



U.S. AIR FORCE

Policy Letter

Digest

News and Issues from Headquarters U.S. Air Force

February 2001

To Make The Air Force Whole -- Recapitalization of the Air Force

At a House Armed Services Committee hearing on Sept. 27, 2000, Gen. Michael E. Ryan, Air Force chief of staff, estimated "the Air Force needs an additional \$20 to \$30 billion per year, over and above current funding levels to recapitalize our force." This additional funding covers near- and mid-term readiness requirements, recapitalization of aging equipment, improvements to physical plant (infrastructure) and increased investment in personnel.

General Ryan relied on an Air Force study conducted in August and September 2000 to support statements

made to Congress concerning Air Force funding shortfalls. The study identified required annual purchases of aircraft and the total funding needed to achieve and maintain acceptable average ages of aircraft, space,

munitions and physical plant. It also identified the funding required to meet training, retention and recruitment, force shaping, and end-strength requirements.

The Air Force now relies on a fleet of aircraft with an average age of 22 years. In 15 years, the average age will be nearly 30 years, even if every modernization program currently on the books is executed. "We've never dealt with a force this old before and are, consequently, vulnerable to a myriad of aging aircraft problems, including technical surprise," said General Ryan.

"We had very large procurement numbers during the Reagan era build-up. This large procurement, especially in fighters, helped us keep our average ages down. However, the spending reductions of the 1990s, created an aerospace modernization shortfall. Further, all those aircraft are now growing old at the same time, which makes it very difficult to arrest the upward trend in the aging of our fleet. To recover from this, additional investment is

necessary in fighters, tankers, airlift, C2ISR and bombers," said Lt. Gen. Joseph H. Wehrle, deputy chief of staff for Plans and Programs. Modernization of our space capabilities is on track, but additional funding is needed to ensure future space programs meet anticipated requirements. Recapitalization also includes additional funding for munitions, which will allow the Air Force to develop and purchase weapons needed by our fighters, attack aircraft, and bombers.

The \$20 to \$30 billion per year figure also covers improvements to Air Force physical plants to include military construction, real property maintenance, vehicles, support equipment, base basing and communications. Budget reductions and relentless near-term readiness demands have

resulted in Air Force infrastructure being underfunded in the past decade. For example, the Air Force is currently on a 250-year replacement cycle for buildings. Commercial industries use a 50-year replacement cycle. "The Air Force cannot afford to continue funding its infrastructure at this level. This is especially troubling because it impacts us where our people work and live," said General Ryan.

Our people programs are also impacted by funding shortfalls. "Although the Air Force, with the help of Congress, has made great strides to improve the lives of our people, we still need to do more. Accordingly, we have included additional funding for people and training programs," said General Ryan.

Former senior defense leaders, as well as a number of non-military studies, have validated the DOD and Air Force funding shortfalls. In February of last year, former Defense Secretary James Schlesinger warned before the full House Armed Services Committee that, "In order to replace the equipment of the

"We've never dealt with a force this old before and are, consequently, vulnerable to a myriad of aging aircraft problems, including technical surprise."
Gen. Michael E. Ryan

**Information
Assurance
Initiatives
Minimize
System
Compromise
or Exploitation**

Quadrennial Defense Review-designated force, we will have to spend approximately \$100 billion a year [over and above current funding].” At that same hearing, former Secretary of Defense William Perry stated military procurement should be between \$70 and \$80 billion in the fiscal 2001 budget. Similarly, the Congressional Budget Office report “*Budgeting for Defense: Maintaining*

Today’s Forces,” estimates the DOD procurement requirement at \$90 billion with the Air Force portion at \$35 billion per year.

Funding the recapitalization of the Air Force is essential to maintain current levels of readiness while also providing the future capabilities required to support the National Military Strategy and Joint Vision 2020.

“Information capabilities and networks are the key to achieving information superiority and decision dominance over our adversaries. The security of these capabilities is everyone’s responsibility. Trusted and timely information enables warfighters to accomplish their missions. Thus, sound Information Assurance system security architecture, investment planning, techniques, tactics and procedures, and configuration management are essential to mission success,” said Lt. Gen. John L. Woodward Jr., deputy chief of staff for communications and information.

To emphasize the importance of IA, the Air Force launched a 12-month implementation focus campaign beginning Jan 1. Due to the rapid proliferation of information capabilities, the explosion of network use, and the growing threats to these capabilities, the Air Force leadership directed that IA is everyone’s responsibility everyday. Major commands would help promote Air Force awareness and implementation by sponsoring a specific month in 2001 to focus IA necessities.

