



**U.S. AIR FORCE**

# Policy Letter

**Digest**

Policy, News and Issues from Headquarters U.S. Air Force

January 2003

## **AF realigns 13,000 positions**

The Air Force will realign more than 13,000 active-duty and civilian manpower authorizations now through the end of the decade to better support the service's highest-priority mission requirements, personnel officials said in December.

The increased operations tempo, workload and security requirements created by the war on terrorism, and budgetary realities have prompted the Air Force to review its authorizations to create a workforce that is better prepared to meet future challenges and missions.

The major commands will identify approximately 9,300 military and 3,900 civilian positions for realignment. The active-duty

positions identified will result in more airmen being available to perform expeditionary duties such as operations, maintenance and combat support. This will help the Air Force relieve some of the stress on the most critical career fields

People's whose positions have been identified for realignment will be able to take full advantage of the wide array of personnel programs.

Some of these programs include career job reservation and retraining opportunities for military members and priority placement, voluntary early retirement authority and the voluntary separation incentive program for civilians.

## **Hometown values reflect core values**

*By Chief Master Sgt.  
of the Air Force  
Gerald R. Murray*

Growing up in Boiling Springs, N.C., I was influenced by many great Americans. The values my parents and others here taught me have served me well. As my wife and I left North Carolina 25 years ago to join the Air Force, we carried with us the valuable lessons we'd learned.

Our upbringing made it easy to transition to an organization that espouses these three core values: integrity, service before self and excellence in all we do. I saw those core values lived by the people and leaders of this community throughout my influential growing years. Now, as a leader myself of our U.S. Air Force, I rely heavily on these cherished virtues to guide my steps.

Those steps have taken me from the dormitories of basic training, to Air Force flightlines around the country and world, to the sands of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Kuwait, to the streets of Turkey and Japan, and finally, to the halls of the Pentagon.

University and community leaders may never shed blood on a battlefield, but they are engaged daily in the vitally important

work of educating the young hearts and minds of tomorrow's leaders. Launching these young people into the world with the skills they need to succeed and the moral compass to steer them honorably is more than just a job; it is a calling.

I continually draw on my faith, my family and the values I learned here to guide my decisions. Around the nation, communities like this one do a great service to our nation by instilling character and values into their young people. It is these young men and women that serve in our great Air Force.

Make no doubt about it, the war on terrorism has challenged us, but as I travel to bases and deployed locations throughout the world, I am in awe of the caliber of the people. I want to share with you for a moment about those people, and about America's Air Force.

Wherever I go, I see the sons and daughters of America standing proudly as men and women of honor for their country. I see families overcoming challenges of distance and logistics to support each other. I see communities like this one reaching out to our

military, showing their support in so many ways.

This is what our military and our nation are about. It is not the pursuit of war or the thirst for a fight. It is not about seeking to destroy or to kill. It is about people working together to preserve the freedom and way of life we so dearly treasure.

We are a nation whose very fabric is woven with the blood and sweat of many hands — the military, public servants, communities, families — all working toward the common good of our nation, our people and our world.

It is a valiant effort, and one that I am proud to serve.

## **AF changing high year of tenure**

Airmen serving in most enlisted ranks will now have an additional two years available to serve on active duty.

The change, effective Jan. 1 and approved by the secretary of the Air Force recently, is part of an initiative to retain enlisted people's skills and experience, Air Force Personnel Center officials said.

The revised high-year-of-tenure policy means senior airmen can serve up to 12 years of total service; technical sergeants up to 24 years; master sergeants up to 26 years; and senior master sergeants up to 28 years. Remaining unchanged are staff sergeants at 20 years and chief master sergeants at 30 years.

Seen as a good option for most airmen, later HYT dates may affect the status of assignments, promotions, reenlistments and evaluations for thousands of enlisted members, said officials.

In the case of senior airmen, HYT dates

will automatically be extended to 12 years, regardless of any scheduled separation date after Dec. 31, 2002. Those planning to leave the service soon may be allowed to continue to serve at their current duty location or be reassigned, based on Air Force needs.

