

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

STATEMENT OF

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(MANPOWER, RESERVE AFFAIRS,
INSTALLATIONS, AND ENVIRONMENT)**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL
UNITED STATES SENATE**

SUBJECT: PERSONNEL OVERVIEW

March 24, 1999

INTRODUCTION

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the programs and policies that support the most important element of our national defense strategy – our people.

OVERVIEW

The Air Force is a seamless operation with a Total Force Policy to guide decisions about how people -- active duty, reservists, national guardsmen, federal civilians, retired military, service auxiliaries, and contractors -- are structured to protect the nation's interests. Our national military strategy states that our mission is to prevent, to deter, to fight and to win. Using the Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) as a template, rather than as an end in itself, we have developed a process that will further enhance our mission capability by shaping our military force to meet future challenges.

We have moved from the Cold War to an era of peace troubled by regional conflict. Consequently, the Air Force has been called upon to accept an ever-widening array of peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, and an ever-increasing number of deployments while maintaining our wartime commitments. Over the past 10 years deployments have increased by over 400 percent while manpower has been reduced by 40 percent. Maintaining wartime readiness and performing peacetime humanitarian missions cannot be done, today or tomorrow, without a seamless Total Force--**One Force, One Family, One Team, One Future!** This philosophy and practice enables us to aggressively contend with the most formidable challenges to troop retention and readiness--high OPTEMPO and high PERSTEMPO. This is why we are renewing our commitment to fully meet the needs of our people as we move into the 21st Century and transition to an Expeditionary Air Force.

Air Force people are the foundation that enable us to engage anywhere in the world and to successfully accomplish our growing and increasingly demanding missions. We're all proud of

our troops' selfless commitment and professional dedication, and we owe them a great debt of gratitude.

But we owe them more than our gratitude. We owe them the right tools and the right training to do their jobs. We also owe them a fair wage and adequate benefits, and, for those who stay with us for a career, a reasonable and stable retirement. During the past year my staff and I have traveled extensively to visit Air Force bases both here in the United States and overseas. At each stop we have talked to, and witnessed the work of, highly motivated men and women who are excited about serving their country. Yes, they are serving proudly, and yes, they are doing everything we ask of them and more; but they also have questions and concerns about what the future in the Air Force holds for them and their families. While there is still much that we need to do as we restructure from a forward-based to an expeditionary aerospace force, because of your continuing support for quality of life programs I am pleased that I can provide positive responses to most of their questions.

QUALITY OF LIFE

To effectively plan for the future needs of our Air Force community we must start at the beginning, and our beginning is our people. Our people tell us that operating strong Quality of Life (QoL) programs is the best way to retain experienced personnel. We know there is a correlation between readiness and quality of life, and we know that if we take care of our troops, they will take care of the mission. This underlying principle has shaped our development of, and concentration on, a quality of life strategy that focuses on seven key initiatives to: 1) Pursue fair and competitive compensation and benefits; 2) Balance the impact of high tempo levels; 3) Provide access to quality health care; 4) Provide access to safe, affordable and adequate housing; 5) Maximize retirement systems and benefits; 6) Increase and enhance support to community and family programs; and 7) Expand educational opportunities and access.

This quality of life strategy provides a balanced approach for improving the living and working conditions of all members of the Total Force--active, retired, Reserve, Guard, and

civilian. To achieve balance, we determine the impact these seven initiatives have on retention; on expressed or documented need; and on the number of Air Force people who benefit.

Competitive Compensation and Benefits

The foundation for maintaining the world's greatest aerospace fighting force is a fair and competitive compensation and benefits package. In his recent speech to the Air Force Association's Air Power Symposium, Air Force Chief of Staff General Michael Ryan said that "the United States has had its peace dividend, and now is the time for reinvestment;" – I agree. This reinvestment must be in people as well as hardware. My discussions with airmen of all ranks confirm that military readiness is being negatively affected by changes made in the mid-1980s to the Military Retirement System, and also by pay raises capped below the rate of inflation for 12 of the last 16 years. Our missed recruiting goals and reduced retention rates are the most visible signs of this systemic problem. These pay and retirement shortfalls must be corrected if we are to maintain a viable all volunteer force. In this regard, the Air Force believes that the *Compensation Triad* must be our first order of business; i.e., to restore our people's faith and confidence in our leadership, and in our ability to provide them and their families an adequate quality of life.

The *Compensation Triad* initiative is specifically designed to reverse a number of negative trends in recruiting and retention, and ultimately to restore our readiness posture. It includes reforming REDUX (the Military Retirement Reform Act of 1986) and restoring the Military Retirement System (MRS) to a 50 percent multiplier at 20 years of service as our first priority. Further, the second part of the triad, an across-the-board pay raise, will result in a significant increase in base pay. And, finally, restructuring the military pay tables so that performance and promotions are rewarded over longevity is essential for recognizing and retaining our most experienced mid-level NCOs and officers.

We appreciate this committee's swift approval of several initiatives that will improve compensation for our service members and their families. We welcome the opportunity to study

all such enhancements that will improve our ability to attract and retain sufficient numbers of America's finest men and women without sacrificing the Air Force's critical readiness and modernization requirements included in our current budget.

We are grateful for other improvements Congress provided in the FY99 National Defense Authorization Act, such as the 3.6 percent pay raise for military personnel; the increase in cadet pay from \$558 to \$600 per month; the increase in Hazardous Duty Incentive Pay for enlisted flight crewmembers; and, beginning in October of 2008, the termination of Survivor Benefit Program payments after 30 years of payments and attainment of age 70. Even with these increases, significant military pay raises are still needed now to let our people know that when we say "People First," we mean it in substantive ways.

The cost of serving in today's military continues to increase for our members and their families when they relocate from one base to another. We need your help to reduce our people's out-of-pocket permanent change of station (PCS) expenses. Our families lose money every time they change addresses. This year we are asking for Congressional support of an initiative that will authorize the Services to provide a temporary living expense for enlisted members and their families when they move to their first duty station. These members incur the same expenses as members on their second or subsequent PCS move, yet they are not eligible to receive the same compensation at a time in their careers when they need it the most.

