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AFA - Air and Space Technology Exposition

"Sustaining The Force"

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General Wolfenbarger: Good afternoon.

I thought I'd start by just telling you all that I think this event on an annual basis is really one that I looked forward to every year, so I wanted to start by thanking the AFA for what they do to put on this event and provide this opportunity for all of the folks who choose to partake of it, to engage in discussions and topics that are important to us in our United States Air Force.

Given the topic of sustaining the force, I have chosen this afternoon to share with you kind of a thumbnail of what my command, Air Force Materiel Command, is responsible for. I've done a whole lot of work since I took over last June, along with those 83,000 folks in my command, to really launch us on a path that leverages a reorganization that is historic in nature. So I thought I'd share with you where we are today, a year later, and how that all relates to the topic today of sustaining the force.

I have to tell you that we started with relooking at our mission and our vision statements as we were stepping into this new organization, and my hope is if I put all of that in context you all will be better able to understand exactly how Air Force Materiel Command goes about equipping and sustaining the force.

I do need to tell you that while I am here to represent those 83,000 men and women of Air Force Materiel Command, I would be remiss, particularly in this forum, to not also speak about our industry partners. We could not achieve our mission of supporting the warfighter without our great industry partners, a whole host of whom I know are represented and attend our conference annually, and I maintain that this partnership is actually critical to the work that is accomplished day in and day out by Air Force Materiel Command.

So our mission as we have embraced it since I have taken over is fairly simple: To equip the Air Force for world-dominant air power. So in the end, our job is to ensure that the Air Force has the tools needed to dominate in the delivery of global vigilance, global reach, and global power. In essence we're responsible for providing combat capabilities to the warfighter and that is an awesome responsibility that the men and women of Air Force Materiel Command execute on a daily basis.

Our vision that we have embraced is just as clear as that mission statement is, it is: One team delivering capabilities to fly, fight and win today and tomorrow. We have a unique responsibility, I maintain, in Air Force Materiel Command to not just focus on today's challenges and issues, but to also look well into the future to ensure that our great institution can continue to accomplish those critical mission sets for the foreseeable future.

As I alluded to earlier, AFMC has just accomplished a significant reorganization. For those of you who may not be familiar, we have gone from a 12-center construct, 12 subordinate reporting units in Air Force Materiel Command, they're called centers, now to five. In so doing we have organized with those five centers around our primary mission areas. We have four of those for the Air Force. We have the science and technology mission. We have life cycle management as a mission, cradle to grave oversight of our weapon systems. We have a development, test and evaluation mission. And we have a sustainment mission for our Air Force. So what I thought I'd share with you is while that initiative was birthed -- I like to use that word -- under that efficiency mandate that former SecDef Gates issued a few years ago now, actually what I am most excited about in this reorganized Air Force Materiel Command is not just how more efficient we have gotten, but how much more effective we have gotten at accomplishing all four of those mission sets.

This reorganization was Air Force Materiel Command's response to the challenge that was issued by our Secretary and our Chief back when that efficiency mandate was directed to think strategically about how we could absorb reductions in dollars and in people, and in particular civilian manpower, to be able to continue to accomplish our mission sets in the Air Force.

So what I thought I'd do today is spend just a few minutes, leaving plenty of time for any questions that you all might have, talking about each one of our mission areas, about that associated center as we are operating today, and then I'm going to circle around to the value of integrating across all of those centers in the execution of our missions for the Air Force.

I'll start with the first center that I'll talk to, and that is our Air Force Life Cycle Management Center. This reorganization stood up for the first time that center in Air Force Materiel Command. It consolidated all of our program management and product support missions from throughout the command. As I said, the Life Cycle Management Center focuses on that cradle-to-grave management of Air Force weapon systems to directly improve our ability to support the warfighter.

All of our program offices including those that are collocated at our air logistics complex bases are now aligned to a program executive officer, to a PEO. So now that program manager, PEO, SAE, service acquisition executive, chain is responsible for all aspects of the weapon system life cycle. That's a change for us in the Air Force. Previously we had that responsibility fractured and put into different stove pipes. In fact if you go back to the organizational structure before we reorganized, if we had a customer, say one of our warfighting operational command representatives who wanted to understand some aspect of a weapon system that we were executing on their behalf, there would have been multiple program managers that they might have tapped living in different locations throughout Air Force Materiel Command. There could have been an air logistics center commander they would have talked to or a PEO, a program executive officer, of the Air Force Materiel Command commander.