Those airmen who have already spent government funds associated with a separation or retirement will be exempt from the changes, officials said. Typically that includes people who have already shipped household goods, a car, or if their families have already moved using government funds.

The last revision of HYT dates was in 2001, according to officials. At that time maximum years of service for technical sergeants was increased from 20 to 22 years.

Policies associated with years of service and high year of tenure will continue to be reviewed periodically to ensure they are meeting the needs of the Air Force and Air Force people, officials said.

## **President signs defense bill**

President Bush signed the fiscal 2003 National Defense Authorization Act into law in December at the Pentagon.

The NDAA authorizes the Department of Defense to spend \$375 billion to continue the transformation of the military to face future challenges and to fight the global war on terrorism. More than one-fourth of that amount, \$94 billion, will go to support personnel programs and quality-of-life initiatives.

The NDAA rewards the service and sacrifice of the nation's military people and their families with higher pay, improved facilities and better housing. It also ensures people have the best equipment, the most advanced weapons, supports operations and maintenance, and continues investments in missile defense and new technologies to give America's military every advantage on the

battlefields of the future.

As part of this year's overall defense budget, the Air Force was authorized \$28.3 billion for the procurement of aircraft, missiles and ammunition; \$33.7 billion in operation and maintenance funds for the active-duty force, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard; \$389 million for environmental restoration; \$1.3 billion in military construction; and \$684 million in family housing construction.

The annual defense budget comprises two parts — the appropriations bill, which the president signed on Oct. 23, and the authorization bill. The appropriations bill allocates funds to operate the Defense Department. The authorization bill permits DOD to spend the allocated funds.

The bill's highlights include:

■ Fully funding an across-the-board 4.1 percent military pay raise with targeted increases of up to 6.5 percent for mid-grade and senior noncommissioned officers.

■ Reducing the out-of-pocket housing expenses from the current 11.3 percent to 7.5 percent in fiscal 2003, eventually eliminating the out-of-pocket costs by fiscal 2005.

■ Extending TRICARE Prime Remote benefits to family members who remain at a remote location when they cannot accompany the military member on a new assignment or duty. It also extended these benefits to family members of remotely located air reserve component members when they are ordered to active duty for more than 30 days.

■ Extending several special pays and bonuses through December, including enlistment and reenlistment bonuses. It permits service secretaries to award incentive pay to military members in difficult working conditions or undesirable overseas locations.

■ Doubling the regular basic allowance for subsistence for single enlisted airmen stationed in remote locations without adequate availability of meals from a government messing facility.

■ Creating a new payment for military retirees wounded in combat and received the Purple Heart and those who were severely disabled in combat-related incidents.

■ Continuing the existing DOD payment of a special stipend for severely

disabled military retirees with a disability rating of 60 percent or higher.

■ Allowing service secretaries to grant a one-time leave of absence of up to 14 days to service members with qualifying emergencies to prevent them from entering into unearned or excessive leave status.

■ Reducing the minimum years of service required by reservists before they are eligible to qualify for retirement pay from eight years to six years.

■ Extending the number of years members of the selected reserve may use Montgomery GI Bill benefits from 10 to 14 years.

■ Authorizing commissary privileges to National Guardsmen who are participating in federally declared national emergencies.

■ Providing \$4.6 billion for procurement of 23 F/A-22 Raptor production aircraft and continued Raptor development.

■ Increasing the service's unmanned aerial fleet with the procurement of three Global Hawk and 29 Predator unmanned aerial vehicles.

■ Providing \$3.7 billion for the purchase of 12 C-17 Globemaster IIIs and to support a multiyear procurement of additional C-17s.

■ Funding the procurement of one E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System aircraft, one ED-130J and 35 T-6A Texan II Joint Primary Aircraft Training System aircraft.

## Directorate changes name, focus

Air Force officials changed the name of one its key directorates Dec. 1 to inspire innovation and better reflect the service's emphasis on warfighting effects.

The directorate of operational requirements under the deputy chief of staff for air and space operations at the Pentagon became the directorate of operational capability requirements to more accurately represent its role in how the Air Force manages operational requirements.

