to. That's not going to happen, though the Chief and Secretary approved 75 additional recruiters starting in FY16. We're very happy about that. But this is the most efficient way for us to do that and still cover these landscapes. You can see, we've got to get after it and we're very proud and it begins with the quality of the Airmen that we get. Very proud of our recruiting service.

A brand new commander last week, Brigadier General James Johnson, took command on Thursday.

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Transition from recruiting, then we drop them off at the gateway to the Air Force, Lackland Air Force Base. I know a lot of you have been there. Boy oh boy, am I proud of the men and women that serve in the 37th Training Wing there. Primarily the 737th Training Group does the BMT and if you want to get re-blued, I personally invite you, 50 out of 52 Fridays of the year, come out on any one of those except Thanksgiving or Christmas week, and we'll re-blue you. You can watch between 500 and 700 of our newest Airmen march past you and you will get fired up. They're great.

We're going to do something starting in January with our new class that comes in. They'll finish in March. We're going to add what's called a transition week to their training. The course is eight weeks long, it will remain eight weeks long, but after about seven and a half weeks we'll graduate them from their parade, they'll spend time with their moms and dads, their brothers and sisters and spouses, and then we'll bring them back Sunday night and on Monday morning they're going to get five days[sic] of reinforcing those important concepts of the profession of arms, our core values. The Airmen's Creed, how to treat each other with dignity, respect and diversity, and it's going to be great. We're really excited about this. The idea will be when we turn them loose to tech training, they'll be even more solidified in that framework, that basic foundation on what it means to be a United States Air Force Airman. I'm excited about that. We've got a lot of folks working with us. Very exciting times.

Let me tell you, we've been on a journey with BMT. A lot of good things to report. I've got to be honest when I say this. I think the finest NCOs we have in our Air Force are our Basic Military Training instructors. They're something to behold and I'm proud to be one of their wingmen. It's a neat place.

So the offer stands, if you want to get motivated, let me know and we'll get you out there Friday morning.

Next.

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Tech training. We're spread around. I think I've got all the bases up. SERE training for our SERE specialists at Fairchild; to our Defense Language Institute at Monterey; Space and Missiles at Vandenberg; Sheppard does a lot of different type of tech training, largely focused on maintenance; Goodfellow, our fire academy and mostly our intel; Joint Base San Antonio there at Lackland is the largest tech training place. Believe it or not, everyone knows it for its Basic Military Training but it does an array of different things there. Then out at Keesler where we're really working hard [at] the information technology, the cyber training that we need for our Air Force. So there you have the tech training places that we're at.

Next.

Flying training, as some mentioned, a little different. These are the undergraduate flying training organizations and, if you will, the advanced graduate flying training organizations. Again, pretty much scattered from the West Coast out to the East Coast.

Next.

We start them at IFS at Pueblo in that little DA-20. Then they come in to fly the T-6 at one of our bases. A decision will be made if they're going to go to helicopters, T-1s or T-38s. That's where we're at right now. I'll stand prepared to answer any questions you have about the plan for the T-38 replacement, the T-X. But that's what we're doing currently.

Next slide, please.

We're real proud of our advanced flying training. We've got the Eagles at Kingsley Field, our Air National Guard wing does all the F-15 training for the entire Air Force right there at Kingsley. That was my last wing that I visited, just an absolutely rock solid organization, hitting home runs for us.

We do our F-35 training. Some of it is right now at Eglin. Will remain there. And we've got our ninth airplane, F-35, at

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Luke. Luke will do both F-35 and F-16. I'm happy to entertain any questions. We're really excited about the future there and what we're doing.

We're also going to expand and add a mission at Altus. Altus right now does our KC-135s and our C-17s. And in '16 we plan to get our first KC-46 and we'll do the training for the Air Force's KC-46 drivers. I'm very excited about that. I was out there with my good friend Joe not more than about a month ago and we broke ground on our KC-46 facility. So we're getting after it. It's just right around the corner.

Kirtland's got a mish-mash of everything. We do a lot of the support training for Special Ops with our CV-22s, our C-130s, the MCs. We've got our H-60s training there. A lot of great things happening there.

And then we've got four F-16 training locations -- Luke, Holloman, which we just started. In fact our first B course, 16 young lieutenants, are at Holloman right now getting ready to start. They're going to grow to two squadrons of F-16s at Holloman. Tucson, another fantastic wing. It's a national treasure what they do at Tucson for our international F-16 training is remarkable. And then we've got the Kelly Guard unit right across town from where I live, flying F-16s as well. So we stay involved with the flying.