Now it's very clear under this organizational construct that for every program of record the customer goes to one designated program manager. So that PM, PEO, SAE chain is responsible for resolving all program-specific issues now in this organizational construct.

So let me share with you some of the other things that LCMC has taken on just in the year or so of operation.

They have been aggressively focused on their product support mission. We needed to put a spotlight on the work that we had ongoing in that critical arena. We now have a product support manager assigned for every acquisition program to oversee all aspects of support for that single system.

LCMC also has implemented a logistics health assessment tool to provide both the acquisition and sustainment communities a standard, tailorable, user-friendly tool to report on and ensure long-term sustainment and availability considerations are integrated early into our program decision-making.

Another new initiative that I am really proud to talk about that has come out and really has been possible by this reorganized execution of our mission sets is the standup of our weapon system enterprise review. We have had for many, many years something that we called a WSR, a weapon system review; but now that we have organized in the way that we are operating today, we make that review much more integrated and comprehensive. So for every one of our fielded weapon systems we provide good, timely, actionable data on support issues for that fielded weapon system, modernization efforts that are ongoing, and future risk areas -- all in one comprehensive review. That review is presented to our

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MAJCOM commanders as well as the Chief of Staff of the Air Force and really does enable much better situational awareness on all of our ongoing activities associated with any particular MDS.

Air Force Life Cycle Management Center has also implemented a standard cost process center-wide with the intent of capturing savings across the full life cycle of the many ACAT weapon systems programs. They focused initially on the ACAT-1s, and I have to tell you that work that they've done in standardizing that approach to cost has already projected about a \$1.5 billion savings -- now the proof is in the execution. This is the early work to do the analysis. But in that standardization of cost across all of those acquisition programs, right now we're looking at \$1.5 billion. And then if we expand that standard approach to our additional acquisition category programs below the major level, the ACAT-1s, also to sustainment programs and to some of the services work that we have going on, the current estimate is that we think we can grow that projected cost savings up on the order of \$5 billion.

So you'll see in the words that I'm going to use today, the feedback that I'll share with you, that we have begun to not only embrace a more effective way to operate in Air Force Materiel Command, we have put a particular focus on cost effective operation of the work that we do. We in Air Force Materiel Command are responsible for about 30 to 40 percent in any given fiscal year of spending for the Air Force. So a substantial amount of responsibility in terms of the oversight and mission sets that we execute in Air Force Materiel Command. And I maintain that this approach that the Life Cycle Management Center has embraced in should cost is truly a game-changer that reflects that true cost effectiveness mindset.

The last example I'll share with you of progress that we have made as a result of reorganizing for LCMC is that they have implemented a new product support governance structure that horizontally links the Life Cycle Management Center with another new center, our Air Force Sustainment Center. So I gain the expertise and seasoning and judgment of the folks who are responsible for depot maintenance and supply chain in the decision-making that we are doing on each one of our programs of record when it comes to those product support decisions.

That new process was exercised for the first time to leverage a revised F-22 product support strategy that we're estimating is going to save \$300 million over the next 15 years in terms of the operating and sustainment costs for just that single fleet.

So some really exciting stuff going on in our new Life Cycle Management Center. I think the take-away from all of those

initiatives and that progress that has been made is that the development, acquisition and product support of a weapon system will be fully integrated throughout its life cycle as a result of the focus that we've placed on that life cycle management construct.

Let me transition to the second of my five centers and that is in the development, test and evaluation arena. We have stood up for the first time an Air Force Test Center as part of our reorganization. They too are leveraging this new organizational construct to optimally achieve that DT&E mission. They've been standardizing processes across the developmental test enterprise. They, of course, have three different places to go as you look at the input organizations that make up now our Air Force Test Center. So they are choosing the best of breed in terms of standardizing processes in the test arena.

