



U.S. AIR FORCE

Policy Letter

Digest

News and Issues from Headquarters U.S. Air Force

June 2001

Roche Sworn in as 20th Secretary of the Air Force

Dr. James G. Roche was sworn in as the 20th Secretary of the Air Force June 1 during a ceremony at the Pentagon.

David O. Cooke, director of administration and management for the Office of the Secretary of Defense, administered the oath of office. Roche was nominated by President George W. Bush on May 7, 2001 and confirmed by the Senate on May 24, 2001.

As secretary, Roche is responsible for the functioning and efficiency of the Air Force, the formulation of the service's policies and programs and the timely implementation of decisions and instructions of the president and the secretary of defense.

"I am honored to be confirmed as the secretary of the Air Force, and to join one of the most innovative, dedicated and respected teams the world has known – the United States Air Force," Secretary Roche said. "I appreciate the confidence and trust the president, the secretary of defense and the Senate have in me to lead this proud aerospace team. I consider it an esteemed privilege to have this opportunity to serve with the Air Force's outstanding men and women.

"Over the past decade, our nation has demanded increasingly more effort and sacrifice from the Air Force team – our active duty airmen, civil servants, guardsmen, reservists and contractors – and that team has re-

sponded brilliantly," Secretary Roche said. "The American people have the highest confidence in our military forces and are justifiably proud of the Air Force's numerous achievements and bright future.

"We must now respond to this century's new and emerging national security environment by fostering even more constructive relationships among the services to more fully integrate for joint and combined operations," he explained.

Roche, a retired navy captain and recipient of the Arleigh Burke Fleet Trophy for the Navy's most improved combat unit in the Pacific in 1974, said he looks "forward to piloting the journey ahead for the Air Force. My vision is an aerospace future just as remarkable as its admired past. My pledge is that I will serve the way Air Force men and women do every day throughout the world – with integrity, selflessness and in earnest pursuit of excellence."

"We welcome Secretary Roche and his family to the Air Force team," said Gen. Michael E. Ryan, Air Force chief of staff.

"The secretary has had a distinguished and successful military and civilian career," Ryan said. "He brings a unique and valuable combination of military experience, executive management expertise and proven leadership that will be an asset to our Air Force and our nation. I look forward to serving with him."

Top Enlisted Leader Addresses Quality-of-Life

The Air Force's top enlisted person, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Jim Finch, addressed quality-of-life issues before the House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Installations and Facilities in May.

In his remarks, he addressed the continuing need for improved quality of life for the more than 400,000 enlisted active duty, Reserve and Guard members he represents.

"We, the Air Force, are committed to taking care of our people and their families, who can be found in just about all corners of the world," he said.

Chief Finch relates the welfare of these people to Air Force readiness. But, he said,

"because quality of life is a broad term, with different meanings to everyone, we continue to pursue improvements in several areas."

In written remarks, the chief identified core quality-of-life priorities: adequate manpower, improved workplace environments, fair and competitive compensation and benefits, balanced tempo, quality health care, safe and affordable housing, enhanced community and family programs, and enriched educational opportunities.

"Our Air Force comprises true professionals, willing to give their lives, if necessary, to accomplish the mission," he said. "I believe this level of dedication and commitment deserves a standard of living equal to their contri-

bution to America and at least comparable with their civilian counterparts.”

Verbally, he highlighted the workplace and living quarters. He also talked about lack of people and resources.

Even though he said he appreciates the initiatives taken last year by Congress in the National Defense Authorization Act, more must still be done to retain America’s best and brightest, he said.

“And, it must be done in the near future, as approximately 193,000 airmen, 69 percent of the active duty enlisted force, will make a reenlistment decision between now and fiscal year 2004,” Chief Finch said.

“Our people spend the majority of their waking hours in the workplace, and a quality workplace environment is an important issue to them,” he said. “The Air Force has routinely had to trade off infrastructure and modernization to shore up near-term readiness.”

The current level of military construction funding only allows for repairs of the most critical work requirements and day-to-day maintenance,” Chief Finch said.

“The long-term implications of recapitalizing the Air Force at reduced funding levels directly increases operations tempo for our Air Force men and women as they try to repair and maintain aging systems and facilities,” he said.

To buy this backlog down by 2010 will require additional money in our real property maintenance budget, Chief Finch said.

“We cannot continue to mortgage the Air Force infrastructure without significant, long-term, negative effects on morale, retention and readiness,” he said.