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I think I kind of mentioned this. Around the corner, F-35s are already there doing it. We haven't done any student training yet. We're training the instructors is what we're doing right now.

I'll also mention that this is going to be a big international flavor for us with our eight partners right now and three FMS countries that we're expecting will be their training at Luke.

Then I'm happy to announce the A-29 Super Tucano. We're going to base it at Moody Air Force Base. It will be a squadron. Its

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parent unit will be Columbus Air Force Base. We picked the cadre. We're going to get the airplanes and we're going to start training Afghans. We've got our first 12 Afghan pilots selected and we're going to go up to 30, and 80 maintainers over the next four years. So that's real exciting for us and certainly will I think help solidify the Afghan Air Force.

I mentioned the KC-46 already.

Next.

In education. I just thought I'd highlight. It's great having Maxwell and AFIT and just some incredible faculty folks. We really, really get a lot of things. But here are some of the highlights of what's changed.

The bottom line, some of our PME courses, we've made them better. We really have. We're more efficient, we're more streamlined. I'll start off with the NCO Academy. The way we've changed the syllabus by blended distance learning within residents. We're going to get more people in residence. It's just going to reinforce better our core competencies.

The Senior NCO Academy. It's a great program for our high top end master sergeants and our senior master sergeant selects. And it's a great course that we've put a little more student involvement in it. It's interactive where the students are much more involved and much more participation from them, and the feedback we're receiving has been very very positive.

Chief Leadership Course. I'm really proud to announce where we're going with that. We did a Beta test. It was initially going to be distance learning. About 39 weeks for our chiefs, and we said, you know what, for the same price we can probably figure out how to do this in residence. Chief Welsh and Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Cody have supported that and we're going to take this and we're going to bring the chiefs to Maxwell for an in-residence course because we think that certainly is the better utilization of their time and we think they'll learn more and be better chiefs when they leave.

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Then I am happy to announce an initiative that we were asked to start. We've done a pretty good job of getting most of our young officers to SOS, Squadron Officer School. I think most of you realize that's probably one of the only times that the majority of officers will ever have an in-residence experience is at SOS. You can't say the same about IDE or SDE, but certainly for SOS. The Chief gave us a goal. He said I want 100 percent of the active duty there. We've got it. But we had to shorten the course to do it, to five weeks. But we didn't shorten the content. We didn't shorten I think the meaning, how meaningful it will still be. And the really good news is we're going to be able to get more of Sid and JJ's guys and gals to SOS now and we're going to get more of our international partners to be able to come. So this is going to be something that starts the 15th of October. Our last eight week course is there right now. They'll graduate in about three weeks and we kick off the new course. I'll report back to you in a year and let you know how it's going, but I have every indication it's going to be a hit, so I'm excited about that.

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Let me just say about the training part, the mission if you will, we've got over 5000 international partners each year that we train with. We've got over 128 countries, when you talk about at AU, in our tech training and in our flying trainings that go through our programs. We have ENJJPT with 13 nations involved in that. I've already mentioned what's going to be going on at Luke with the F-35. Folks, it's wild, what Sid's guys do at Tucson. We are really joined at the hip with our international training and our partners and they love it. Typically what I find is they want more of it. Whatever we can provide for them, they'll say can we have more? That's the challenge sometimes is we just, you know, we don't have the capability always to give more. If we could, we would, but I think we're really maximizing the training we're able to provide and it's a great story. And I'll entertain any questions you have on that.

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The real weapon system is our Airmen. That's where our focus is, and to work around these young men and women like in this picture is just incredible folks. You can be proud of these guys and gals.

Next.

Someone like this person. Felix Morales. The Chief and I met Felix. You can see the Chief photo bombing the picture. See him in the back? I met Felix. He was 19 years old when I met him. It was in January, and he was from Killeen, Texas. Boy, does he look proud. What do you think?

So I asked him, who's that young lady next to you? He said sir, that's my fiancé. Your fiancé? How old is she? She's 19. I go, when are you getting married? And honestly, he looked at his watch and he said, in two hours. Since then they've already had a child. He's in intel. He's gone on to his first duty assignment. Those are the men and women we get to lead, that we get to serve with, that we count on. I'm proud of Felix.