Each month during 2001, the deputy chief of staff for air and space operations, the Air Force inspector general, a major command, or a field operating agency will sponsor a different IA topic and present information related to their respective areas of expertise. The first month hosted by the Air Force Communications Agency, focused on individual and organizational responsibilities. The AF/SC’s Information Assurance Division will host February, focusing on Web security initiatives.

In addition to monthly “IA hosts,” promotional items and pamphlets will be distributed throughout the year to keep computer and information security in the forefront. Finally, about 500 of top IA performers will receive a newly minted 2001 IA Medallion Award. The ultimate goal is to keep IA on the minds of every Air Force member to help minimize potential for system compromise or exploitation.

Another IA initiative is Public Key Infrastructure. As more and more reliance is placed on computer networks, security becomes increasingly important. In the future, electronic

DOD PKI certificates will allow members to secure information they exchange with each other via email and other workplace applications. PKI certificates digitally authenticate signatures on e-mail, electronic documents and forms.

These digital signatures guarantee the information transmitted over the network is not altered while in transit. The receiver of digitally signed e-mail is also assured that the sender is actually who he or she claims to be. Presently, medical doctors within Air Combat Command securely transmit sensitive patient data using PKI, and a system program office is using it to secure source selection information during contract proposal review.

In the near future, Air Force members will receive their certificates when they are issued DOD’s new identification card, the common access card. This will greatly enhance the security and portability of DOD PKI certificates. Future plans include PKI certificates on each CAC that will establish an individual’s “digital identity,” allowing access into authorized work facilities as well as granting access to Air Force networks.

In addition to a CAC, computer systems will soon feature a biometrics process. Biometrics describes methods of authenticating or verifying an individual’s identity based upon physical or behavioral characteristics such as fingerprints, iris patterns or voiceprints. Passwords, PKI and smart cards are currently necessary and reasonable access security measures. However, these security methodologies can be lost, forgotten, or given or forcibly taken away. Biometrics addresses these vulnerabilities.

The Air Force is analyzing ways to integrate biometrics technology into the soon-to-be-released DOD CAC, or “Smart Card.” For example, a person’s biometrics template could be stored on the card and then, instead of logging into the network with a password, one would slide his or her smart card into a card reader, and his or her fingerprint would be verified and access granted. This two-

AF Welcomes Space Commission's Recommendations

step process provides a near fool-proof method of ensuring the user is authorized access to the network. This technology is currently in the initial stages of development and the Air Force will soon be field-testing biometrics-enabled components such as mouse and keyboard devices.

PKI and biometrics will soon take a central role in making system and network secu-

rity routine and easy, which, in turn, increases the overall IA posture of our combat network capability.

"The threats against information resources are real and growing. The Air Force must implement sound IA practices and remain vigilant to provide the right information to the right place at the right time for warfighters worldwide," said General Woodward.

A recent report submitted to Congress by the Space Commission calls for a series of changes at the national, DOD and service levels in order to create a strong advocacy and national commitment to the national security space programs. The commission, established by Congress last year to assess the organization and management of space activities in support of national security, determined that a realigned and rechartered Air Force is best suited to organize, train and equip space forces.

Air Force officials say they are pleased and enthusiastic about the observations and recommendations that have come out of the report. The Air Force is analyzing the recommendations, providing inputs to DOD and developing preliminary implementation plans.

The commission recommended that Air Force Space Command become the focal point for developing this cadre of space professionals and advocating education and training programs. As such, the command should be given the responsibility and authority for the resources to execute space research, development and operations.

Additionally, the commission recommends statutory responsibility be given to the Air Force to organize, train and equip for prompt and sustained offensive and defensive air and space operations. The report also calls on the defense secretary to designate the Air Force as Executive Agent for Space within the Defense Department since the service already accounts for 85 percent of DOD's space-related resources and personnel.

The report also recommends assigning responsibility for command of AFSPC to a four-star officer other than the commander in chief of U.S. Space Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command. Currently, the same general officer holds all three positions. This recommendation is designed to give each commander more time to focus on his or her primary roles and responsibilities.

According to Brig. Gen. Michael A. Hamel,

director for Air and Space Operations, Headquarters Air Force, many of the principles behind the recommendations are about how to refocus and reconsolidate authority and accountability, and how to put the kind of focus on space that is commensurate with how important it has become to national security. The recommendations reflect how dependent the services are on space in all aspects of military operations.

"All joint operations and services are dependent on space," he said. "While the Air Force is the principal provider with the single largest set of capabilities in space for enabling and supporting operations for the joint force commander, there are many different agencies, services and activities in DOD that are becoming increasingly dependent on space and that do different aspects of space."

This trend has contributed to the diffusion and fragmentation of military space operations addressed by the Commission.