“Consequently, many of our noncommissioned officers continue to remind me we don’t have enough people or resources available to

maintain all of the aging Air Force facilities,” he said. “Knowing you can’t get blood from a stone or more money from an already tight budget, a solution to this dilemma may be to reduce our infrastructure. Ultimately we must find a way to match the amount of infrastructure to the people and money available to adequately sustain it.”

Also playing an important role in quality of life are living quarters.

“Our airmen residing on the installation ... deserve to return to adequate quarters, whether it be in a dormitory or in family housing,” Chief Finch said. “Our Air Force is pursuing a balanced approach, using traditional MILCON (military construction) and the privatization authority enacted by Congress to meet our housing requirements.

“I firmly believe there is a direct correlation between safe, affordable housing and being able to recruit, motivate and retain a top-quality professional force,” he said

The Air Force owns approximately 104,000 homes and leases 7,100 additional units. Using the current Air Force family housing master plan, the chief said the resources required to meet the defense secretary’s goal of revitalizing inadequate units by 2010 will fall short with continued constrained funding. An additional \$2.4 billion is needed to meet the deadline.

“Make no mistake,” he said, “the Air Force is committed to ensuring our members and families have a high-quality working and living environment.

“Our men and women are the bedrock of the Air Force team and are definitely our most important resource,” he said. “I firmly believe that how we take care of them today is definitely linked to our readiness tomorrow.”

New Personnel Data System Operational

The Air Force began using a new personnel data system, MilMod, May 1. After more than five years of production, 20 years since the last major system update and nearly \$60 million for production costs, Air Force officials gave the green light to turn on the new system. The switch to MilMod, which stands for military modernization, replaces the 1970s technology, which continued as the system of record until June 1.

“We extended the turn-off date to allow a longer and more graceful transition to the new system,” said Lt. Gen. Donald L. Peterson, Air Force deputy chief of staff for personnel.

The new system will support all “life cycle”

personnel management functions from recruiting through job assignment and ultimately separation or retirement, said Lt. Col. Ed Oliver, MilMod program manager at the Air Force Personnel Center, Randolph AFB, Texas. “It will provide real-time updating and reporting capabilities that are not available in today’s personnel data system.”

All personnel records, including Guard, Reserve and active duty, will be at AFPC and serviced from the field. It will allow more than 15,000 users real-time access to the Air Force’s personnel database of 1.7 million records and eliminate duplicate data entry, that under the current system could cause

major delays in the completion of a single personnel action.

"Today's automation technology is being leveraged to improve support at all levels and is the foundation for building a robust integrated personnel system for the total force," Colonel Oliver said. "We've also standardized the support we're providing to the total force. This will improve system support to the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve personnel processes."

In the future, the MilMod system may even enhance the enlisted testing program.

"We believe as MilMod goes on line it will become much easier for us to make needed

improvements," said Chief Master Sgt. Greg Haley, chief of AFPC's enlisted promotion and testing branch. "For now, we will continue to look at shortening the wait time between when someone tests for promotion and when they get the results. MilMod will give us instant access to the very latest promotion eligibility status entered into the system by our base-level technicians. We remain optimistic that MilMod is going to do a lot of good over the long haul for the Air Force's enlisted promotion system."

For more information, visit the MilMod home page at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/modern>.

Air Force Begins Transformation of Space

The Air Force is stepping out to implement decisions from the Secretary of Defense to transform the way military space is managed and organized.

The service will put into motion recommendations made by the congressionally chartered Space Commission, a group that looked at national security space activities and suggested steps to strengthen and streamline how national leaders, the Department of Defense and the Air Force manage space.

The DOD recently reviewed the report and agreed with its recommendations.

Gen. Ed Eberhart, Air Force Space Command commander, describes this transformation of space as a critical step.

"This is a tremendous opportunity for the Air Force," General Eberhart said. "We're excited about what this will mean for all aspects of our space program, and especially what it will mean for America's security. We're working closely with our service partners and all of DOD to implement the commission's recommendations."

The intensive planning underway by the Air Force and other services will implement the Space Commission's far-reaching set of

recommendations involving space organization and management improvements, to include career force development, acquisition, operations, budgeting, and planning at the national, DOD and Air Force levels.

Among the commission's specific recommendations, the Air Force will be designated as the executive agent for space within DOD and the undersecretary of the Air Force will be assigned as the Space Acquisition Executive and Director of the National Reconnaissance Office. The commission also recommended realigning the Space and Missile Systems Center to become part of Air Force Space Command and enhancing space career and professional development.