Next.

Then there's this guy. I met Steve Tyler back in 2007. At the time he was a weapons loader at Aviano and deployed to Iraq. So he'd be out at the airplane being a fire guard on some of the missions when I'd show up and fly with them. I asked him one day, Steve, why did you join the Air Force? He looked at me kind of sheepishly and he said, General, I was a bad kid growing up. Caused my mom a lot of problems. I wanted to do something to make her proud of me.

Let's fast forward to 2014. Steve now is a tech sergeant select. He's finishing his master's degree in counseling. He's married. He's got a beautiful son. I have every reason to believe mom would be proud of Steve Tyler. What do you think? He's now a chaplain's assistant and he works for Joint Base San Antonio there out at Lackland.

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Then there's this young lady, Jessica Weibel. Jessica was a student pilot, got her wings from Vance Air Force Base not that long ago. Her first assignment was the DM. She went to fly the A-10. I was the 12th Air Force Commander when she graduated and I had a free afternoon so I went down to the 358th Fighter Squadron, the Lobos, and the squadron commander met me at the hangar. Jen Short was her name. She said sir, we're so glad you could be here. I just want to let you know one of our graduates is missing, though. I thought that was peculiar that we'd have a graduate missing. She said, but her parents are here. I said Jen, where is she? Sir, she's en-route to join the 354th Fighter Squadron, the Bulldogs for combat. Folks, five days after she graduated from A-10, about eight months after she graduated from pilot training, she flew her first combat mission. That's the kind of Airmen we have.

I'm really proud of Jessica Weibull. Not only did she fly her first combat mission five days later, but on her fifth mission she did some heroic stuff. There will be Taliban that are going to forever rue the day that Jessica Weibel skipped her A-10 graduation. Okay? That's the kind of Airmen we have.

Next.

I could go on and on and on and on. I love it.

Go around the corner. Tech Sergeant Chavez, my A-1 Kim Toney. That lady in the middle, Michelle Funk. She's a staff sergeant from Little Rock, a C-130 crew chief. A year ago October she had volunteered to go be a JET Airman, I think you know what they are. Joint Expeditionary Tasking. Volunteered. She was a driver, convoy driver. Non-tactical vehicles for the Defense Management Agency. She broke wire one day in two vehicles. One of the vehicles got blown up from a VBIED. Her vehicle took serious damage and she literally, they got ambushed. The window of her car she was in, the back window got blown out. She takes her M4. She's hosing off rounds, keeping the enemy at bay. They get the individuals from the other car in her car. As they're driving off, she's firing off rounds. She saved the

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day. She was awarded the Bronze Star with Valor, folks. When I asked her how could a crew chief possibly have known what to do? She looked at me, she said Sir, I did what I was trained to do.

We have a ton of people like that.

I just want to tell you one more. That guy in the bottom middle. His name's Ed Camacho. Ed graduated from Laughlin Air Force Base this past April, five or six months ago. Ben I think was with me when I met Ed. Ben, this was in February of '07 when you came over on your visit. I met him at two in the morning. He was a young Airman and he was working in our supply tent there. When I met him, I asked him who was in charge, and he said I am. He had a very thick accent. I said where are you from? He said, Sir, I'm from Venezuela.

Long story short, five years to the day, he graduated from the Air Force Academy. That was in the summer of May of '12. Went to Columbus and he got his wings. When I first met him, I said why did you come into the Air Force? He said I wanted to be an astronaut. But he didn't even know how to speak English, folks. Here he is seven years later. He doesn't want to be an astronaut any longer, but he's going to do great things for our Air Force. He's at Davis Monthan right now going through EC-130 training, so he'll do great things.

Next.

Our families are important to us in this command, as they are everywhere in the Air Force. How about those two young boys on the upper left? Are they not the handsomest young men you've ever seen? They look just like their granddad, don't they? That's Eli and Luke. Anyone guess what time of day it is? What do you think the time is? It's 1700. How do I know that? What are they doing? What do we do on military bases at 1700 most places? We do Retreat. They were inside, they were visiting my wife Kim and I. They came flying out when they heard the sound of the music and we got that picture. I don't know what that has to do with the story, but I like the picture so I thought I'd show it to you.

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It has a lot to do with it, what our families go through. My daughter, Brooke, is married to Matt. Matt's a 2003 Academy grad. He's been in 11 years. And of his 11 years, almost six have been deployed. So it's personal to me because we ask a lot of our families and my daughter raises those three children of hers -- Eli, Luke and their baby sister Evie. Evie Joy. That's what we ask of our families.