Frequently, when our families move to a new town, they cannot find decent and affordable temporary lodging. To alleviate this additional stressor, we have approved \$101 million in nonappropriated funds ("Troop Dollars") to construct 440 new Temporary Lodging Facility (TLF) units and repair another 237, in order to reduce the out-of-pocket expenses members incur during changes of station. We also continue to support the commissary benefit as an extremely important non-pay entitlement for our active duty, Reserve component members, and retirees. Our people count on their savings from commissary purchases (up to 28 percent when compared to commercial stores) to extend their already-stretched income--partially offsetting lagging pay raises, inflation, and out-of-pocket housing and moving costs. Eliminating the commissary

subsidy would have the same impact as a seven percent pay cut for young enlisted families. Also, in keeping with our total force concept, we appreciate the support you and your colleagues provided to extend commissary access for Reserve component members from 12 to 24 days per year. This recognizes in a tangible way the increasing utilization and contributions of our Reserve components.

Balanced Tempo

For the third consecutive year, Air Force field leadership has identified high tempo levels as one of the factors negatively impacting unit readiness and retention. Since 1989, deployment requirements have increased over 400 percent, while permanent forward basing and end strength have decreased by 66 percent and 40 percent, respectively. The effects of sustained high tempo continue to impact the overall quality of life, as well as the morale and retention of many of our people. Our objective is to maintain tempo levels that successfully balance both the needs of the Air Force mission and the quality of life of our people. The Air Force has already taken a number of steps to reduce PersTempo impacts. We have lowered deployment levels; decreased Southwest Asia flying unit deployment rotations to 45 days; authorized unit stand downs after long deployments; and reduced unit inspections and competitions.

Reducing the tempo impact is a cornerstone of the Expeditionary Aerospace Force (EAF) concept which we will implement in January 2000. Air expeditionary forces will provide more stability and predictability for our people. By increasing the personnel strength for support career fields involved in expeditionary operations, we will provide the needed manpower for both our deployed forces and our nondeployed (at-home) forces, and their families.

The EAF concept also will lead to improved support to airmen and their families. Community and family support programs will be able to tailor the scope and tempo of their operations to respond to the deployment cycles. Knowing projected deployment dates more than a year in advance will allow Air Force members to plan for training, education, and family activities. The resultant stability and predictability also will allow a more complete integration of

our active, Guard, Reserve, and civilian members. This integration in turn will help reduce tempo strains by spreading the load of deployments across the Total Force. Through the EAF concept, we will make the most efficient use of our people and resources.

Health Care

The availability of quality health care remains a primary non-pay priority for our members-including our retirees. The Air Force Medical Service (AFMS) has undergone significant re-engineering over the past four years. The primary focus of this re-engineering effort is to move from a reactive, sickness-based, largely inefficient healthcare delivery system to a more efficient, proactive, prevention-based system. Through our health promotion initiatives, we are working to increase accountability for health: commanders are accountable for the health of their command; medics are accountable for health care education and delivery; and individuals are accountable for their own health by adopting healthy lifestyles.

TRICARE is the backbone of the strategy for providing both active duty and retired members and their families appropriate care. By employing TRICARE, the AFMS is able to optimize quality, cost, and access to care, while offering beneficiaries a choice of health care plan options. Enrollment in TRICARE Prime has been strong and well ahead of predictions. In fact, as of October 1998, DoD had more than 3.42 million Prime enrollees, including more than 1.02 million at Air Force Military Treatment Facilities (MTFs).

Unfortunately, TRICARE remains unavailable to Medicare-eligible beneficiaries. However, thanks to widespread congressional support, there is now legislation authorizing a Medicare demonstration project which offers retirees age 65 and over the same access to military medical treatment facilities as retired TRICARE Prime enrollees. The demonstration project is underway at six sites in the continental United States and will last for 3 years. The Air Force has taken a lead role in implementing this project and is responsible for several of the sites (Keesler Medical Center, MS; Wilford Hall Medical Center, TX; and the hospital at the United States Air Force Academy, CO, at Sheppard AFB, TX, and at Dover AFB, DE). While only a limited

number of Medicare-eligible beneficiaries are enrolled in the initial demonstration project, it is an important first step in providing seamless health care for all our beneficiaries. We continue to work with our DoD counterparts to explore other alternatives, including the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, to improve access to care for this population. This demonstration program is scheduled to begin in December 1999 and will enroll up to 66,000 medicare-eligible beneficiaries.

Housing

Access to safe, affordable, and adequate housing is extremely important to all airmen, and particularly to our junior members. Like most Americans, members of the Air Force want to live and raise their families in affordable, adequate, and secure neighborhoods. Our people do not expect to live in luxury--they simply want their families in homes and neighborhoods that are safe and that give them peace of mind. Similarly, for our single personnel adequate housing and privacy are key to recruiting, motivating, and retaining a top-quality professional force. Our young men and women must get adequate rest so that they can safely perform critical missions, like maintenance, security, air traffic control, and special operations.

In Family Housing, the Air Force must continue its journey toward excellence by improving and sustaining what we own, and by pursuing new, diverse avenues of funding. Approximately 40 percent of Air Force families live in military family housing, and 60 percent reside in the private sector. We sustain our investment in family housing in order to provide adequate living standards. As of FY99, the average Air Force housing unit is 35 years old. Of the total units in our inventory, approximately 61,000 require revitalization. Based upon projected Air Force resource allocations, it will take us over 26 years to revitalize this inadequate housing inventory.

The FY96 NDAA instituted the Military Housing Privatization Initiative, providing DoD new authorities to encourage privately funded construction and improvement of military family housing. The primary goal of competitive military family housing privatization is to leverage

capital resources to attract private sector financing for the development of quality, affordable housing. Our goal is to have no out-of-pocket expenses for military members residing in homes built using these new privatization authorities; i.e., to have their allowance for housing fully cover their rent and utility expenses.

The Air Force continues to improve the quality of life for our unaccompanied airmen living on base in dormitories by providing increased privacy and updated facilities. Our goal is to improve privacy by using a dual-pronged approach consisting of both the 1+1 construction standard (in concert with the Air Force Dormitory Master Plan), and a private-room assignment policy.

We strongly support measures designed to reduce Air Force members' out-of-pocket housing costs. January 1998 marked the start of a 6-year transition period to the new Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH) program specified in legislation. When originally enacting our housing allowance, Congress intended that the allowance would pay for about 85 percent of the national average housing cost for each grade, with the member paying the remaining 15 percent out-of-pocket (member absorption). Although the current absorption rate has been estimated at 19.8 percent, the new BAH rates will draw us closer to the intended rate at the end of the 6-year transition period if the additional funds are provided.