Gen. Michael E. Ryan, Air Force chief of staff, described the changes ahead in the DOD and Air Force space program as comprehensive and far-reaching, a true watershed event.

"As a nation, we are more dependent on space than ever before for our economic and security needs," General Ryan said. "These changes to our space program are necessary, and truly profound. It's an exciting time to be on the leading edge of the transformation of our military space capabilities."

New System Improves Work Conditions

The Air Force is implementing an orderly, quality-based environment, safety and occupational health management system that will ultimately provide safer, healthier and more productive work conditions while reducing potential risks to the environment.

"The Air Force ESOHMS is a management structure designed to ensure consistent execution of environmental, safety and health policy across the entire Air Force to reduce

mission risks and improve performance," said Lt. Col. John Coho, Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health, deputy for pollution prevention.

"The key to making the policy effective in achieving these improvements is leveraging the skills and training of each member of the Air Force to manage responsibly the ESOH risks inherent in their daily mission activities," he said.

The ESOHMS is patterned after international standard ISO 14001, Environmental Management Systems — Specification with Guidance for Use. ISO 14001 is the only internationally recognized EMS standard. The goal is to have the new management system in place throughout the service by Dec. 31, 2005.

Through its ESOHMS initiative, the Air Force plans to do more than just comply with Executive Order 13148, "Greening the Government Through Leadership in Environmental Management," Colonel Coho said.

The Air Force is taking the executive order's mandate one step further. It will apply quality-based management to address not only environmental issues, as required by the executive order, but safety and occupational health issues, as well.

An Air Force audit conducted last year recommended adoption of a quality-based versus compliance-based management system, Colonel Coho said.

"With the new policy, the Air Force will evolve its current compliance-based management system into a quality-based management system to handle the environmental, safety and occupational health requirements inherent to our core mission," he said.

Currently, the three programs are managed separately.

"Right now, with the compliance-based management system, we understand what the compliance requirements are, and we work to achieve them," Colonel Coho said.

However, Colonel Coho said, "The problem with such an approach is that compliance, rather than mission performance, becomes the management focus. Once the compliance requirements are met, there's no clear system to drive further improvement in mission performance through ESOH risk reduction.

"We already have the compliance-based programs in place, and they are working very well," Colonel Coho said. "We're successful in achieving and meeting compliance requirements. We've gone from 245 open enforcement actions in the early '90s down to fewer than 10 today."

The new ESOH management system will

bring a more structured and mission-oriented approach to reducing ESOH risks and costs. Ultimately, individual work centers will identify, evaluate, and control or eliminate activities that entail ESOH risks or costs that are not essential to a successful mission outcome.

"We recognize that some ESOH risks and costs are unavoidable; however, we need to identify those that are realistically and cost-effectively avoidable, and we need to identify and take action to control or eliminate them in the interest of mission enhancement," Colonel Coho said.

He said the ESOH management system should not create more work, but is a new approach to ESOH management. It will integrate existing ESOH management programs and processes under an overarching management umbrella.

"We're not building new programs or processes," he said. "What we need to do is link existing processes together with an effective management system that will drive mission improvement in the workplace.

"The key is that, instead of focusing on compliance as an end point, we want to focus on eliminating the risks that create the need to comply. We need to evaluate our mission activities and make them more efficient by eliminating the inherent risks to the extent possible and cost-effective," he said.

Under this new management system, ownership and accountability for ESOH management will reside in the organizations that operate and control the processes that generate ESOH risks.

"The people in the shops are the experts in their mission activities. The ESOH experts and programs will help the process owners conduct their mission safely and in a way that minimizes the hazards," Colonel Coho said.

The ESOHMS is an ongoing and evolving processes, he said. "We're not looking for a quick fix; we will evolve toward an ESOH management system. By getting management connected from the air staff level on down, and holding people accountable for meeting objectives, it helps us all achieve continuous improvement," Colonel Coho said.

Reenlisting Airmen Offered More Choices

A new way for airmen to reenlist offers them more control over separations and retirements and possibly brings more money into the pockets of those eligible for bonuses.

The Air Force's Military Personnel Data System Modernization program allows reenlist-

ing airmen to fall under the Full Enlistment Program.

Full enlistment will allow airmen to specify the number of years and months they wish to reenlist. They must reenlist for a minimum of four years and a maximum of six. This pro-

gram allows reenlistment to high-year-tenure, using a combination of yearly and monthly increments. Senior airmen may not exceed their high-year-of-tenure, and those eligible to retire may not exceed their HYT plus one month.