According to Maj. Gen. Daniel P. Leaf, director of operational capability requirements, this change and others the directorate will implement reflects Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper's vision to "make warfighting effects, and the capabilities we need to achieve them, the drivers of

everything we do."

This transformational way of doing business calls for the Air Force to think first about what effect it needs on the battlefield, and then to determine what is required to achieve that effect.

This is a change from the past, when oftentimes one particular weapons system was looked at first, and the effects it provided were considered later.

Besides the name change, a brigadier general will be added as the deputy director. The directorate's seven divisions will modify their efforts to directly support the shift from a program-centric focus to an effects-based focus.

A team from each division will become a "task force champion" by completing a

capabilities review and risk assessment. The CRRRA will review how programs contribute to warfighting capabilities and effects, and will center on the task force's CONOPS.

Task force members will review hardware, weapons systems, and doctrine and policy to

assess the risks in attaining the desired capabilities.

While Leaf expects the task force champions to have developed solid foundations for the CONOPS by mid-2003, his vision is for continual refinement.

## **Stop Loss inflates 2002 enlisted retention numbers**

The Air Force's fiscal 2002 enlisted retention rates, which appear to show that the service met or exceeded its goals for the year, are inflated due to Stop Loss, according to personnel officials.

The retention rates for 2002 — 72 percent for first term airmen, 78 percent for second-term airmen and 95 percent for career airmen — are higher than the annual goals of 55 percent, 75 percent and 95 percent respectively.

Personnel officials are concerned that these numbers might send the wrong message to airmen and commanders in the field,

misleading them to think that Air Force retention is better than it actually is.

Officials caution that these 2002 retention figures can't be compared to other years in which Stop Loss wasn't implemented.

When Stop Loss was implemented after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, most airmen were no longer able to separate or retire from the service.

Therefore, Air Force leaders are continuing their efforts to retain the right mix of airmen needed for the Air Force to accomplish its mission.

## **President orders smallpox vaccination to begin**

Airmen will soon begin receiving smallpox vaccinations, as directed by President Bush in December.

The president, citing an increased bioterrorism threat since Sept. 11, 2001, ordered military members and others in high-threat areas to receive the smallpox vaccination.

While Air Force plans for the vaccination schedule are still being worked out, the program's director said inoculations should begin in the next few months. According to officials, the program will start as soon as possible, probably within the next six months.

Inoculations will be given in phases, but will initially target the active-duty force.

One of the program's first goals is education. Smallpox has been in the news for quite some time, so the Air Force wants to get down to establishing the specifics.

One specific item the program managers want to clarify is concern for the quality of the vaccine, and reports that it may have been diluted to "stretch" the supply. There is a limited supply of the vaccine the FDA has approved. The vaccine is currently licensed for full-strength use, and that is how it will be used.

Because the World Health Organization declared that smallpox had been eradicated worldwide in 1980, the vaccine itself is several years old. But, that should actually be considered a benefit.

While the vaccine may be old, this is the vaccine that has proven to be successful. The supply has been tested and there's no degradation in quality.

All inoculations involve some risk of side effect. Since it is a live-virus vaccine there can be occasional problems. One such problem, though extremely rare, is when the virus erupts widespread over the body, as opposed to staying limited to the vaccination site.

People who received the shots as children — the United States stopped its routine vaccination program in 1972 — must still receive the inoculation. Over time, the body's defenses against smallpox, that were gained through vaccination, decrease. People, regardless if they've been vaccinated before, need to be revaccinated every 10 years.

A potential benefit to those being revaccinated is that the threat of side effects is lower than for those getting the shot for the first time.

A benefit to all who receive the vaccination is peace of mind. Even if no smallpox biological attack happens, the vaccination program is well worth the effort.

People can help reduce the risk of side effects by knowing their own medical histories. There are people who should not take the vaccination, for good reasons. People

should talk to their family members to get as complete a medical history as possible. The more complete a picture you have, the better medical decision can be made.

For additional information, contact local military medical officials or visit the official Department of Defense smallpox vaccine Web site at [www.vaccines.army.mil/smallpox.asp](http://www.vaccines.army.mil/smallpox.asp).