I have to tell you that having one set of procedures will be a real boon to those folks who work acquisition in the execution of the programs. Previously some of our program offices had to maneuver the disparate processes of those three different test centers and depending on if they were testing an airframe, an engine or a weapon or all three, they would have had to accommodate three different systems.

The AFTC has established a council that prioritizes and aligns enterprise test funds, personnel, test aircraft, and facility utilization. They've already begun to exercise that enterprise approach to that resourcing. I'll give you just a couple of examples. They move funding to the Arnold Engineering Development Complex at Arnold Air Force Base to prevent the loss of intellectual capital. And they move manpower billets internal to the test enterprise to Eglin to better meet warfighter requirements. And in particular this was an AFSOC programs of record that needed additional manpower applied. So again, we're already starting to see the real benefits of having reorganized Air Force Materiel Command to take a more enterprise approach to each one of our mission sets.

The third mission area that I'll talk to and third center is our sustainment mission. We again stood up a brand new center in this reorganization, our Air Force Sustainment Center, responsible for depot maintenance and supply chain management. And like the other two newly formed centers, one of the primary objectives of this center has also been to standardize procedures. So when you think about this, if you think across the depots, three different depots in our United States Air Force, there were a different set of procedures depending upon which depot you were working with, and that caused confusion and concern, problems for not only our customers but also for the

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people who were working in the air logistics centers. So every time somebody would PCS from one depot to another, they had to learn a whole new set of procedures, even if they might be executing the same mission set.

As a result of this center standup we now have a single face to the customer for all Air Force depots and supply chain management.

The Sustainment Center has implemented a standard framework for executing their processes. That new framework involves a leadership model that identifies their center focus, goals, culture and levers that can be pulled to change a process. So this model is where any process change begins. They look at several scientific methods for how to go about standardizing their processes. They look at the Toyota Method, Lean Aerospace and others to consider how that new process should execute. Once they are convinced that they have leaned out the process, based on the modeling, that framework that they've applied, then they establish that process as a standard for the whole of the center. So as a result that same process is applied regardless of which air logistics complex or product line it is applicable to, and that greatly improves the standardization within the Air Force Sustainment Center.

One of the initiatives that was instituted by the commander of our Air Force Sustainment Center is The Road to a Billion Challenge. Again, this is another indicator of the embracing of that cost-conscious culture within Air Force Materiel Command. So the commander along with the senior leaders have issued a challenge to all of their work force to come up with ideas for how they can drive a culture and a mindset to be continuously cost conscious.

So the center leaders proposed this \$1 billion goal -- either cost avoidance or cost savings -- and asked all of their people to submit proposals and plans to achieve that goal. So I have to tell you, they started this toward the end of last year, and to date their work force has really stepped up. They are at this point, they have a thermometer that they track this, they are at \$650 million of that \$1 billion goal. Again, some of that's savings, some of that's avoidance. But I think the message is that the work force gets it, that in order for us, and this is the message from General Bruce Litchfield who is the Sustainment Center commander. He has challenged his folks to get as efficient, as cost efficient, as they possibly can because as we drive down the cost in our weapon system sustainment arena, that frees up resources for readiness or for force structure that our Air Force desperately needs in this downsized budget environment.

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The Sustainment Center has also built a high confidence plan to reduce their rates, their working capital fund rates, by 5 percent. And I have to tell you, we look back in time and to the best of my knowledge this is the first time in recent history anybody that I've been able to find, where we have been able to plan for a reduced fee for depot work.

Now you might not think 5 percent is a lot. Let me tell you, 5 percent of a reduced rate in our working capital fund equates to more than \$500 million in one fiscal year, in FY15, which is a tough year. So we've just recently locked in that rate structure where it's going through the approval process now within the Air Force and the Department of Defense. But I have to tell you that it is exciting stuff to see that the work that's being done in the Air Force Sustainment Center and that focus on cost effective readiness is beginning to bear fruit.

Let me just give you some Air Force Sustainment Center one-year-later stats. It's a little easier to do this in that industrial environment that we have ongoing in our depots and in that supply chain arena, but here's what I'm being reported on by our Air Force Sustainment Center commander just at our SLC, Senior Leader Conference that we had just last week. Here's his report card for one year later, having now been operating as an Air Force Sustainment Center.