Retirement

The Air Force remains committed to ensuring adequate retirement benefits for the military and civilian workforce. A solid retirement benefits package has long been the foundation of the military All-Volunteer Force. The Military Retirement System (MRS) is designed to provide a reasonable level of economic security in exchange for the sacrifices incurred by members as a result of the unique demands of military service. The reforms to the MRS during the 1980s diminished the lifetime value of military retired pay by 25 percent. Recent separation surveys indicate that more than 85 percent of our people do not think the REDUX military retirement system is good enough to keep them. Right or wrong, REDUX is perceived by some as another

example of breaking faith with our people.

For our purposes, however, the important thing to understand is that most view REDUX as an issue of equity--equal pay for equal work. In their response to our 1997 Quality of Life Survey, only one in eight airmen and one in three officers agree with the statement that the military retirement system is "fair and equitable." An attractive and fair military retirement benefit must be the foundation of a comprehensive compensation package that is critical to sustaining a ready force. We are anxious to work with this committee to restore the value of the military retirement to a 50 percent-based system after 20 years of service.

Community and Family Support

In planning for the future, the Air Force has reaffirmed its commitment to preserving the sense of community at our bases and to maintaining high quality of life standards. The installations where our people live and work serve not only as the springboards for launching aerospace power, but they are also central components in defining who we are as an Air Force. How we take care of our people is inextricably linked to our ability to recruit, retain, and motivate the aerospace warriors we need to achieve our mission.

Balanced community and family activities directly support unit readiness through programs that enhance individual fitness and unit cohesion, provide a hometown environment regardless of geographic location, and serve the adaptation needs of Air Force members and their families. While competitive sourcing and privatization initiatives may soon play a significant role in Air Force community programs, and may influence future investment plans, the Air Force's commitment to maintaining top-quality family and community support programs will remain unchanged.

The Air Force recognizes that our members derive an economic benefit from the activities and services provided within our base community. On-base programs like child development and youth centers; fitness centers; libraries; skills development clubs; golf courses; and bowling

centers are part of the non-pay benefit system providing savings over the cost members would pay to receive similar services off base. As an example, while the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredits only five to eight percent of civilian childcare centers, I am proud to report that all Air Force Child Development Centers are NAEYC accredited. In many areas of the country, accredited care can cost more than twice as much as on-base care. To a young enlisted family, these savings can amount to as much as \$3,000 per child per year.

Likewise, we view morale, welfare, and recreation programs and other base services as essential ingredients in building a strong Air Force community. Our sense of community, in turn, directly impacts recruitment, retention, and readiness. We are committed to seeking out every opportunity to reduce costs through new and efficient ways of delivering member benefits and entitlements, including competitive sourcing and privatization where appropriate. We must ensure, however, that any additional costs--direct, indirect, or opportunity--related to competitive sourcing efforts for community support agencies are not shifted to the Air Force members or their families.

The Air Force continues to focus on helping active duty members with their dual responsibilities as military members and parents. There is a need for 86,000 child care spaces. The Air Force was able to meet 58 percent of this need by the end of FY98. Facility projects and funding are in place to achieve 65 percent of the need by 2002. Enhancing and expanding the before-and-after school programs for children 6-12 years of age is a major part of the plan.

For our older children and youths, we are strengthening our partnership with the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. This has proved to be a very beneficial step. Our youth face challenges quite different and much more dangerous than those you and I faced as teenagers -- a much higher incidence of gangs; media bombardment glamorizing the use of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco; and teenage pregnancy. These stresses are intensified because our teens must move frequently, and also must cope with family separations. We must be vigilant to counter these threats. I ask that you continue your support for our Youth Programs. Without your help, Service children will pay

an unfair price because their parents chose to serve our country.

The Air Force is committed to providing comprehensive family support programs for the Total Force. Family Support Centers (FSCs) are key to delivering critical assistance to our people. FSC programs provide timely information, referral assistance, and other forms of assistance needed to cope with parenting needs, budgets, and family readiness preparedness.

We also have a comprehensive service delivery system to address domestic violence. This includes extensive education awareness programs, preventive services, and short- and long-term counseling.

Because of mobility requirements for military and civilian personnel, the Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) remains one of the most requested installation service. The impact and value of the RAP are well documented--those receiving RAP services experience fewer and less serious problems with the costs of setting up new residences, finding spouse employment, locating schools, adapting to available child care, and adjusting to new cultures and higher costs of living.

The FSC's Transition Assistance Program (TAP) provides crucial services to civilian and military members alike who are concluding their service to the Air Force and our Nation. In FY98, a wide range of TAP services were provided to well over 48,000 DoD personnel and spouses. Over 31,000 military members/spouses and 505 civilians/spouses attended 1,000 three-day TAP Workshops to help prepare for the transition to employment in the private sector. TAP's increased reliance on technology, to include computers, the multitude of relevant web sites, and distance learning, helps to compensate for the loss of staff. The recent Transition Commission Report validated the continued need for a responsive and timely transition assistance program.

We also recognize that the quality of educational opportunities for Air Force dependent school age children influence retention trends. We have formulated quality of life objectives to aid in meeting the educational needs of our dependent school age children. One initiative is to

work with local school districts to provide information and material to students and their families via the internet. This helps diminish uncertainty for school age children when they move from one school system to another on a permanent change of station, and it is particularly important for Air Force families going to, and returning from, overseas locations. In the overseas Department of Defense Schools programs, initiatives to reduce the teacher pupil ratio in the first three grades of elementary school to 1:18 are underway.

Educational Opportunities

The number one reason young men and women join the Air Force is to take advantage of the education and training opportunities we offer. Since our service is heavily oriented to high-tech skills, we place a high premium on making sure educational opportunities are available, and we reap the benefits of a well-educated force.

Education assistance programs clearly are very important to retention, and the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) is the foundation of our education program; on average, 96 percent of our airmen participate. Tuition Assistance, and the college credits earned through the Community College of the Air Force, are also major tools we use to achieve our recruiting and retention goals. We appreciate that participants in the Veterans' Education Assistance Program (VEAP) are now permitted to switch to the more advantageous Montgomery GI Bill. Thanks to the provisions of the Veteran Benefits Improvement Act, 66 percent of those who were eligible converted to the MGIB. However, there are approximately 19,000 other members who entered active duty during the VEAP era (1977-1985) who were excluded from participating in the recent MGIB conversion opportunity because they lacked VEAP account contributions. These are people who at one time opened VEAP accounts but later withdrew their money because of the eroding value of the program. We would like to see immediate legislation to address these members' concerns. Also, there are an additional 58,000 active duty members who entered between 1977 and 1985 who did not participate in VEAP, and who will be retiring without a GI Bill for education. We support an open season for these people to give them a fair opportunity of

obtaining the significant educational benefits of the MGIB since they have earned educational benefits the same as those who had VEAP account contributions.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND TREATMENT

The Air Force is committed to ensuring equality of opportunity and treatment for all of our personnel. We recognize the special responsibility associated with service to our nation, and that we must ensure unit effectiveness and mission readiness while simultaneously promoting individual worth, opportunity, and fairness. Since 1995, our Air Force pamphlet, Discrimination and Sexual Harassment, has provided guidance for military and civilian members regarding discrimination or sexual harassment. Discrimination or harassment of any kind is not tolerated. Commanders and supervisors are charged with the responsibility to take swift and appropriate corrective action when violations occur.

