

# Commander's Call Topics



March 6, 2014

“Lost time is never found.”

Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790)  
Author, printer, political theorist

Spring forward!  
[Daylight Savings Time 2014](#)  
Starts in the wee hours on  
Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup>.

## CSAF Puts Airman Issues at Top of Moving Forward

With personnel reductions, the retirement of the A-10 Thunderbolt, modernization concerns and an Air Force strategy for the next three decades points of discussion for Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III during the recent Air Force Association Warfare Symposium and Technology Exposition at Orlando, it was Airman issues that took center stage.

Welsh spoke to Airmen directly about putting to rest several myths floating throughout the Air Force on issues of educational requirements and professional military education. He said that the biggest misconception is that a Community College of the Air Force associate degree is no longer enough to move ahead through the ranks.

The chief of staff emphasized that a CCAF degree is still required, but the requirement for a bachelor's degree and higher could be revised in the years ahead.

For professional military education, Welsh said the schools aren't going away, but there will be streamlined versions. “On the right side of the page, we're still going to require Airman Leadership School; we're still going to have the NCO Academy and the Senior NCO Academy. The only difference is that the NCO Academy and the Senior NCO Academy are going to be blended learning in the future.” He said that the changes will actually shrink the length of the residency course and will not repeat the online version, and it's not a CBT-type of learning.

Welsh said that there is also a concern about getting the best NCOs promoted into the senior NCO ranks. “There needs to be logical time-in-service, time-in-grade requirements, but we need our best performers to be senior NCOs faster, so we can use them longer to lead our Air Force.”

The chief of staff said that during a mock board, held last year, overseen by Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James A. Cody, there was about a 25 percent difference between who was promoted by the mock board versus how the traditional board turned out. The mock board was handled more like a senior master sergeant board, where records are scored and weighed based upon job performance. In one career field, Welsh noted, the best performers were not promoted under the current system.

“Job performance is what we should value most,” Welsh said. “It's not quarterly awards, volunteer work off-duty, although those things are wonderful, but when it comes to promoting people at the senior grades, both officer and enlisted, job performance is what should matter most to us.”

### ► TRENDING...

“We are repositioning to focus on the challenges and opportunities that will define our future,” said [Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James](#) during the [Bloomberg Government Defense Transformation Spending and Strategy Summit](#) Feb. 26 in Washington D.C. “We have to get ready for the new centers of power, such as the Pacific, and what will be a more volatile and unpredictable world. A world we can no longer take for granted.”

## ► RESOURCES

Website access to the following resources can be gained by clicking on the name.

[AF.mil](http://af.mil)

[Airman magazine](#)

[Military OneSource/HomeFront](#)

[Air Force Personnel Center](#)

[Air Reserve Personnel Center](#)

[Department of Defense News](#)

[Department of Veteran Affairs](#)

[TRICARE](#)

[U.S. Government Website](#)

[Air Force Association Scholarships](#)

[Air Force Safety Center](#)

[Civil Service Employment Opportunities](#)

[NAF Employment Opportunities](#)

[Air Force Bands/Outreach](#)

## ► THIS WEEK IN AIR FORCE HISTORY

**March 6, 1942** - The US Army Air School at Tuskegee, Ala., for black aviators graduated its first class. The five black military pilots included Capt. Benjamin O. Davis.

**March 7, 2003** - President George W. Bush issued an ultimatum giving Saddam Hussein and his sons 48 hours to leave Iraq.

**March 8, 1944** - Eighth Air Force attacked Berlin with 623 bombers, escorted by 891 fighters.

**March 9, 1955** - In an F-84F Thunderstreak, Lt Col Robert R. Scott set a 3-hour, 44-minute, 53-second record for the 2,446-mile flight from Los Angeles to New York.

**March 10, 1967** - F-105 Thunderchiefs and F-4C Phantoms bombed the Thai Nguyen steel plant in North Vietnam for the first time. At the time, Thai Nguyen was the only plant in Southeast Asia making bridge sections, barges, and drums for fuels and lubricants. While attacking the steel plant, Capt Merlyn Hans Dethlefsen used his severely damaged F-105 to silence enemy defenses, despite intense enemy ground fire and fighter attacks, to earn the Medal of Honor.

**March 11, 1974** - The YF-16 attained Mach 2 for the first time in test flights at Edwards AFB.

**March 12, 1980** - Through 14 March, two 410 BMW B-52Hs from K. I. Sawyer AFB, Mich., flew nonstop, 19,353 nautical miles around the world in 42 hours 30 minutes, averaging 488 MPH. Majors William H. Thurston and John M. Durham commanded the flight from Offutt AFB, across Canada, the North Atlantic, Europe, the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, the Strait of Malacca, the South China Sea, and back to Offutt. They earned the Mackay Trophy for the flight.

## ► CURRENT ISSUES

[Air Force presents FY15 budget request](#)

The FY15 budget of \$109.3 billion repositioning the Air Force to meet future challenges and opportunities has been requested.

## ► PERSONNEL ISSUES

[SMSgt promotion release rescheduled](#)

Although the promotion release procedures will remain the same and pin-on dates will remain unchanged, the 2014 senior master sergeant promotion selection release date has been rescheduled to March 20.

[Admin career field to make comeback](#)

A significant change affecting nearly every Airman will occur in May when approximately 80 percent of Airmen currently assigned to the Knowledge Operations Management Air Force specialty code will transition to the new Administrative AFSC.

For more information on Air Force heritage, visit <http://www.airforcehistory.af.mil>

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