That middle picture is Phil Wielhouwer. He's assigned to AETC. He just gave up group command and now he's working the staff. He's working T-X for us. Those are his three beautiful children. That's his beautiful wife Val, and you can't see Val's face nor can you see what she's carrying. She's holding little baby Ryan. That was five years ago. Ryan is now a little terror, let me tell you. And that's not unique to the Wielhouwers. For generations we've had families that have been doing this. Having babies while someone's deployed. But it speaks to what we ask.

So in AETC our families are a priority because our folks are working hard like they are everywhere and Chief and I are committed to that.

Next.

But if mission, Airmen, families -- Well, let me talk about these two real quick. That guy in the middle Dominic Luca. That's his mom, to his right. And that's his wife with the pink cap on. Dominic was from South Sudan and when he was 15 his family was murdered. A German nun took him in and he got across the border into Kenya to the Kenya Embassy. From there they were able to place him into the United States. His mom adopted him when he was 15. I asked him my favorite question, why did you join the Air Force, Dominic? He said the United States has given me everything I have. Everything. I owe my life to this country and I just wanted to pay it back. Quite a story, isn't it?

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Don't try to keep up with Dominic. At BMT he did his mile and a half in seven minutes and 28 seconds. Okay? He'll outrun you.

Then there's the Ensley sisters. Second lieutenant Ensley, who's a defender, and her sister, who's a transporter. I asked her why she joined the Air Force and she said I wanted to be like my big sister. I'd like you to look at mom and dad in that picture. They are happy and they are proud because that's a proud day. Their daughter just graduated from Basic Military Training. But mom and dad have no idea what the Air Force is going to ask those two ladies to do over the next five years, ten years or however long they stay in the Air Force. We do, and so it's important to the Chief and I that, and the men and women in AETC that we're doing everything we can for these folks to make sure they're trained, resourced, and equipped.

Next.

If you believe mission, Airmen, families, and I just want to tell you, it's got to be based on something for us. This is our core values. I didn't make these up. I'm just proud that I can stand up and talk about them to our Airmen. They don't need a lot of explanation, do they? We stand for an organization that believes in integrity, service and excellence, and when we don't reach those we critique ourselves and we strive for them, and we're proud. And we want to reinforce that. So we're working hard on that. That's why we're doing the transition week in BMT. That's why we've added what we call Airman 200. That's why we're infusing some of this back into our PME courses. That's why we're trying to get it out into the wings on a daily, weekly, monthly, formalized, informal training. Okay? Formalized informal training. Teaching, coaching, leading our Airmen.

Next.

The Airman's Creed's a good tool. Be a good wingman.

Next slide.

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And the Airman's Creed is a good tool. I like to ask our folks when I talk to them, how many of you have memorized the Airman's Creed? I don't want to embarrass anyone. But I tell them, your Airmen have memorized it. And every Friday the last thing they do, the very last thing before we turn them loose to their moms and dads, is they recite in unison the Airman's Creed from memory. It's powerful, Vicky, you wait until you see it when you come out and see us here next month. It will bring a tear. When you hear 600 Airmen in unison booming this out. But folks, they're just words. What we've got to do is we've got to put meaning behind those words and that's what AETC's trying to do a better job of, is to teach them what it means to be an American Airman, what it means to be proud heritage, one that's based on the legacy of valor. Truly, what's it mean to defend your country with your life? And what's it mean, the term wingman, one that's forged in blood, sweat and tears? Wingman. What does that mean?

So there's our blueprint. This is our blueprint for how we're enforcing and teaching our core values, and we want to inspire people to do the right thing.

Next.

To inspire them, we use our heritage. So this is something that we're very excited about what we're doing across the command, getting back to our roots.

History makes you smarter, but heritage makes you prouder. And with today's Airmen, if all you do is tell history, it's just history. It's just stories about old people. I tell them World War II stories kind of inspire me. Well, my father served in World War II. Our young Airmen today, they don't have fathers and grandfathers old enough to have served in those wars. So we've got to teach them what it means. And when we teach our heritage, make it relevant. How does it affect them and apply to them today? That's what we're trying to spend a lot of time doing.