The Air Force has also reemphasized the importance of equal opportunity to our personnel through mandatory training known as Equal Opportunity 2000. Over the past 4 years, we trained more than 380,000 military and civilian personnel--achieving our goal of training at least 90 percent of the force. This training and awareness has paid off--the total number of military equal opportunity and treatment complaints filed has dropped in each of the past four fiscal years.

RECRUITING AND RETAINING QUALITY PEOPLE

Recruiting

The Air Force remains committed to recruiting high quality people to perform its leading edge missions using high tech weapons systems. In FY99, because of a downturn in retention, we had to increase our recruiting goal by 8 percent to 33,800 recruits. Increased enlistment bonuses have helped, but recruiters are still working harder to find the required numbers of eligible recruits at a time when the propensity to enlist has declined by approximately 23 percent since 1991. This is partially due to a strong economy and increased opportunities for continuing education. As a

result, the Air Force has missed its Delayed Entry Program (DEP) targets in 9 of the last 12 months, and also has fallen short of our goal for new contracts in 4 of the first 5 months this year--down 1046 accessions through Feb 99. If this trend continues, the Air Force could miss its FY99 target by 2,000 or more recruits.

We are aggressively pursuing several initiatives to help our recruiters overcome the challenges they meet every day. First, we increased our advertising budget after a significant drop in funding in the early nineties. The Congressional increases that we received in FY98 and FY99 to boost our advertising campaigns had a positive impact; however, we have not reversed recent declines in the size of our enlistment bank. We are now entering uncharted territory. For the first time in the Air Force's history, we are conducting a paid television advertising campaign, this year funding it at \$54 million. Early indications are that this is the right way to go, and we are optimistic that this television campaign will be successful.

We are improving our recruiters' capabilities on the job in part by providing cellular phones, laptop computers, and information support systems that allow immediate update of applicant data and access to supporting data systems. Recent special emphasis on housing (given preference for assignment to base housing) and pay (Special Duty Incentive Pay) for recruiters have also helped to lessen their financial burden when serving in high-cost areas.

Finally, thanks to the help we received from Congress, in Oct 98 we expanded our enlistment bonus program to all critical career fields to help attract quality applicants. This is an essential program for attracting potential recruits for hard-to-fill skills, particularly those specialties requiring mechanical or electronic aptitude.

Meeting Air Force accession requirements, in terms of both numbers and quality, will remain a big challenge. Your continued support for sufficient recruiting and advertising funding is essential for us to sustain the world's finest aerospace force.

Retention

After we have recruited and invested training dollars in our people, we must retain them

in sufficient numbers and quality to ensure mission readiness. Retention is becoming increasingly difficult because of our members' growing perceptions of eroding benefits and the increased stress on families due to high tempo rates. Recent separation surveys indicate that airmen are often torn between wanting to serve their country and needing to take care of their families. These indicators serve to remind us that, while we recruit individuals, we retain families.

Last year was the first time since 1981 that the Air Force fell below its goals for reenlistment in all three of our reenlistment categories: first-term, second-term, and career airmen. Since FY95 the trend in each reenlistment category has been consistently negative, and, unfortunately preliminary indicators for FY99 suggest that the downward trend will continue.

This trend gives us great cause for concern since nearly 93 percent of our enlisted force must make a reenlistment decision over the next 4 years. Even more troubling is the fact that more than half of our enlisted specialties are below the 75 percent second-term reenlistment goal, and that among these are critical war fighting skills such as avionics, air traffic control, and security forces. We significantly expanded the Selective Reenlistment Bonus (SRB) program by increasing the number of eligible skills from 48 in FY95 at a cost of \$24M, to 117 skills in FY99 at a cost of \$53M. We will continue to maximize the use of this program to improve retention in our critical skills.

Officer retention also continued downward in FY98. This trend is not limited to our pilot force. Though pilot retention is a major concern, we are also closely monitoring navigator, non-rated operations, and mission support retention for further signs of erosion.

If current trends continue, the Air Force will experience a shortage of more than 2,000 pilots by fiscal year 2002. We are attacking this problem from all angles in order to stem the tide and reverse this trend. Your approval last year of new limits in flight pay (Aviation Career Incentive Pay (ACIP)) and the pilot bonus (Aviator Continuation Pay (ACP)) have helped immensely. We had 42 pilots change their minds and accept ACP after we restored the bonus to its original value. So far in FY99, 44 percent of those pilots who have entered their decision window have accepted the long-term bonus contract, while another 20 percent opted for a short-

term contract. To put the cost of ACP in context, the first three pilots who took the bonus paid for the entire annual ACP program in terms of what it costs to train three new pilots.

However, since we know that pay is only one factor affecting our pilot retention, we recently increased the active duty service commitment for pilot training from 8 to 10 years to help preserve our future combat capability. We are also testing an innovative transition assistance program for pilots called Phoenix Aviator 20. It is designed to encourage mid-career pilots to stay with the Air Force to 20 years. In turn, the Air Force will commit to helping them transition to commercial aviation after completing their full military careers. This is a great partnership venture between the Air Force and commercial airlines that assures our pilots that they can upgrade their proficiency before retirement, even when they've been out of the cockpit.

We intend to continue to use every available incentivized recruiting and retention tool to its fullest advantage. For the Air Force to continue to attract and retain quality people, now is the time to act to become competitive with today's labor markets. As discussed earlier, we believe the first step is to restore the retirement system so that it will once again be the number one reason people stay in the Air Force. At the same time, we must reform military pay so that it keeps pace with inflation and remains competitive with private sector wages. Our people are looking to us to take action on their behalf to ensure that they receive fair and competitive salaries and a stable retirement benefit. We believe the elements of the Compensation Triad initiative will achieve these objectives. Importantly, our people not only need these changes, they deserve them.