"The recommendation on the consolidation of authority, responsibility and budgetary decision making will help bring more focus to the current [diffusion and fragmentation] and really attest to the fact that the Air Force is the best institution and service within the DOD to achieve the goals inherent in the report," General Hamel said.

It is still too early for the Air Force to determine how some of the processes, roles and relationships with the other services will evolve as a result of the commission's recommendations, he said. However, the tools, capabilities, authority and accountability given to the Air Force by the commission's recommendations will challenge the service to bring about the full vision and potential argued for in aerospace integration.

"This is a golden opportunity for the Air Force to step forward and to truly bring about the critical mass of space advocacy and capabilities," he said. "It will really underpin the achievement of true integrated aerospace capabilities for the joint warfighter.

"The most important thing all airmen should take away from this is that, after an exhaustive study by a very illustrious panel, the conclusion was made that there is not another service or institution within this nation that can take on the challenges our growing dependence on space means for national security," General Hamel said. "That is a huge vote of confidence [in the Air Force and its people] and the

recommendations will give us the tools needed to step up to that leadership challenge. It is going to be an exciting time," he said.

"We believe these steps will create a strong center of advocacy and national commitment to the national security space efforts, enabling the Air Force to deliver even greater integrated aerospace capabilities to the joint warfighter," he said.

Housing Allowance Rates Increase

The DOD announced the 2001 Basic Allowance for housing rates, giving servicemembers one of the largest increases ever. The new rates are part of the DOD initiative to eliminate servicemember's out-of-pocket expenses by 2005 and incorporate a number of major changes to the BAH program. Average increases in the BAH range from 7.8 to 12.9 percent by grade, with the typical increase in the range of 10 percent. In total, the planned increase in housing allowance funds for fiscal 2001 above the fiscal 2000 amount is more than \$700 million.

"These changes in the BAH process, resulting in one of the largest increases ever, represent our commitment to the preservation of a compensation and benefit structure. They will provide members with a suitable and secure standard of living, one that will sustain a trained, experienced and ready force in the future," said Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Bernard Rostker.

The rates that went into effect Jan. 1 have increased in most areas and will remain the same in others. Out-of-pocket expense, the portion of the typical member's housing cost that the member is not compensated for, has been reduced from 18.8 percent last year to no more than 15 percent this year. DOD made a conscious decision to not decrease BAH rates

even though median out-of-pocket expenses in some areas were below 15 percent. The 2001 rates represent the first in a series of steps to bring the average member's out-of-pocket expense to zero by 2005. Out-of-pocket expenses are to be reduced to 11.3 percent next year.

An important part of this year's BAH process was an improvement in the measurement of local housing costs. DOD asked the services and local military housing offices to actively participate in the data collection process to ensure our personnel can live in quality neighborhoods. Additionally, improvements were made in how utility costs are estimated.

An integral part of the BAH program is the provision of individual rate protection to all members. No matter what happens to measured housing costs, servicemembers will never see their BAH rate decrease as long as they stay in the geographic area. This policy assures that members who have made long-term commitments in the form of a lease or contract will not be penalized if the area's housing costs decrease.

BAH is not taxed, so every dollar of BAH goes directly into the servicemember's pocket.

Fiscal 2001 BAH rates can be found at <http://www.dtic.mil/perdiem/bahform.html>.

Improvements Made to the Montgomery GI Bill

by SSgt. Kathleen Rhem, USA AFPS

The Veterans Benefits and Health Care Improvement Act of 2000, signed by President Clinton Nov. 1, makes several important improvements to the Montgomery GI Bill.

Monthly payments climbed by nearly \$100 starting Nov. 1, 2000. The rate for full-time training increased from \$552 a month to \$650 for eligible veterans with at least a three-year term of service. The rate for those with a two-year term of service went from \$449 a month to \$528.

The law also provided for an increase from \$485 a month to \$588 for eligible spouses and children under the Dependents Education Act. This program is for families of veterans who are permanently and totally disabled through their

service, or who died while on active duty or shortly after leaving the service," said Dennis Douglass, Veterans Affairs deputy director of education services.

"These families are our most at-risk population, because the traditional breadwinner has been taken out of the picture," he said. "This program is VA's opportunity to reward the families of service members who have paid an incredible price."

Another provision in the law addresses service members who leave active duty before the end of their first term and return later. Previously, these people were precluded from drawing the GI Bill benefit because the pro-

gram only recognized the initial term of service. The new legislation allows VA to consider any term of service when deciding eligibility, Douglass explained.

