



U.S. AIR FORCE

# Policy Letter

Digest

News and Issues from Headquarters U.S. Air Force

July 2001

## Secretary Outlines Goals

He began his military career with the Navy and after 23 years retired as a captain. Now, as he starts his journey with the Air Force, Dr. James G. Roche said his naval service and subsequent business career brings a new perspective to his job as Air Force secretary.

"The culture I come from is a naval culture, with its traditions," he said. "It's not the culture of the Army or the Army Air Corps that led to the Air Force.

"On the other hand, I bring knowledge of another service," he said. "I've worked in business around the Air Force for the last 17 years. What I do bring to the job is the understanding of a military warrior culture and the business world."

The former aerospace executive and Harvard Business School graduate said he brings to the job "the understanding of dependence all of us have on our technicians, our enlisted base. I bring an understanding of national policy ... of what it means to be an officer and a gentleman, and what it means to be a dedicated airman and a sailor."

As he takes office, Secretary Roche said he has four goals in the areas of strategy, careers and equipment, respectively.

"My first goal is clearly to work with the Air Force leadership to develop a strategy that is consistent with that of Secretary (of Defense Donald) Rumsfeld and

President Bush for this era," he said. "We're in a new century, a new millennium, and it's appropriate to step back and take a look at what we're doing, where we're going and what our role is combined with the other forces.

"We can never win a war solely as an air force. We can work with the other services — Army, Navy and Marines — to jointly win a war," he said. "We have a key role to play, and understanding what that role is and making sure our colleagues in other services can depend upon us is terribly important."

His second goal focuses on careers.

"There are airmen, both officer and enlisted, who are leaving (the Air Force) about the middle point of their careers," he said. "So, that means there's something about our career development program we can work on to make better. We want service in the Air Force to be fulfilling for people throughout their whole career, not just for part of it."

The challenge is to make sure the Air Force has the talent it will need in the future, he said.

"We have to make sure a career as an airman is a wonderful career, something that someone wants to do, not a series of jobs they have to do," he said.

"Secondly, we've got to recognize the value of our longer-term airmen, our senior enlisted and our middle-grade officers and realize they have a wealth of corporate memory that we're going to have to retain and tap." He also said the Air Force must ensure its high-caliber people get the kind of equipment — and support for the equipment — that they deserve.

To better equip the Air Force, Secretary Roche said his third goal is to look at ways to be more efficient with staffs and overhead functions. His fourth goal is to see more money moved to combat arms, making more funds available to repair materials and provide more spare parts.

However, "that's

just not a matter of asking Congress for more money, it's also a matter of looking to see how we can improve our processes and be more efficient," he said.

Secretary Roche looks forward to meeting and working with the men and women of the Air Force and to the challenge ahead, he said.

"This is something I never thought I would do or be asked to do," he said. "This is going to be the high point of my career — and I've had a very rich, fascinating career to date. But boy, this is something I wanted to do, and it's going to be great!"

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*Dr. James G. Roche*

## **Personnel Community Working Toward Achieving Vision**

*By Lt. Gen. Donald  
Peterson  
Deputy chief of staff,  
Personnel*

Accurate and responsive service ... that's what our customers want. We've listened and now we're moving forward.

A year ago, the Air Force Personnel Board of Directors developed a new vision for the personnel community aimed at meeting our customers' expectations.

That vision is "professionals providing responsive, agile support to our Air Force and its people, from peace to war."

In May, the Board met again to review and update the personnel vision. These senior personnel leaders from the Air Staff, the Air Force Personnel Center, and the major commands discussed our progress and considered other goals and opportunities to help achieve the personnel vision.

We have made substantial progress on our six original goals of readiness, recruiting and retention, reengineering, total force management, information technology, and developing aerospace leaders. Now, we are expanding our goals to develop improved concepts of operations for civilian personnel services and total force support, as well as a communication plan to ensure the progress of the personnel vision continuously reaches all the men and women of our great Air Force.