Our civilians are also experiencing shortfalls and need workforce shaping tools to address the negative impact of an aging personnel pool. Decreased hiring, base closures, and increased use of competitive sourcing affect our ability to bring in new employees. These factors are also keeping our people from being promoted into senior level positions. And, like their military counterparts, their pay has not kept pace with the private sector. This is especially true for our senior executives. We must address their needs now, or we could well lose the talents and skills

we need to meet our critical missions at the most senior levels.

SUMMARY

People are the foundation of Air Force readiness. Our job is to recruit, train, and retain sufficient numbers of the right people to ensure the Air Force is always ready to defend this country's interests. While there are readiness indicators that suggest some cracks are beginning to form, we are confident that our foundation is strong and that the Air Force is ready for any contingency. This is due in large measure to your support for those Quality of Life programs that provide our people with an adequate standard of living, realistic career expectations, a secure benefits package, and a robust community and family support network of services.

While we can be justly proud of our accomplishments, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels. Our people continue to give everything they have, and go everywhere we ask, to ensure mission accomplishment; this despite the fact that tempo rates continue to increase while the size of our force continues to go down. Our people are not asking to live on easy street. They only ask that we give them the means to reasonably take care of their needs and those of their families. During your deliberations on the Fiscal Year 2000 budget proposal, please consider the sacrifices our men and women, and their families, are making for our country, and support the funding needed to keep your Air Force strong and secure.

Questions for Assistant Service Secretaries and Military Personnel Chiefs

1. End Strength Management

What is the end strength your service is requesting for FY00? Please break down the end strength by officer, warrant officer and enlisted personnel.

Answer: The requested end strength for FY00 is 360,877 (70,616 officer; 286,261 enlisted; and 4,000 cadets).

Do you anticipate that you will end Fiscal year 1999 within the flexibility range between the ceiling and the floors established in the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999.

Answer: No. Due to falling retention rates and a depressed recruiting market, we do not expect to end FY99 within the range established by the NDAA for FY99. An estimated understrength of 5,000 is reflected in the FY00 President's Budget submission. The floor and ceiling established in the FY99 NDAA for the Air Force was 370,882. The NDAA allows for only .5% flexibility under the floor equating to 1,854. The 5,000 estimated understrength is 1.3% under the floor.

2. Cost of Increasing End Strength

What are the costs of authorizing a higher end strength than requested in the FY00 budget? Please provide the cost in 5,000 person increments from the requested end strength to the levels authorized by section 401 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999.

Answer: The requested FY00 end strength is 10,005 under the section 401 NDAA strength of 370,882. It would cost approximately \$118M for each 5,000-person increment added to the requested position. With the current retention trends, difficulty in recruiting new entries, and the availability of training resources it may not be possible to get the required accessions to meet the higher end strength.

3. OPTEMPO and PERSTEMPO Management

The Committee defines OPTEMPO as the frequency and duration that units are deployed or are away from home station over night. The Committee defines PERSTEMPO as the frequency and duration that individuals are deployed or are away from home station over night.

In your view, is the Committee's definition accurate and functional?

Answer: Yes. The Air Force definition: OPTEMPO measures a weapon system's or unit's activity level, while deployed or at home station, while PERSTEMPO measures an individual's temporary duty away from home.

What are the OPTEMPO and PERSTEMPO standards for your service?

Answer: The Air Force does not have specific deployed OPTEMPO standards. The Air Force's "desired maximum" PERSTEMPO level is 120 days TDY per individual, per 12 months. It includes all TDY reasons, lengths, and locations. Simply stated, "A day away is a day away." We do not use the word "goal" with the 120 number because it could be misinterpreted as a mark we're trying to achieve. The Air Force tracks TEMPO rates for each weapon system and skill. The data, available to commanders world-wide, is briefed at the Joint Monthly Readiness Review and reported to Congress quarterly.

Do you have the capability to track the PERSTEMPO at the individual service member level? If not, how do you measure service practice against your standard?

Answer: The AF developed a data based system to track individual TDYs in September 1996. It was designed to (1) readily identify the most used AF skills/weapon systems, and (2) standardize the AF collection and evaluation of TEMPO data. This system, the Air Force Tracking System, allows commanders to review the TEMPO of bases, units, specific specialties or individuals. Applications are available for the active duty, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command.

What actions have you taken to manage the PERSTEMPO to ensure that service members are not away from home in excess of the service standard?

Answer: AF has taken the following initiative to balance TEMPO:

- Reduced Joint /Air Force exercises and competitions
- Authorized post deployment stand down of units (1 day down for each 7 days deployed; up to 14 down days maximum)
- Eliminated Quality Air Force Assessments
- Reduced Operational Readiness Inspections
- Global Military Force Policy - Established limits on taskings of selected low density/high demand assets for contingency operations
 - Funded 2 additional RC-135s
 - Stood up a Reserve Associate AWACS Squadron
- Continued use of Guard and Reserve volunteers to reduce active taskings
- Shifting to the Expeditionary Aerospace Force (EAF) concept

4. Status of Quality of Life Initiatives

Several years ago Secretary Marsh chaired a Quality of Life panel for Secretary Perry. Secretary Marsh's panel concluded with a list of recommendations for improving the quality of life for military personnel and their families. At the time, these recommendations were strongly supported by the Services.

Please provide a summary of the actions your service has taken with regard to each of the recommendations of the Marsh panel;

Answer: (See Attached Quality of Life Task Force Grid)

Housing:

Assure members of the Armed Services and eligible civilians access to safe, affordable, quality housing;

Answer: We are in the process of finalizing an Air Force Family Housing Master Plan that will guide our use of tradition Military Construction, O&M; and privatization to ensure our families have access to safe and affordable housing.

Support near-term efforts, such as new legislative authorities, being considered by the 106th Congress.

Answer: There are no legislative authorities being considered.

Address other near-term issues that impair housing delivery that cause members and families concern;

Answer: Demand for on-base housing is very strong at many Air Force bases resulting in long housing waiting lists. One reason for this is the assumption that our members will spend on average 20 percent out of pocket for a suitable house on the civilian economy. Given this factor, our members attempt to secure base housing to avoid this housing "bill."

Identify an effective structure for alternative Defense Department System to deliver and maintain quality housing at affordable, commercially comparable costs.

Answer: The present Department of Defense system effectively identifies military family housing requirements. The system also effectively operates and maintains our 110,000 housing units. However, additional resources are required to revitalize our 61,000 inadequate housing units.