The program also has another major change from the current system in that airmen are required to fulfill their entire reenlistment contract, said Master Sgt. Mai Pederson, chief of enlisted skills management.

“Under the current program, any unserved obligation from the previous enlistment contract is absorbed within the new contract. Full enlistment will require airmen to add any unserved obligation to their reenlistment contract,” she said. “This revised reenlistment policy requires reenlistees to fulfill all unserved contractual periods along with their new reenlistment contract.”

For example, if more than 29 days remain until an airman’s date of separation, the period will be counted as one month. If 29 days or less remain, the days will not be added to the new contract. If an airman’s date of separation is July 15, and the airman decides to reenlist May 1 for four years, the airman’s remaining obligated service is two months and 15 days. The airman’s new period of reenlistment will be four years and two months because the remaining 15 days are less than 29 days and are therefore not included.

If this same airman was eligible for a Selective Reenlistment Bonus and reenlisted for four years and two months, the new SRB would be paid for four years because the airman was

already paid for the two months in the previous reenlistment. The two months of obligated service would not be recouped because it would be served in the new contract.

This program was developed to help improve the current retention situation, Sergeant Pederson said.

The Air Force has been reviewing its force, stability and sustainment policies. It has found artificial constraints — combined with falling retention rates — have made a significant impact on its ability to maintain a viable force, said personnel officials at the Air Force Personnel Center, Randolph Air Force Base, Texas. They added that the future Air Force depends on people completing their obligated periods of service. The Full Enlistment Program was created to help maximize that investment.

The reenlistment window has also been expanded from three months before the estimated time-in-service date to 12 months. This was changed to allow second term and career airmen more flexibility on reenlistment dates.

“This (system) gives airmen more control over their careers by allowing them to reenlist in a combination of yearly and monthly increments,” Sergeant Pederson said. “Under the Full Enlistment (Program), eligible airmen can combine their reenlistment years and months to match their retirement date in one selection.”

The program will give airmen more control over their careers and allow them to maximize their SRB entitlements, AFPC officials said.

Web-Based Deployment Tool Receives Facelift

The Air Force’s Web-based deployment tool, EAF Online, has been redesigned to give airmen more help with Air Expeditionary Force issues.

Aerospace Expeditionary Force Center officials at Langley AFB, Va., redesigned the Web site to give users more information, enhanced access and the convenience of a single source for all AEF deployment information. The center is the agency for implementing the Air Force’s EAF concept.

“This is a major milestone to provide better service to those deploying,” said Lt. Col. Marie Barboza, the AEF Center’s project officer for EAF Online.

The new format combines features of the previous AEFC site into a Web “portal” which provides access to various databases and can be customized for each user. The site offers

an array of information including deployment checklists, the AEF Commander’s Playbook, lessons learned, and the newest feature, the Commander’s Toolkit.

The major attraction for deployers is the position descriptions with information on the duties, requirements and conditions of specific deployed positions. Users get the information by first registering at the site, which establishes their profile. Future log-ins will provide information tailored to the user’s career field. The deployment checklist includes training, medical status and other qualifications required for deployment, as well as links to references. Commanders can track training requirements of their people.

The Commander’s Toolkit upgrade to EAF Online allows commanders to track the deployment status of their unit and people. Fu-

ture enhancements will include a training module to track skill level training and a module to track operations tempo. All modules are updated by pulling data from existing Air Force data sources, such as the Personnel Data System.

"EAF Online is also very beneficial to Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard members," Colonel Barboza said. The position descriptions and the Commander's Toolkits include information for active, Guard and Reserve personnel.

The restricted Web site can be accessed via military and government computers at <https://aefcenter.acc.af.mil/>. The AEFC has also added a new public Web site accessible from any computer. It can be accessed through

EAF Online or directly at <http://aefc.langley.af.mil>. Updated daily, the unclassified site allows users to link to EAF/AEF activities, theater information and other key issues.

"As the AEF construct matures, the unclassified Web site provides critical information on how the Air Force conducts business in the 21st century to the general public, family members and news media representatives," Colonel Barboza said. "This also allows Air Force people to get certain AEF information from their home computers.

"It is critical that everyone identified for an AEF should go to EAF Online to obtain the latest information they need for their deployment," Colonel Barboza said.



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QUOTABLE QUOTE

"The service chiefs came together and worked very hard with the administration and Congress to try and turn around the trend of paying our folks less as we ask them to do more. We think it is imperative that we compensate our folks sufficient to the task that we ask them to do."

Gen. Michael E. Ryan, Air Force chief of staff

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