They are reporting a 20 percent increase in aircraft depot production over last year, before we stood up this Air Force Sustainment Center. They are reporting back orders down 21 percent. Depot work stoppage is down 18 percent. And critical part shortage is down 25 percent. Some extraordinary improvement and progress not only in terms of embracing cost effectiveness, but also improving our readiness across the board in our United States Air Force.

I have to tell you, truth in advertising here, those numbers were all at the point at which we embraced a civilian furlough, and you can all appreciate that the depots in particular really got impacted substantially by the furlough. So those numbers, those percentages, are modified some if you include those six weeks, six days of civilians being on furlough, it equated to 1.4 million production hours that we lost just in those six days, six weeks of undergoing that civilian furlough. So a substantial impact to our mission in the sustainment center, but I have to tell you, I take nothing away from the fact that they have now been ramping back up again and they are looking at being recovered to that workload responsibility by the second quarter of FY14.

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So some great opportunities there in an organizational construct that presented itself and also a great work force and some great leadership to try to drive those kind of results.

The fourth center that I'll talk about is the nuclear, it's in our nuclear enterprise, our Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center. I'll tell you, this center was in existence in Air Force Materiel Command and really did not substantially change as a result of this reorganization. Our NWC has a very purposed and singular focus. They provide nuclear capabilities for our United States Air Force. Those Nuclear Weapons Center professionals are critical to the sustained deterrence that this country has used to prevent nuclear war since World War II. They accomplish both that cradle-to-grave management and the product support of those most sensitive weapon systems.

The last center deals in our science and technology mission, so this is the fourth of those four missions that we execute for our Air Force. That is our Air Force Research Laboratory. Again, the Air Force Research Laboratory did not adjust much as a result of this historic reorganization in Air Force Materiel Command. As you all know, and as we like to articulate at every opportunity, our Air Force has a rich history of innovation and discovery and our Air Force Research Laboratory is right on the pointy end of that for our United States Air Force. They are tasked with accomplishing that science and technology mission.

They have a host of in-house research laboratories and researchers that are respected throughout their fields, and those S&T experts work with our major research universities throughout this country and industry to develop technology not only for our Air Force but for America.

They cover the gamut from basic research to support required for those life cycle management activities as we're developing new warfighter capability. And I have to tell you, the lab has a tremendous track record of responding to real-world issues that are facing our COCOMs each and every day.

I'll give you some examples of each one of those categories.

In the basic research arena, you all might have read that we had a tremendous record-setting flight in the hypersonic arena with the X-51 just this last summer. So that's sort of the future as you think well into the future for us being able to accomplish our critical missions in the Air Force and truly a game-changer in terms of embracing hypersonics and what they can bring.

Relative to supporting our Life Cycle Management Center and in particular I'll share one example with you from a fielded weapon

system, and that was in the F-22. You'll recall that we had a period of time here where we stood that fleet down as a result of some hypoxia-like incidences that were occurring. We really needed to put our best minds on resolving that issue and allowing that fleet to get up and operating again. The laboratory had a significant role to play in figuring our way forward through that issue.

Then when it comes to responding to COCOM needs I'd share with you that it was our laboratory that put together a new capability that was intended to detonate IEDs, improvised explosive devices, at a safe distance from convoys. It's called Max Power. It was deployed in theater and it was really deployed to try to wring it out, to prove out if that technology would be viable. I've got to tell you, we learned some great lessons out of that deployment. It's now redeployed to CONUS, but a very successful evaluation of a new capability that could bear great fruit for us in the future.

AFRL experts also work internal to the command in Air Force Materiel Command, working with each one of our centers to figure out how we can leverage some of those technological advances in the execution of the other missions within Air Force Materiel Command. One, since I'm here to principally talk to you about sustaining the force that I'll share with you is some work that the lab did with their AFSC sustainment center brethren in developing new technologies for depot maintenance like the Advanced Robotic Laser Coding Removal System. This technology promises to significantly reduce depot hours and waste while virtually eliminating employee exposure to airborne toxins. We expect to have an initial operational capability for the F-16s with this technology in 2014; and on the C-130 in 2015. So just some examples of the work the laboratory has going on that really does cover the gamut of support needs, both internal and external to the command.