PERSTEMPO:

DOD should establish a single, simple formula for counting deployed time as "a day away is a day away";

Answer: The Air Force currently uses the simple formula, "A day away is a day away" to define and measure PERSTEMPO.

Promote use of the reserves to ease active duty PERSTEMPO;

Answer: As part of the Air Force's Total Force Concept, we continue to use the Guard and Reserve volunteers to reduce active duty taskings. In FY98, ANG deployed an average 1336 people per day and the Reserves deployed on average 663 people per day in support of contingencies and JCS/Air Force exercises. The Expeditionary Aerospace Force (EAF) concept will ensure the Reserve Components continue to serve a significant role with Active Duty.

Earmark money in the FY97 DOD contingency fund to reimburse the general treasury for the cost of an employer tax credit for employers whose reserve employees are called to active duty to support a contingency operation.

Answer: N/A.

Child Care:

Continue to provide sustained appropriated funding.

Answer: Air Force childcare provides support to help active duty members fulfill their responsibilities as parents while performing their military mission. In FY98, Air Force child development centers, family child care homes, and school age programs provided care and supervision to more than 50,000 children a day. With more than 10,000 children on waiting lists, the Air Force continues to seek Congressional support for MILCON facilities to expand the amount of care available. We have increased the percent of childcare need met from 54 percent to 58 percent during the last five years and have funds programmed to meet 65 percent of the need by FY05. With additional resources we can begin working towards meeting the DoD goal of 80%.

Family Support:

Update the automated relocation information system;

Answer: Standard Installation Topic Exchange Service, known as "SITES" data is updated twice a year, however, the Air Force has established a method which allows our members and families to obtain relocation information that is updated daily through FAMNET Crossroads, which includes actual photographs of base facilities and housing floor plans. Crossroads provides easy one-stop process for providing relocation information to all personnel preparing for a permanent change of station or temporary assignment. In addition to providing information on the most frequently asked questions, Crossroads also provides information on temporary housing, schools, embassies, availability of medical services, pet services, spouse employment, and education opportunities. Crossroads also provides site links to service organizations to respond to personal inquiries.

Seek exemption from the Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) rules for hiring military spouses;

Answer: We do not believe this is necessary. The lack of FTEs would not prohibit the employment of military spouses. Authority already exists to employ overhires based on mission requirements and funding availability. In addition, military spouses already receive statutory employment preference administered through the Department of Defense Priority Placement Program. With the ongoing civilian reductions in force, any additional preference would not appear to be prudent.

Investigate greater use of reserve chaplains.

Answer: The USAF Chaplain Service is not aligned with Family Support Centers. All Active duty and Reserve Category B USAF Chaplains are assigned to the installation Wing Chaplain (Category B Reserves are attached to active duty Wing Chaplain on active duty bases as augmentees for that chapel staff). Their duties involve visiting the Family Support Center in the same manner as other units assigned to the installation. The core competencies of the Chaplain Service are: Spiritual Care and Ethical Leadership. The core processes are: Religious Observances, Pastoral Care and Advising Leadership of spiritual needs, ethical issues and first Amendment rights for service members and their families. Today, 394 Reserve chaplains serve on active duty on any given day.

Education Services:

Provide necessary advocacy to keep the impact aid program viable.

Answer: The Air Force supports the efforts of The Military Impacted Aid Association (MISA) and the National Association of Federally Impacted Schools (NAFIS) to ensure the adequate funding of the Impact Aid program. Additionally, the Air Force, as a member of the Federal Interagency Committee on Education (FICE), does address Impact Aid concerns through this forum.

Morale, Welfare Recreation:

Allocate additional funds to upgrade and build new fitness centers;

Answer: The Air Force allocated \$183 million over the next five fiscal years from our share of the Secretary of Defense Quality of Life funding wedge to renovate existing fitness centers and build new ones, where appropriate. In support of this effort, we benchmarked with the private sector fitness industry to ensure the facilities we build and the programs and services we offer will meet tomorrow's standards of excellence. Also, Services commissioned a fitness center master plan to identify and prioritize the total requirement for Air Force fitness facility improvements. We are also developing a fitness center design guide to standardize fitness centers across the Air Force to the maximum extent possible. These initiatives will not only support the standardization of fitness programs we provide the troops, but also ensures the best return on investment. Our focus in standardization is to deliver a constant level of quality to all members of the Air Force family regardless of their location. We are also working with the medical community to link the efforts of our fitness centers with those of health and wellness centers, to enhance individual fitness, meet the fitness needs of the Air Force community, and deliver a fit and healthy force.

Fitness continues to be one of the Air Force's highest priorities. As the 1995 Marsh Commission report clearly indicated, fitness centers are critical to readiness, productivity, and quality of life. They directly assist recruiting and retention efforts and are a key ingredient in ensuring our Air Force is fit to fight and win. In the 1997 Air Force Chief of Staff Quality of Life Survey, Air Force members ranked fitness programs second, behind health care, in allowing them to be more productive. This survey also indicated that fitness is the most important MWR program having a positive effect on career intent. Stated simply, fitness centers are a force multiplier.

Adopt enhanced support practices that would allow installation commanders to assist military Teens, especially programs that address study-skills enhancement.

Answer: Air Force youth programs partner with Boys and Girls Clubs of America (B&GCA) to affiliate on-base youth and teen programs with B&GCA. Through this partnership, youth programs developed Keystone clubs (leadership for teens), NIKE Swoosh clubs (leadership through sports), Power Hour Homework Club, Ultimate Journey (an environmental club), and teens apply for the national youth of the year through regions. Air Force teens participate in the Congressional Award Program. We are currently working on several initiatives to connect Air Force teens worldwide through the Internet (with the purchase of hardware, software and Internet access) and offer a wide variety of summer camps to all Air Force bases in five areas - Creative Arts, Educational (computer, speech, writing, grammar, creativity), Life Skills, Lifetime Sports, and Team Sports.

Transportation:

Accept the findings of the Military Traffic Management Command's Personal property Re-engineering Working Group;

Answer: The Air Force is working hard to improve the Personal Property movement process to raise the "quality of life" of our service members. We support the efforts of MTMC's Reengineered Personal Property Pilot Program, which began this past January with five Air Force bases participating in the "Pilot" program. We are also working closely with DoD to bring ourselves more into line with commercial practices such as, settling claims directly with the carrier and obtaining full value replacement, and customized pickup and delivery schedules. Additionally, we are actively engaged with the United States Transportation Command in the evaluation process of the new concepts in an effort to determine the best of each (which may be a combination of all the processes). We fully recognize that for major improvements to occur in the program, we need to continue to strengthen our partnership with the Moving industry.