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## **Paperwork reduction saves money**

The Air Force is saving time and money by streamlining the paperwork involved in environmental cleanup efforts.

The Air Force has eliminated a document called the land use control plan by including its contents in another document, the record of decision.

Like other federal agencies, the Air Force is held accountable for the chemicals, solvents, fuels, oils and other products it spills into the ground. The process of cleaning up such spills involves a studies-and-investigations phase that is capped off with a record of decision, a report that is the culmination of all the studies. The record of decision explains the results of the initial studies and explains how the site will be cleaned up.

On average, from the initial preliminary assessment to the time of the record of decision, it takes about 12 years in the Air Force.

If the cleaning leaves residual amounts of contamination in place, federal regulators may require an additional set of documents. The documents, called land use control plans, describe what can and cannot be done with the land following a cleanup. Failure to comply with contents of the plans is legally enforceable and fineable.

The development of a land use control plan is both costly and time consuming. The additional studies and the cost of the technical writers, regulators and scientists needed to produce the documents, must be paid for by the Air Force.

Merging land-use stipulations from the land-use control plan into the ROD is an example of a performance-based initiative.

By concentrating on a result, instead of producing documentation, the Air Force has improved a process and saved both time and money.

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## **AF eliminates captain selection boards**

The Air Force will eliminate captain central selection boards for active-duty, Guard and Reserve officers beginning in 2003.

The move will streamline the process for eligible first lieutenants — placing the decision point for promotion closer to those who know the officers best — but will benefit the Air Force in other ways.

Promotion decisions will now be made at the major command or equivalent level. Previously, active-duty captain selection boards were held at the Air Force Personnel Center at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas; while Reserve and Guard captain selection boards were held at the Air Reserve Personnel Center in Denver.

Despite the absence of a central review, individuals will still need to be “fully qualified” to be promoted. This means everyone who is determined to be qualified can be promoted. By comparison, promotion to the ranks of major through colonel are based on the “best qualified” criterion, meaning promotion board members rank-order qualified candidates by

merit and only a predetermined percentage of the total eligible are promoted.

First lieutenants meeting the time-in-grade requirements will be initially recommended as either “promote” or “do not promote” candidates. Members who receive a “do not promote” recommendation will be provided an opportunity to rebut that recommendation.

Recommendations to captain for active-duty officers will take place one year preceding the quarter in which an individual is eligible to pin on, which is based on the two-year date or rank anniversary.

Promotion recommendation lists are then compiled and certified quarterly at the major command level and forwarded to the AFPC. Center officials then forward the list of recommended officers through the secretary of the Air Force for presidential approval.

Recommendation to captain for Reserve officers will take place twice a year, which parallels current board cycles. Guard captain recommendations will take place once a year, one year preceding the projected pin-on date.

## Laser aircraft arrives for test work

A first-of-its-kind aircraft joined the cadre of weapon systems getting tested at the Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., when the YAL-1A, or Airborne Laser, touched down in December. The aircraft arrived from the Boeing Maintenance and Modification Center in Wichita, Kan.

The YAL-1A will rely on sensors, lasers and sophisticated optics to find, track and destroy ballistic missiles while they are in the launch phase.

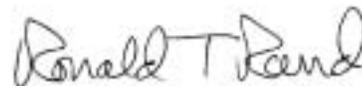
When fully developed, the system will perform its mission by focusing its megawatt-size chemical laser on the missile's fuel tank, causing it to rupture and explode.

Experts from the Airborne Laser Integrated Test Force at Edwards will soon begin installing the lasers and optical system on the test aircraft.

The aircraft, its lasers and optics, and the computers that make up the brains of the system, are being integrated and tested individually. The team has already conducted initial airworthiness and sensor flight tests and is now integrating the chemical laser system on an existing test fuselage housed inside the ABL Systems Integration Laboratory. The 7,000-square-foot laboratory was designed and built specifically for the Airborne Laser integration effort.

The final key to testing is bringing the laser and optical components together and making them work as an integrated system.

The goal is to integrate and test the laser on the ground before testing the system in the air. The ABL program's ultimate goal is to shoot down a ballistic missile by the end of 2004.



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