

Commander's Call Topics



January 22, 2015

"Knowledge is power."

Sir Francis Bacon
English Philosopher
(1561-1626)

January is
[National Slavery and
Human Trafficking Prevention](#)
Month

The State of the Air Force

Senior leadership addressed the key issues, priorities, initiatives and challenges facing the Air Force during the State of the Air Force press briefing, Jan. 15 at the Pentagon.

[Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James](#) and [Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III](#) focused on the Air Force's highest priorities and said they have been working hard to balance resources and preserve combat capability in a tough fiscal environment.

"Everyone wants more Air Force," James said. "We're meeting those demands with the smallest force in our history. Couple a smaller force against the backdrop of austere budgets, and you have a total force that is under significant strain: active duty, Guard, Reserve, civilian, and their families." Welsh had the same concern.

"It's about some very tough decisions we have to make to recapitalize on the Air Force for the threat 10 years from now," Welsh said. "We don't have enough money last year or this coming year to fund all the things that we currently have in our force structure."

While fiscal year 2015 still presents some enormous budget challenges for the Air Force, James and Welsh strongly agree enough is enough when it comes to force shaping and stated Airmen will see no involuntary boards in 2015.

"We cannot go any lower," Welsh said. "We are getting too small to succeed as opposed to too big to fail."

James said challenges with the budget in no way minimize the responsibilities of the Air Force. "As Air Force demands around the world continue to increase, we cannot afford to get smaller and sacrifice capability."

One of greatest demands James and Welsh addressed was intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance requirements.

"Not only do combatant commanders want more ISR, they want the globally-integrated, persistent ISR that Air Force capabilities provide," the secretary said.

James and Welsh acknowledged the significant stress the high operations tempo has placed on its experienced operators. To combat that, they have developed a plan to meet combatant commander warfighting requirements while relieving some of the unrelenting strain felt by operators.

The intentions of the ISR goals outlined by James and Welsh will provide near-term relief to stressed crews by implementing a number of options to immediately increase manning.

The future of the Air Force continues its focus on balancing today's readiness with tomorrow's modernization.

"The American people expect our Air Force to fly, fight and win against any adversary," James said. "It is important that we continue to afford our nation the Air Force capability it needs well into the future by appropriately investing in our people and in our platforms."

► TRENDING...

"We should fundamentally begin taking care of each other in personal relationships and wherever else. If we don't understand the dimension of this crime, then we will miss the whole point," said Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel in [closing remarks at the Air Force Sexual Assault Prevention Summit](#), Jan. 16, at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland.

► RESOURCES

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

[AF.mil](#)

[Airman magazine](#)

[Military OneSource/HomeFront](#)

[Air Force Personnel Center](#)

[Air Reserve Personnel Center](#)

[Department of Defense News](#)

[Department of Veterans 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

Jan. 22, 1964 - The Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird first flew.

Jan. 23, 1961 - The last Atlas-D launch from Cape Canaveral, Florida, was a success. Altogether, there were 35 completely successful launches, eight partial successes, and six failures in the program.

Jan. 24, 1946 – Gen. Carl Spaatz is named the first chief of staff of the Army Air Forces.

Jan. 25, 1990 - A Titan II booster launched Clementine I, a space probe to the moon. This mission was the first American lunar effort since Apollo 17 in 1972.

Jan. 26, 2004 - The Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards AFB, California, carried out the first mission its new KC-135 “rain and ice” tanker. The aircraft could replicate rain, snow or icing conditions through a four-foot shower head, with 100 air and water nozzles, mounted at the end of its refueling boom. In the mission, the tanker produced a saturated cloud for an F-22 Raptor performance test.

Jan. 27, 1967 – Air Force lieutenant colonels Virgil I. “Gus” Grissom and Edward White, and Navy Lt. Cmdr. Roger B. Chaffee died when their Apollo spacecraft caught fire at Cape Kennedy, while rehearsing for a Feb. 21 flight.

Jan. 28, 2003 - The Air Staff waived the U.S. Air Force General Flight Rules to allow Air Combat Command to deploy the RQ-4A Global Hawk. At the time, the Air Force Flight Test Center at Edwards AFB, California, still had the Global Hawk in developmental testing.

► CURRENT ISSUES

[Sexual Assault Prevention Summit prepares Airmen to talk effectively about sex](#)

The founder and president of the Date Safe Project said that a paradigm shift that starts with the individual is necessary if the myths relating to sex are to be replaced with mutually amazing intimacy.

[Sexual Assault Prevention Summit offers multiple tactics to prevent sexual assault](#)

According to three experts who spoke during the Air Force Sexual Assault Prevention Summit, sexual violence, caused by a confluence of risk factors compounded by individual barriers to taking action, can be successfully prevented by a combination of emotional health, empathy and connectedness.

► FAMILY HEALTH AND SAFETY

[Free tax preparation, advice available to military families](#)

Military OneSource and H&R Block are combining efforts to offer no-cost tax consultation, preparation and filing to service and family members, reservists, survivors and some separated service members.

► PERSONNEL ISSUES

[Assistance fund campaign kicks off in February](#)

The six-week-long campaign underwrites assistance to Airmen facing financial hardship in the areas of housing, education, nursing care and education.

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

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