During the past year, we have made the following progress toward our vision:

We know executing the personnel wartime mission is paramount. We've made significant strides toward improving our Personnel Support for Contingency Operations, or PERSCO. We've completely rebuilt our schoolhouse training program, improved field systems and reformulated our unit type codes to meet the aerospace expeditionary force construct.

Our next steps involve standing up a field training course through Silver Flag at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla. I have visited our men and women in the field as well as the students attending our revised PERSCO course. These fine men and women understand the expeditionary nature of today's Air Force and are proud to be a part of our effort to improve service and accountability for deployed forces.

In an effort to sustain our force, our Air Force team declared war on our recruiting challenges and achieved our demanding goal last year. To do this, we fielded more recruiters in order to meet increasing recruiting goals and make us competitive with the other services. We put first-class advertising on television and in theaters, increased the resources and funding to support our recruiting initiatives, and worked hard to attract talented people to the Air Force family.

This year, we are on target toward improving the skill mix and quality of our recruits. Initiatives

to synchronize our total force recruiting efforts will help us achieve our goals.

In the area of retention, second-term and career retention have stabilized, and we reached our goal in first-term retention. To continue making strides in retention, we are focusing our efforts to better implement mentoring initiatives.

I am pleased to report that we've developed and are now implementing a Civilian Personnel Management Improvement Strategy designed to enhance recruiting, retention and the development of our important civilian workforce. We've been successful in gaining solid support for these initiatives from our Congress.

Our personnel reengineering efforts are yielding real dividends. The reengineering teams are committed to an aggressive schedule and are getting great support from our experts in the field. We've kept our focus on improving support to our customers vice reducing manpower. We're on track to complete all personnel reengineering studies by September 2002 and to implement new processes no later than September 2003. Many of our initiatives are in place now.

Major strides have been made in our Total Force Management Strategy. This year, all Air Force specialties participated in a Total Force Career Field Review to identify trends, deficiencies, strengths and best practices. As a result of this review, we have developed a series of recommendations, and we are working to implement them quickly. We want to institutionalize this process so our career field managers can continue to make informed, intelligent decisions while strengthening the shape and content of our workforce.

Our customers said they wanted more and better Web-based services. We are answering the call.

The personnel community continues to take advantage of technology by improving customer support at every level. The new Military Modernization System, more commonly known as MILMOD, has been fielded, and efforts are continuing in the development of the virtual personnel flight. Our ultimate goal is to give every customer the ability to perform transaction-based personnel actions anytime and anywhere they have access to a computer. Our goal is to provide easy to use formats 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

We are in a concerted effort to transition into a flexible, competency-based career development model that rests on institutional needs and requirements. The goal is the creation of a deliberate, systematic approach to developing future Air Force leaders. Through career path,

## Expeditionary Force Prepares for Evolutionary Changes

program and policy research, we're continuing to develop new ideas as Developing Aerospace Leaders (DAL) initiatives mature.

As you can see, this has been a very busy

and exciting year. Next year promises to bring even greater challenges and opportunities. I want to personally promise you that we will continue to make sure we put Air Force people first.

While the first two aerospace expeditionary force cycles focused on early notification, predictability and stability for Air Force people, cycle 3 will concentrate on team-oriented deployments.

"We pretty much relied on 'brute force' to get off the ground and went right into the execution phase (in the first aerospace expeditionary force cycle)," said Col. Walter Burns, commander of the Aerospace Expeditionary Force Center at Langley AFB, Va. "By the end of cycle 1, the 120-day deployment notification goal was fine-tuned, and we've improved on that during cycle 2." The 15-month cycle 2 began in December and runs to February 2002.

AEF officials noticed in cycle 2 that the current unit type codes — positions grouped together to provide specific warfighting capabilities — were designed to meet the nation's strategy of being able to fight two major theater wars at the same time. "They were all very large UTCs," Colonel Burns said, in contrast to the much smaller needs of ongoing requirements like operations Southern Watch and Northern Watch. So UTCs are being redesigned to reflect the demands of the current world environment.