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What do you think of him? He paid a visit to AETC in April of this year, a very special anniversary. The 72nd Anniversary of Doolittle's Raid. That's Dick Cole. Dick's one of the four surviving Raiders and he's 99 years young. What do you think of that? And yes, that is a shot of Hennessey in his hand. He came and spoke and after he spoke he stood on his feet an hour and a half. He wouldn't leave until he shook every hand, signed every autograph, talked to any Airman that wanted to talk to him. Folks, that's our heritage. He was Jimmy's copilot. What do you think? Sweetheart of a guy.

Next.

So those are the things we're kind of focusing on. Mission, our great Airmen, our wonderful families that support those Airmen who are doing the mission. We want to base it on the core values. We want to use our heritage to help inspire us to do the right thing. Let's tell people what they should be doing using examples to enforce that.

I stand ready to answer any questions.

Moderator: Recent surveys have said somewhere between 75 and 80 percent of today's youth will not be qualified to serve in our armed services. What does that mean to you as the commander of Education and Training?

General Rand: Well, it means that 25 percent are qualified and we've got to go find them. That's what it means to me.

I've got no lack of good people we're bringing in. These guys and gals are smarter, they're faster, they're stronger, they're motivated. So we're not seeing it, are we Chief? That's why I've got some of these fantastic recruiters and they go find them.

Moderator: We've got a whole bunch of questions on a little bitty airplane that folks are interested in called the T-X.

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General Rand: Good. I'm interested in it too.

The T-38 is 52 years old. It's done great things for our Air Force. But I'm happy to report and I know there are several commanders before me. I know Ed Rice and probably General Lorenz and General Looney and General Cook and a lot of the great people that have served in this position before me that wanted a T-38 replacement. I'm happy to report that the Chief and Secretary have inserted it into the FYDP. It's funded over the next five years. We're rapidly working hard to complete the requirement statement that we have. We hope to have that completed. I'll give it to Bill LaPlante and his gang hopefully in December, and we're going to go after the business of getting ourselves a T-38/new T-X. And I do believe it will be more than just a T-38 UPT replacement and that's what we're working with the MAJCOMs to really make sure we capture those requirements properly, to be that bridge to our fifth-generation airplanes and weapon systems that we need to fly.

Moderator: A sensitive question. What are we doing to address the ethics issues in the Air Force? The sexual assault, cheating, et cetera.

General Rand: We're doing several things, Lynn. I appreciate the question.

Part of what I talked about is what we're doing in our transition week, our capstone week at BMT. What we've added to our core courses across the spectrum of training. We're carving out time not just to produce subject matter experts, but to produce subject matter experts who are steeped in the profession of arms and understand that Airmen have to treat Airmen with dignity and respect and can't denigrate and can't hurt each other. We're doing that across the spectrum. We're looking at our PME courses. I call them touch points. Where are times in our careers where we can have these touch points and reinforce these core values and our character development? If you don't exercise your character, it will atrophy like every other muscle. So we need to make sure that we do that periodically,

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frequently enough. The Chief has asked AETC to work with our Air Force Academy and to work with the A1 and to work with AU to bring some things that we're going to be able to share with the rest of the Air Force. It's critical thinking, call it human development, call it leadership, but getting it. We're concentrating on the squadron commanders and our squadron superintendents. They're the ones that are responsible for the climate. They have to own the climate in their squadrons. And if we can get that right, we're on to good things. Just a lot of initiatives. So I'll stay around afterwards if you want to know in more detail.

But I also have to tell you, the vast majority, the vast majority of your Airmen live by those core values. Okay? And those who don't, when we find out about it we are brutally honest, aren't we? We go about correcting it even if it has to be done sometimes in ways that unfortunately brings undue and unwanted attention to our great service. But we take it on the chin and we keep driving.

Moderator: A whole bunch of questions dealing with technology, whether it's simulators versus real time versus social media, versus cyber. How are we getting into this whole new world that's out there that we didn't grow up with?

General Rand: Well, it's a good question and we need to get into it because a lot of it, if I may, that's how our Airmen learn. That's what they're growing up with. That's how we have to learn. We've got to teach, we've got to be able to connect with them. So a lot of the way we're teaching is adopting some of that.

LVC, the Chief, probably every four star that has talked and MAJCOM commander that's talked has talked about virtual and simulation and that's becoming much more the way of the future. We've got to continue down that road.