Provide for storage of privately-owned vehicles for those assigned overseas;

Answer: The authority to store privately owned vehicles at government expense for members who are assigned overseas, but restricted from sending their vehicle to the overseas location, has been in place since 1 April 97. We are working hard to complement this much-appreciated entitlement by striving to standardize the storage processes with our Service counterparts through efforts with MTMC and the United States Transportation Command. We are also studying the feasibility of allowing Air Force members to use the Government Credit Card to pay in instances where they choose to self-procure their storage provider, making the payment process easier and quicker.

Expand space-available travel to unaccompanied as well as accompanied family members.

Answer: DoD policy already extends the space available privilege to family members traveling accompanied to/from overseas locations and within an overseas area. If the military sponsor is assigned overseas, command-sponsored family members may travel unaccompanied to/from the CONUS and within their overseas area. DoD policy does not allow family members unaccompanied travel within the CONUS because it would constitute competition with the airline industry. The Air Force supports the DoD policy to focus the privilege on the program's primary beneficiaries - active duty service members and retirees. Additionally, we fully support its primary purpose to offer relief from the rigors of active duty service and give recognition of a career of rigorous service or the possibility of recall to active duty service. Although we would like to expand the program, the current environment of an increasing pool of eligible travelers and decreasing resources precludes expansion. Any expansion would diminish the travel opportunity for active duty and retired members, as well as their family members and impact their "quality of life."

6. Junior ROTC Program

What are the Junior ROTC funding levels for Fiscal Years 1997, 1998, 1999 and what is the amount in the request for Fiscal year 2000?

Answer:	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>
	\$22.9M	24.8M	24.1M	24.9M

When local educational agencies apply or express interest in initiating a Junior ROTC program, they are placed on a waiting list. Please provide a copy of the JROTC waiting list.

Answer: See attached list.

Local school districts, and many Members of Congress, believe that the JROTC waiting list reflects the order in which new JROTC programs will be awarded. Is your service policy on awarding JROTC programs other than the hierarchical order assumed by the local school districts and Members of Congress? If so, please explain the policy for determining the order in which new JROTC programs will be awarded.

Answer: The Air Force JROTC waiting list is ranked in geographical distribution order in which they would be open if funding becomes available.

What legislative changes would your service recommend with regard to the JROTC program?

Answer: None, but continued congressional funding support for JROTC is vital. JROTC offers a valuable opportunity to American youth. Even though JROTC is not used as a recruiting tool, historically, 48% of JROTC seniors do affiliate with the military through enlisted service or Senior ROTC programs.

7. Legislative Fellowship Program

The legislative Fellowship program can be a valuable experience for those who participate. If the services require a utilization tour following completion of a Legislative Fellowship, it can be a valuable resource for OSD and the Services. In the Committee Report to accompany the Senate version of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1997, S,Rept 104-267, the Committee expressed concern about the management of the legislative fellows. The Committee remains concerned that the Legislative Fellowship program has not received the required attention and that no significant management reforms have been implemented.

Which agency within your Service has responsibility for managing the Legislative Fellowship program?

Answer: The Air Force's "Total Force" Legislative Fellowship Program is composed of active duty, Air National Guard, Reserve, and civilian fellows. On November 19, 1998, Mr. Peters approved our roadmap which established the Director of Legislative Liaison (SAF/LL) as the Air Force's central OPR, with the Air National Guard and Reserve serving as their component OPRs. As an academic program, Air University (AU) manages Legislative Fellows as part of its larger fellows' program. Therefore, AU commander has command responsibilities over Legislative Fellow personnel, maintains budget, ensures Legislative Fellows meet curriculum requirements, and determines AF Personnel Center selection board requirements.

Is there a service regulation or instruction which describes the goals, policies and procedures with regard to the Legislative Fellowship program? If so, please provide a copy of the directive.

Answer: With the Acting SECAF's November approval of the roadmap briefing, we are drafting a change to AFI 36-2301, Professional Military Education, July 22, 1994, which governs the Air Force Fellows program. However, we have thoroughly reviewed and are in full compliance with DoD Directive 1000.17, Detail of DoD Personnel to Duty Outside DoD, 24 November 1998, and DoD Directive 1322.6, Fellowships, Scholarships, and Grants for DoD Personnel.

What activities and assistance are provided to the Members' offices where Legislative Fellows serve to ensure that the Members understand the objectives, goals and requirements of the Legislative Fellowship program?

Answer: We have several mechanisms to ensure the hosting Member of Congress understands the objectives. Starting with the Fellows' Class of 1999, the SAF/LL sent an introductory letter to each member of the House and Senate Armed Services' Committees. We followed that with direct communication with offices interested in hosting an Air Force Fellow. Once an Office committed to a Fellow, we provided a copy of ASD(FMP)'s "Guidelines for Avoiding Political Activities" under a SAF/LL letter summarizing the most critical areas of potential conflict.

Our Fellows' reports indicate that their activities adhere to the published guidelines.

Military Legislative Fellows routinely do *not* wear their military uniforms while working in the Senate. In your confirmation hearing, the Committee asked your personal views as to whether requiring military Legislative Fellows to wear their military uniform would degrade the Legislative Fellowship program. What is your service's position with regard to military Legislative Fellows wearing their uniform during their fellowship?

Is there any advantage to the fellowship program for your military fellows to mask their service affiliation?

Answer: Based upon historical precedent set by the Air Force Fellows, National Defense, RAND, National Security, and SecDef Fellowship programs, our personnel wear professional civilian attire while on Capitol Hill. The depth of the experience as a Congressional staff member could be degraded if a Legislative Fellow in uniform was singled out as different from other staff members and thus not included to the full extent. In addition, the daily interactions with others outside of the Congressional office and DoD or other Congressional offices unaccustomed to military fellows could pose a barrier to their effectiveness.

Are there benefits that would accrue if military fellows proudly wear their uniforms and demonstrate the professionalism and bearing on behalf of your Service?

Answer: Since the goal of the Air Force Legislative Fellowship is to provide hands-on education in the Congressional process, we want to eliminate any barrier to our fellows' having a total immersion into that process. Feedback from the members and their staff strongly indicate that our Fellows bearing and professionalism are clearly evident daily in their work.