Then I'll share with you kind of the integrative portion of how we work the seams between those centers that we have stood up. I would tell you that any organization has seams. I am excited that the new organization has far fewer seams than the previous organization did.

So the real power, I think, of this new AFMC construct is our ability to work across those centers to ensure that while they have their own distinct mission areas that we can even best succeed, better succeed when we can work collaboratively, and there are multiple examples of our centers working with each other to address the issues that we are tackling day in and day out.

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So my job as the commander of Air Force Materiel Command is to manage those seams and to ensure that we are, to the best of our ability, looking across the centers, looking at working at standardization opportunities that cross-cut activities that go on internal to the centers and take that construct of ILCM -- Integrated Life Cycle Management -- to a level really that we've never seen before in our United States Air Force. And I am absolutely convinced after -- I think, at last count about 33 years in this business -- that true ILCM, true Integrated Life Cycle Management, is the enabler for delivering affordable and effective global vigilance, global reach and global power for our nation.

In conclusion, leaving plenty of time I hope for questions, let me just circle back to that point that I started with. That is that my talk this afternoon is truly not just about Air Force Materiel Command. I enjoy talking about the work that we've done and the progress that we've made, but maintaining our national defense comes down to a concerted collaboration and partnership between government and industry.

Our Air Force partners with industry to collaborate on identifying and implementing best business practices and on developing technologies and weapon systems across the life cycle management, testing and sustainment arenas.

Our current budgetary environment provides a significant opportunity to reinforce and to refine the role of industry and the military in this enduring partnership. I maintain that smaller budgets over the next decade as we all anticipate will require all of us to bring to that table even more ingenuity, creativity and collaboration.

So thank you again for allowing me this opportunity to share with you some of the progress that we've made in Air Force Materiel Command, some of the excitement about the mission set that we execute on behalf of Air Force Materiel Command, and let me now throw the floor open to any questions that you might have.

Moderator: Thank you, General Wolfenbarger. We've got streams of questions and they go from broad down to narrow. So we've got almost 15 minutes for some Q&A. So are you ready?

General Wolfenbarger: Ready.

Moderator: The first question is, on the heels of Wes Bush's earlier comments before you took the stage on the importance of maintaining our country's R&D capabilities, how can you, perhaps with Air Force Research Laboratory and the other five centers,

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help preserve or restore the R&D budget in Air Force Materiel Command?

General Wolfenbarger: I'd kind of take that question in two different ways. One is a budgetary flavor; the other is the intellectual capital.

I would tell you on the budget side I am really pleased that even in a drastically downsized environment, there has been a consistent messaging internal to our Air Force and internal to OSD that we need to preserve an S&T budget that protects our ability to execute missions well into the future. So I have to tell you, generally what we find is that we've come kind of cored to a percentage of the top line that for years now we allocate to that S&T budget. We've got lots of freedom and opportunity to figure out how best to allocate those dollars. But the amount of budget that is preserved for the S&T mission has remained fairly constant. And even as we have gone through some real, real difficult decision-making in coming to an Air Force we have worked very hard to preserve the percentage of the top line that is consistent with where we've historically been.

So I really feel as though from a budgetary perspective we've got the endorsement of the senior leadership at every level within the Department of Defense.

When it comes to the hard challenge, in my opinion, in this country of preserving intellectual capital and bringing new folks into that STEM arena, we're not done. We've got lots and lots of work ahead of us to ensure that we create the spark and we get the excitement in the young kids today as they're deciding what they're going to do with their lives so that we can continue to maintain the edge that we have always relied on in our country to be right on the very pointy end of the technology sphere. And we've got lots of activity going on. So do a whole host of other entities and organizations. But internal to my command, the vast majority of that, it occurs in every one of my centers, but the vast majority of it does occur in our Air Force Research Laboratory, and they have tremendous avenues to continue to engage at the college level all the way down to the grade school level. To try to maintain that interest in this critical work space for us as a country.