WE have increased capabilities and we've got to capture those to make our training more efficient. Not only in our flying training but everywhere we're at. So I could have spent an hour

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or two on that topic. But every course we have we're adjusting, and every training thing we do is making adjustments based on this cyber and the IT.

Social media, it certainly is a way to communicate. I just ask our Airmen that they don't base all their information on social media. And this is where it's important that we still have these dialogues. The Chief and I try to break things down as frequently as we can to small groups, big groups, to talk. Because if you're basing everything you know about the Air Force on social media, there are huge holes. That's just not always accurate. Fair enough?

Would you all agree with that? Okay.

Moderator: A number of questions on the future of ROTC and Junior ROTC with the funding constraints.

General Rand: Okay, we're getting smaller. We have to have ROTC and Junior ROTC detachments that perform. They have to produce. And where they're not producing, we need to look and see if there's better utilization. But we have to rely on our Junior ROTC and ROTC. One of the priorities that I didn't mention but it's there in everything we do, is we need to really work on diversity and I've got to tell you, when I go to Friday morning graduations and I see 700 Airmen, 600 Airmen, I am do proud of our Air Force and it's such a reflection of everything our country wants to be. They can see on Friday morning at Lackland, because you should see what marches past us and just how rich and diverse we are. We need to take some of that and we need to take that into the officer ranks. And one of the ways to do that is through Junior ROTC and ROTC. So those are very big big programs to us, along with our OTS. We're not taking our eye off of that at all.

Moderator: There are a number of questions, I'm not even sure I understand them because I never thought they would come and say I didn't understand an Air Force acronym since I was chief acronym officer in one of my earlier positions, but the New

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Senior NCO Academy courses, Space courses. There's a lot of concern about the transition in the programs.

General Rand: What's the specific? I guess I'm missing that.

Moderator: I'll let you look at it because I don't know what the hell they're talking about. [Laughter].

General Rand: You're scaring me now.

Can you comment on the decision to shift Space from AETC Space IQT -- No, but whoever asked this, I'll take it for action if you come up and give me your name. I'll get back to you.

Moderator: -- Senior NCO attendants.

General Rand: Is there a hard date for Senior NCO attendants to require the new Course 14?

What we're doing is we now finished our Beta test and to make senior master sergeant you've got to go to this new Senior NCO ALE, Advanced Leadership Experience is what it's called. That's being implemented, we've started. If I didn't answer your question, come up for more details.

Moderator: The other big one, compare the Airmen you've got coming in today when we were back in the day,

General Rand: I think I would tell you that they're smarter. And they certainly have more awareness and they're more concerned about what's going on, and I mean that, folks. The Chief and I do a lot of commander calls and small groups. And 19 years ago I was a squadron commander and if I met with a group of, I had 340 folks, mostly enlisted in my fighter squadron at the time with maintenance. If I asked them what's on their minds, I would invariably get questions like we need more flavors. How come we don't have more flavors of ice cream at the Osan Baskin Robbins? Those are not the questions we're asked today. They want to know what's going on in Iraq. They want to know where we stand on these issues. They're very

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concerned about the future of the Air Force. They want to be part of something bigger than they are.

They're great Airmen today. They're motivated and they're super. And they're tested. The Airmen who come in today and who have been coming in for the last decade have been tested. Every one of them. And tested in ways that we haven't tested our Airmen in the past before as much as we do today. So I'm very proud of them. I'll stack them up against any generation and I'll certainly stack them up against anyone on the outside.

I'm a little biased, though, you have to admit. Right?

Moderator: I like to save for the last what I call my commander's question.

What keeps you up at night?

General Rand: My wife would tell you nothing, and she's right. I did allude to it, if I were inclined, when I first took command to apply lessons we learned from Lackland in BMT is that you've got to be careful that you don't underman, under-supervise, under-resource, and overwork talented people. When you do that, some things can happen. So I have my concerns about recruiting. We've got after it. I think it's important that what we can't overwhelm with brute numbers that we organize more efficiently so that we can provide for them the support that they need, and that's the one that I have kind of put my marker on right now. I've got the support from the Chief. But I don't stay up worrying too much about things. I just try to work hard during the day and then when it's time to go to sleep, you go to sleep. I'll get after it in the morning. How's that sound?

I think I'm going to get the hook here.

I really appreciate the opportunity to talk with all of you. I'll hang around afterwards if you want to come up and pull on my ear. How does that sound? Thank you very much.

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Moderator: Thank you.

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