The redesign effort focuses on building modular, scalable UTCs that allow force providers to respond to the full spectrum of military operations. With smaller, scalable UTCs, many of the teams deploying for AEF Cycle 3 will come from a single base, rather than individual members deploying from many bases, Colonel Burns said.

"Before, you would have seven or eight different bases providing one or two or three people to go over to do the work in a particular shop," Colonel Burns said. "The team developed after they got off the plane and reported for duty. There was no coherent team aspect there. That's what we're trying to fix right now."

Currently, deployment taskings for a large Air Force wing are spread across all 10 AEFs that make up a cycle. "A base like Langley would have people on the road all the time," Colonel Burns said. "But now, our goal is to tap a wing hard once, and then not so hard during a second on-call period. This will keep bases such as Langley and Shaw from being deployed all the time."

The teaming concept also means most expeditionary combat support troops will travel at the same time as the aircrew and maintainers in their unit.

Colonel Burns said one of the challenges is to define the maximum team contribution a wing can provide before it affects home operations. "We're telling folks that you have to expect some pain, but we don't want to break a wing," he said.

Colonel Burns said airmen need to be aware of the changes.

"As we change from the peanut butter-type spread to the cycle 3 teaming concept, some people who are in AEF 5 and 6 may be moved into AEF 7 and 8, or AEF 9 and 10. So there will be a short-term impact on predictability and stability," Colonel Burns said. "But wing officials can help mitigate this issue."

For example, he said, if an airman is moved to an earlier AEF and that creates a problem, the squadron commander could identify a replacement and put the airman in an "available to deploy" category.

"We want to be up front and tell the field that, yes, there may be some impact, but this is an evolutionary improvement in the AEF process. In the long run, this will benefit everyone," Colonel Burns said.

Additionally, Aerospace Expeditionary Force Center officials are working to expand the number of people in the AEF library who are available to deploy from 120,000 to 200,000 airmen. This leaves a larger number of people to choose from, reducing the impact on individuals and bases, Colonel Burns said.

The current effort to expand the AEF library will make it easier for the Air Force to support joint exercises out of the library, said the AEF commander.

Once the 200,000 goal is reached, the AEF will be able to source large-scale overseas exercises, such as the biennial exercise Bright Star, from the AEF libraries. The Air Force will test this concept this fall by using some on-call forces in Bright Star.

"If you are in your AEF window and you're available to deploy, it could now mean your deployment could be to Operation Northern Watch, Operation Southern Watch, the Balkans or Bright Star," Colonel Burns said.

Security forces deployments highlight one example of the benefits of this change. Previously, security forces would deploy for about 70 days for Bright Star during their training cycle and then turn around and have to deploy to the desert when

## Some Who Took Separation Bonuses Can Now Return to Active Duty

they were in their AEF window. "This blew their personnel tempo goals out the window," Colonel Burns said.

"When you're a security forces troop, the last thing you want is to do is to go to a large-scale exercise like Bright Star and then a few months later, go to an extensive deployment in the desert," he said.

The Air Force recently dropped the restriction prohibiting people who separated under the Voluntary Separation Incentive or Special Separation Benefit program from returning to active duty.

According to Maj. Northan Golden, accession policy chief, only a limited amount of people will qualify to return to active duty.

"There was a shift in policy to remove an unnecessary barrier to extended active duty," he said. "However, eligibility to return is based on the needs of the Air Force."

Maj. Mark Durand, military force structure plans, said, during the drawdown, from 1992 to 1995, more than 33,000 enlisted and 6,000 officers separated under the VSI and SSB programs.

While they aren't all eligible to return to active duty, Major Golden said the expanded prior service program allows enlisted members to return in critical skill areas. He said many of these jobs fall into the mechanical and electrical realm. Examples are crew chiefs and aircraft mechanics.

Although the expanded prior service program is only open to people who have been out of the active force for six years or less, Major Golden said waivers are available on a case-by-case basis. "First, interested people need to apply," he said. "Functional managers will review qualifications and see if the person is current on our Air Force systems today."