Moderator: There are a number of questions related to sequestration and some of the challenges of certainly what has transpired over the past several months, but a question from the floor is can you address, if you had a crystal ball what would be the impacts on certainly your portfolio, but Air Force Materiel Command, and maybe in turn the United States Air Force for the year 2014.

General Wolfenbarger: We'll have to see what Congress decides for 2014. Certainly we're doing some planning, I would call it worst case planning in developing execution plans for 2014, and all of that segues from the 2013 decisions and actions that needed to be made in order to live with a reduced budget that was levied upon us about halfway through the fiscal year.

So that drove decision-making that we will feel impacts from into the 2014 timeframe. We had to really shut down a lot of the, from an installation perspective, preventive maintenance kinds of things that you always want to do to stay ahead of a more catastrophic event occurring. We had impacts to our mission sets in 2013. I'll give you just one example. Certainly in our test world we went to a four-day fly week to accomplish our critical test missions. We needed to do that because we have a very large civilian force in our Air Force Materiel Command. About 77 percent of my work force is civilians. And as we had to furlough all of those civilians, we really needed to effect the mission in that regard.

So there are a whole host of things that we are in the process of recovering from as a result of the decisions that were made in FY13 into FY14.

I would tell you as I take a step back and look at the -- You didn't ask me this, Dick, but I'm going to answer this question -- look back at the sum total of kind of the environment that we are in, I do maintain that the Department of Defense needs to do its part to help our country get back on a sound financial footing.

I think that we in the Department of Defense, what we're looking for is some stability. To help us with removing the uncertainty so that we understand what our nation demands of us. And once we understand what that top line can be or is anticipated to be for FY14 and on out, then we will execute to whatever that top line is. We will preserve to the best of our ability execution of mission sets that are critical. I call it things that are in our DNA in our United States Air Force. And we will have to make some tough decisions on the weapon systems and the capabilities that go with executing those critical mission sets.

But I would stipulate that we are the world's best Air Force today. We will get through this downsized budget environment. We'll come out the other end the world's best Air Force.

Moderator: Thank you.

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Let's stay with that issue just a little bit. With the 20 percent increase -- this is the questioner asking this question. With the 20 percent increase in depot production since last year can you rapidly recover from the deferred maintenance on aircraft, which is certainly ongoing because of sequestration and so forth. Help us understand that a little bit.

General Wolfenbarger: We had to slow down substantially relative to all of that great momentum that we had going with those furloughs. But as I mentioned, we are now ramped back up again. It will take us some time, we're estimating into the second quarter of FY14 to get back on that pace that we were on before we had those furloughs. I'd tell you that all hinges on not having to embrace additional civilian furloughs in FY14, but I think there is some great excitement in that depot arena for this opportunity to standardize our approaches, to continually improve them, and to have the work force have a role in that different way of accomplishing our mission sets. They're excited about it.

Moderator: Let's switch gears a little bit. As we draw down from combat operations and return to more of a steady state, I will put quotation marks around "steady state", but do you have any thoughts on how best to use the reserve component and perhaps the IMA force moving forward across Air Force Materiel Command?

General Wolfenbarger: We have worked really hard, I think, to leverage to a great extent the opportunities that the Reserve and the Guard provide. So if you look at any one of my mission sets, you would find that there are great examples of where we've done that.

Are we done? I don't think we're done. We'll continue to work at that and figure out what that new normal needs to be as our Air Force in that institutional strategic way is doing the same thing.

I would tell you that we really work very hard to find those pockets where it is very helpful to us to leverage our other two components in terms of how we execute the mission sets for Air Force Materiel Command.

Moderator: You hit on during your remarks with certainly the five center construct, and I think the nature of this question, maybe you'd like to dive into that a little bit more in terms of your vision of how you see the five-center construct remaining, of what they refer to as a salient construct. Again, in the midst of perhaps reduced budget, sequestration and so forth. The essence of the question maybe do we have the organization right? Is there still more work to be done? Is there something else you'd like to do perhaps on your watch?

General Wolfenbarger: I would tell you that I think there's always opportunity to get better. I have five commander priorities that I've established as part of a strategic plan and one of them is to standardize our processes and to continuously improve those processes too, this is my commander priority, to achieve the art of the possible.