Servicemembers can now increase their contributions and receive increased benefits later. Members participating in the Montgomery GI Bill contribute \$1,200 at the rate of \$100 each month in the first year of service. The newly allowed additions can be made in \$4 increments up to a total maximum of \$600.

VA's basic full-time education benefit of \$23,400 is paid in 36 monthly installments of \$650 and represents a 19.5-to-1 return on a member's \$1,200 investment. Douglass said additional contributions would return 9-to-1. A \$600 maximum addition, then, would raise a member's total benefit to \$28,800 — 36 payments of \$800 a month.

Douglass said the law also makes a long-awaited change to the old Veterans Educational Assistance Program, which was available to service members between 1977 and 1985. A 1996 law allowed anybody with money in their VEAP accounts to convert to the more generous Montgomery GI Bill. Many servicemembers had no money in their VEAP accounts because they

had previously been allowed to withdraw it, he said.

“As long as individuals were contributors to VEAP at any time in their military service, the new legislation allows them to convert to the GI Bill if they were on active duty on Oct. 9, 1996, the date the previous law was enacted, and if they stayed on active duty continuously through Apr. 1, 2000,” Douglass said.

To become eligible for Montgomery GI Bill benefits, however, VEAP-era veterans must contribute \$2,700. Douglass explained \$2,700 was the maximum VEAP contribution.

Additional changes include:

√ The cost of licensing and certification tests is covered. They previously were not.

√ The cost of preparation courses for college and graduate school entrance exams for eligible Dependents Education Assistance Program participants is covered.

√ The maximum break in training allowed before a break in benefits occurs increased from one calendar month to eight weeks. “This basically allows students to go out and find a job for a short period between class terms,” Douglass said.

For more information, visit the Department of Veterans Affairs' home page at www.va.gov.

AF Surgeon General: One AF Suicide is One Too Many

One Air Force suicide is one suicide too many, according to Lt. Gen. Paul Carlton, Air Force surgeon general.

The surgeon general is trying to combat suicides by instilling in every Air Force member that it is a community problem, and that philosophy is the basis for its community approach to suicide prevention.

“We have to stop thinking of suicide prevention as something only mental health professionals do,” General Carlton said. “All of us have a responsibility to our fellow airman and co-workers.

“Recognizing when a person is having problems and actively encouraging that person to seek help is a vital part of suicide prevention. We lose too many airmen to suicide in the Air Force, and it is preventable,” he said. “Whatever the numbers are, we can never stop being proactive and declare victory. Instead we must continue our efforts.”

Today, the Air Force is using a prevention team called the integrated delivery system that includes chaplains and professionals from mental health, family support, child and youth services, health and wellness centers, and

family advocacy — all working together and taking responsibility for enhancing community health and well-being.

To date, suicide prevention efforts include an emphasis on involving and training leadership, buddy care, annual suicide prevention training for all military and civilians, and a database that tracks not only suicides but also suicide attempts.

According to Lt. Col. Wayne Talcott, who leads the Air Force's suicide prevention team, raising suicide awareness is not enough.

“Our pilots are responsible for early signs of problems with their jet engines, so mechanics can intervene before engine failure occurs,” Colonel Talcott said. “In the same way, we expect our commanders, first sergeants and supervisors at every level to be responsible for their co-workers and watch for early signs of problems so we can intervene early.”

The Air Force is not alone in its battle against suicide. David Satcher, surgeon general of the United States, described suicide as a “serious public health problem” — nearly 31,000 people commit suicide annually in the United States.

“The subject of suicide is very discomfoting for many people, but the first step toward preventing suicide is getting people to talk about it,” Talcott said.

Talcott suggests people be alert for the following warning signs that may signal suicide intent.

For more information on what to do if a member encounters someone with these signs, immediately contact an appropriate IDS representative – the chaplain’s office, family support center, behavioral health clinic, family

advocacy, or health and wellness center.

- Preoccupied with death and dying
- Talk about committing suicide
- Make final arrangements for death
- Trouble eating or sleeping
- Drastic changes in behavior
- Withdrawal from friends or social activities
- Loss of interest in work, school, etc.
- Give away prized possessions
- Take unnecessary risks
- Loss of interest in personal appearance
- Increased use of alcohol and drugs



RONALD T. RAND
Brigadier General, USAF
Director of Public Affairs

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QUOTABLE QUOTE

“The equation remains quite simple: the Air force must be worthy of the great people who fuel it. It must provide a quality of service and quality of life equal to your sacrifices. It must honor your service and must assume that you too will meet the standards of integrity, service and excellence to which you have sworn your devotion and which we as leaders have also sworn ours.”

Out-going Secretary of the Air Force F. Whitten Peters during his farewell address Jan. 19 at Andrews Air Force Base, Md.

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