Even though the prior service programs are not new, previous policy stated that people who left active duty under the VSI and SSB programs could not return to active duty. "All the Air Force has done is lift the barrier," said Major Durand. "A number of people have called and asked for the opportunity to return to active duty." With current retention issues, Major Durand said lifting the VSI and SSB restrictions "opens up another pool of resources for the Air Force."

The biggest advantage for the Air Force is that many of the people who are eligible to return would fill critical officer and enlisted mid-level grades. Major Golden said this will directly address these shortages.

On the line-officer side, only pilots, navigators and air battle managers may return to active duty for an indefinite period. There are also officer

With the Cycle 3 kick off in March 2002, there are many pressing challenges ahead. Getting the UTCs sized correctly and expanding the AEF library are top priorities. "We want to eventually get the AEF into a repeating rhythm of activity. We want to continue to improve quality of life, enhance our retention efforts and make deployments better for our airmen," he said.

openings in critically manned health professional, chaplain and judge advocate specialties.

All line officers and enlisted members may also opt for a limited period recall program. Eligibility for this program is based on career-field manning and allows members to return to active duty for one to three years.

Major Golden stressed that people who are eligible to return do not have to repay any payments they received under the VSI and SSB programs unless they retire. People who separated under VSI receive an annual payment while SSB was a one-time lump sum payment.

While people can return to active duty and still collect VSI payments, Major Durand said they have the option of reducing or stopping payments all together. Because VSI and SSB monthly recoupment amounts during retirement are based on several variables, including total amount received, base pay and length of service at time of retirement, and length of service prior to receiving VSI/SSB, repayment schedules will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Major Golden said allowing these people back on active duty is a win-win situation for the Air Force and eligible individuals. "We have a lot of people who did not want to separate in the mid-1990s and have always wanted to be part of the Air Force," he said. "The Air Force needs people in these critical skill areas and this gives them that opportunity."

He said the Air Force also hopes the program will help improve retention, not only by filling those mid-level positions, but also by bringing people back on active duty telling their stories and maybe sending the message that the grass is not necessarily greener on the other side.

For more information, interested line officers should contact the Air Force Personnel Center at DSN 665-2288 or commercial (210) 565-2288. Health professionals, chaplains, judge advocates and all enlisted should contact local recruiters.

For more information on payback information for people who plan to retire, call the Defense Finance and Accounting Service at 1-800-472-7098. People should ask to speak to a pay specialist concerning their pay status.

## Command Chief Selection Process Undergoes Changes

The Air Force is creating a central pool of candidates for command chief master sergeant positions in an effort to streamline the selection process.

This change from a voluntary process to a more structured one each time a vacancy is announced has several benefits, according to the Air Force's top enlisted leader.

"While the former process worked fairly well most of the time, it had some drawbacks and didn't encourage some of our well-qualified chiefs to apply," said Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Jim Finch.

"By creating a manageable pool of candidates, we remove the need for a formal application each time a vacancy is announced and eliminate the short-notice suspense that chiefs often faced in the past," Chief Finch said.

"It also takes a proactive approach in preparing the candidates, since they will all attend an orientation on CCM roles and responsibilities prior to filling any position," the chief said. "In addition, it gives commanders greater flexibility in hiring a CCM."

The selection process begins when the Air Force Personnel Center requests nominations for command chief master sergeants, Chief Finch explained. "Senior raters then identify qualified chief master sergeants who are both interested and well suited for CCM duty and recommend them as nominees," he said.

The first board will convene in July, and, to be eligible, chief master sergeants must have a date of rank of Oct. 1, 2000, or earlier and must have significant supervisory and leadership experience.

After the nominations are collected, an annual board held at AFPC will screen the nominees, thereby creating of a pool of CCM candidates.

Once selected, candidates will attend an orientation to better prepare them for CCM duties

and will submit their assignment preferences – which can be modified throughout the year.