So there will be more work that we can do and I think we're just on the forefront. We are executing in this new organizational construct. We've been doing it for about a year. We have yet to declare FOC. I'm about 10 days away I think from doing that. We had our Senior Leader Conference as I mentioned last week and everybody gave me a resounding thumbs up on readiness to declare FOC.

But I would tell you that we all are appreciative of the fact that we're just on the forefront of really leveraging this new organizational construct and what it can provide in terms of a more effective way to execute our mission sets. And as I mentioned to you, one of my commander priorities is cost effectiveness across all of our mission areas. During that Senior Leader Conference I did have a good discussion with leadership in the command that, given the role that we play, it is imperative that we step up and really firmly embrace cost effectiveness in everything that we do.

Moderator: Do you envision a change in the type and nature of partnerships in the future? The question is across perhaps the command, but also if you could touch on those relationships particularly with defense industry. You alluded to it during your remarks, but can you give us a little bit more in terms of, particularly on the defense industry side of those partnerships.

General Wolfenbarger: You heard me say at least a couple of times how important I think that partnership is. I think what we would appreciate from that partnership would be that creativity and innovation to help us figure out how we can deliver warfighting capability in that most cost-effective manner possible. You know that we do some of that work in-house but we rely heavily on our industry partners and so in the same way that I am reviewing all of those norms that we have operated by internal to Air Force Materiel Command, I would ask our industry partners to do the same, to take a look at your internal approaches to how you go about executing to contracts that we issue with you because collectively I think our responsibility is to squeeze as much as we can out of every defense dollar that's allocated to us. And it is a partnership.

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So as I've had the opportunity to engage with industry partners and I think I have the opportunity tomorrow afternoon to have a forum to have some more of this dialogue, we'll share some of the future activities that we see on the horizon even in this downsized environment. But I'd tell you, the more we can figure out ways to deliver warfighting capability not on the curve that it's on, because I have to tell you if we continue to have to pay the dollars that we pay for next generation technology, we will see very little of that in the future, just given the reality of a downsized budget environment.

So the more that we can partner, the more that we can understand where are those opportunities to embrace cost effectiveness, I think the better served our Air Force and our nation will be.

Moderator: Okay, we're rounding the horn here, and this is an issue or a question that I think has been certainly one in the forefront of your predecessors as well, but how has our success in certainly maintain legacy aircraft undermine our ability to perhaps advocate for recapitalization on the modernization front. Particularly at Air Force Materiel Command, give us a sense of the challenges and opportunities that you have in that regard.

General Wolfenbarger: We are very good at maintaining legacy aircraft. We along with our industry partners I think can continue to maintain legacy systems for the length of time that our nation demands of us. But I've got to tell you, those legacy systems aren't necessarily up to the test of the threats that are evolving. So that is continuing to evolve the capabilities of potential adversaries, aggressor nations. So there always is that dilemma of how much of the legacy can we keep and continue to execute mission sets? And how much do we need to embrace? Again, this is where the dollars come in, the need to actually modernize, recapitalize those fleets. That is part and parcel of these very, very tough discussions that we've been having internal to the Air Force. Where do you find that balance?

I would tell you, I've got a work force internal to Air Force Materiel Command, and as I said, in partnership with industry, that I believe we can keep those legacy systems going for as long as our Air Force needs us to.

Moderator: The last question. Are you running in the Air Force Marathon coming up here in a week or so?

General Wolfenbarger: I am not running the Air Force Marathon, but I do get to do something that's maybe even more fun and not as difficult, which is to launch the race, to fire the starter pistol, and to put medals on the folks that have run as they come across the finish line. So I'm excited about it. This is coming

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up next Saturday. We've got a 5K, a 10K, a half marathon and a full marathon, and I've got to tell you, those are all sold out and it is a great event. We've got tremendous volunteers and it really is a world-class event.

Thanks for asking.

Moderator: General, thank you for not only your service, but certainly your ability to command Air Force Materiel Command, and certainly over challenging times but also looking for opportunities not only for our Airmen and their families, but certainly for the United States Air Force which contributes tremendously to this nation. Your leadership is pivotal to maintain that capability in Air Force Materiel Command as you support essentially the entire United States Air Force.

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