Candidates will remain in the pool for two years and, if not selected for a CCM assignment, may re-compete during the next annual screening board. Each year, AFPC will determine the number of people needed to replenish the candidate pool.

As a CCM vacancy is identified, AFPC will make an announcement to all candidates, giving them enough time to adjust their assignment preferences as desired, Chief Finch explained.

Currently serving CCMs may also add their names and preferences to the candidate list if they are eligible for reassignment, he added.

The hiring commanders will then work directly with AFPC to get a tailored list of candidates interested in the assignment. Based on the commander's decision, the AFPC Chiefs Group will announce the CCM selection.

According to Chief Finch, in unusual circumstances, hiring commanders may select a CCM from outside the list of candidates with the approval from their major command commander.

As with any change, Chief Finch is aware that several people may be uncomfortable with this new system, and he is ready to handle questions from the field.

One question that he's sure is on the mind of many is whether a candidate can be selected as a non-volunteer for a specific CCM assignment.

"While the short answer is yes, I believe the pool will be large enough that several people suited for any CCM duty will want their names on the list," Chief Finch said. "Although if anyone does decline an assignment, they run the risk of being removed from the pool.

"Overall we believe this new process will be more responsive to the needs of the Air Force, and it will provide a more proactive approach that benefits both chief master sergeants and commanders," he said.

## Air Force Reaches Recruiting Milestone

The Air Force reached its first milestone in meeting this year's recruiting goal with the recent signing of its 34,600th enlistment contract.

With 22,027 new airmen sent to basic training since the beginning of the fiscal year, the Air Force has more than enough contracts with new recruits to enter basic training by Sept. 30 to meet its annual goal of 34,600.

"This is a great accomplishment for our country, the Air Force and our recruiters," said Brig. Gen. Duane Deal, Air Force Recruiting Service commander. "We increased the number of our recruiters, utilized enlistment bonuses, and contin-

ued an aggressive advertising and marketing campaign, and basically worked very hard. However, we won't let up; we're definitely still hiring."

The last time AFRS achieved this milestone during May was in 1986.

"What is exceptionally special about this announcement is that it occurred during the month of May, which happens to be the last of our toughest accession months," said Col. James Holaday, chief of the AFRS operations division. "We refer to our slowest time as 'FMAM,' which represents the first initial of the months of February through May. Although we consider last year also to be

very successful, we didn't reach this milestone until July."

Even with nearly 37,000 sign-ups in hand, recruiters are still hard at work recruiting additional candidates in anticipation of possible cancellations and to begin filling more than 35,000 new jobs for next year. The Air Force also faces a tough challenge in recruiting health professionals — primarily nurses, dentists and pharmacists.

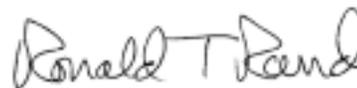
"This is an indicator of how hard our recruiters are working, but we still have a daunting challenge ahead of us," General Deal said. "But the success of meeting such a tough challenge is part of what makes recruiting duty so special."

Recruits cite the opportunity to further their education as the top reason for joining the Air Force, according to a recent survey. All new re-

cruits are automatically enrolled in the Community College of the Air Force, the only accredited junior college among the armed services.

"When our great recruiters talk to young people today," General Deal said, "they recognize that joining the Air Force equals enrolling in college. It's automatic on their enlistment, and new trainees earn between 15 and 72 college hours when they complete training, depending on their skill areas. Added to that, they are gaining a skill, immediate responsibility and being part of the world's greatest aerospace team."

Young people entering today's Air Force can qualify for more than 200 skills. The Air Force is currently placing special emphasis on recruiting qualified high school graduates and college students interested in electronic and mechanical fields.



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

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### **QUOTABLE QUOTE**

*"Our families have to put up with so many inconveniences in order for the serving member to do what we ask, that we often forget they are as courageous as the member. My family is a military family, and I know the subject well. If it were not for the superb support of Air Force families, we would not have the Air Force we have."*

Dr. James G. Roche, Secretary of the Air Force

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