8. Public-Private Housing

Are there any plans or proposals in which service members living in housing administered under a public-private venture would be required to pay costs in addition to forfeiting their basic allowance for housing?

If so, under what authority would these costs be levied or collected?

Answer: There are no deals under consideration that would require Air Force members to pay out of pocket for public-private venture housing. Air Force initiatives are designed where rent plus utility costs would equal the members housing allowance.

The Committee is aware that some within the services may intend or propose to permit commercial retail activities that would compete with exchanges, commissaries and morale, welfare and recreation activities in public-private housing areas.

Do you intend to permit private retail activities in competition with the exchange, commissary or morale, welfare and recreation activities? If so, under what authority would this be permitted?

Answer: The Air Force has studied the impact of commercial retail and recreational activities in public-private housing areas and now has a policy governing the treatment of resale merchandise, services and recreational operations or activities in housing privatization projects. Air Force operating instructions state that to the greatest extent practical developers will be

precluded from providing resale merchandise, services and commercial recreational operations or activities as part of their housing privatization projects.

The Committee is aware that there are discussions concerning the status of school aged children who live in public-private housing areas *with* regard to whether they are or should be eligible to attend DODDEA schools.

What is your service policy with regard to the eligibility of school aged children who live in public-private housing areas to attend DODDEA schools when the installation is serviced by a DODDEA school?

Would you intend to build new DODDEA schools to accommodate the additional school aged children living in public-private housing areas?

Answer: The eligibility criteria to attend DoD Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools (DDESS) is determined by DoD. During concept development of a privatization initiative impacts to DoD schools are assessed and coordinated with the local school authority and DoD. DoD provides the service with the eligibility requirements as they relate to that project and appropriate plans are developed accordingly to retain, expand, build or transfer the school to local school system.

9. Dr. Charles Moskos, in an OPED in the Washington Post published on March 8, 1999, proposes short-term (15 month) enlistments as a solution to the current recruiting shortfall.

Have you studied alternatives, such as that suggested by Dr. Moskos, to the current enlistment programs?

Answer: To our knowledge, the Air Force has never studied or considered a 15-month enlistment alternative. Our research reveals, however, that RAND conducted an experiment for the U.S. Army during the Jun 89 - Sep 90 timeframe. This study was known as the “2+2+4” program which was for “high quality recruits” (high school graduates with an AFQT score at or above the 50th percentile). This “2+2+4” experiment required 2 years of active duty, plus 2 years of selected reserves, followed with a 4-year individual ready reserve term. It also allowed 2-year enlistees to be eligible for the Army College Fund and the results of this experiment was a recruiting market expansion of only three-percent.

What are your views with regard to Dr. Moskos proposal?

Answer: Throughout its history, the Air Force has found the benefits of longer initial enlistment contracts for new recruits (i.e., 4- or 6-years) far outweigh the costs associated with shorter terms. Specifically, the average variable cost to train a new Air Force recruit today is approximately \$16,000 (excluding associated overhead costs) and the average technical training school is about 55 training days, or 3 months. When combined with 6 weeks of basic military training, the total training time is between 4 and 5 months which makes a 15-month enlistment unacceptable. More technically oriented, the Air Force has determined the return on the initial training investment translates into the need for longer vice shorter terms of enlistment. In fact, the Air Force recently increased its enlistment bonus program to attract more recruits into electing a 6-year enlistment contract. Dr. Moskos’ proposal for 15-month enlistments would also require

higher accession levels at a time when the Air Force is facing a very difficult recruiting has become ever more challenging. Based on the aforementioned Army model, it is unlikely that implementing even 2- and 3-year initial enlistments in the Air Force would be cost effective since all Air Force recruits attend technical training before being awarded an AFSC.

Are there any statutory or regulatory impediments that would prevent you from adopting a short-term enlistment similar to that suggested by Dr. Moskos?

Answer: Current law requires a minimum initial term of enlistment of 2 years (U.S.C. 10, Ch 31 - Enlistments, 505c). Title 10, Ch 109, Sec 2171 restricts the amount of an educational loan repayment program to 33.3% or \$1500 whichever is greater, for each year of service.

10. The issue of domestic abuse was recently featured in a 60 Minutes broadcast following that broadcast the Committee was briefed by representatives of the Department of Defense. The briefing was comprehensive and reassuring; however, subsequently several follow-up questions have arisen.

What is your policy for record keeping on reports of domestic violence and tracking cases?

Answer: The Air Force is committed to ensuring the protection of victims as well as accountability for perpetrators. We have a comprehensive system of record keeping, from logging in reports, to extensive Family Advocacy records, brief medical record entries and a central registry database. Much of this data is sensitive in nature, therefore we balance client confidentiality with the collection of critical data necessary for quality service.

Is there a central data base to track domestic abuse cases?

Answer: Yes, the Air Force Family Advocacy Program at each military installation maintains a central registry of both child and spouse abuse cases. This data has been consistently collected since 1987.

What policies are in place to ensure victims of domestic abuse are protected?

Has the training curriculum for Commanding Officers for responding to and preventing domestic violence been vetted through a peer-review process from non-DOD experts? If not, why not? When was the most recent update to this curriculum?

Answer: Air Force Commanders are key players in the safety net our military community creates for maltreatment victims. Therefore, one of our top priorities is making sure they are trained and educated on how to deal with domestic violence within their organization. Air Force Family Advocacy Standards require ongoing training for Commanders and First Sergeants. Family Advocacy staff conduct a personal, introductory briefing with each Commander and First Sergeants upon their arrival at an installation. Additional training occurs at least annually. Training includes discussion of the dynamics of family maltreatment and its impact on the Air Force mission, mandatory reporting requirements, participation in the Family Maltreatment Case

Management Team, and an overview of all Family Advocacy resources. Current trends on the installation level and quality improvement issues are also addressed in this briefing.

Our Air Force Family Advocacy Program established consultation and liaison relationships with national experts on domestic violence through a series of innovative partnerships with the USDA and Land Grant Colleges and Universities. While they have not been asked to formally vet our training, our strategy is to utilize their consultation to consistently update the field with state-of-the-art information for prompt dissemination in education and awareness briefings at the installation level.

At what point(s) do you train officers and enlisted personnel on preventing domestic abuse?

Answer: We provide ongoing formal education and training to active duty (officer and enlisted), family members, and civilian personnel through a wide range of diverse forums such as Commander's Calls, Newcomers Briefings, and Life Skill Development Seminars. This training takes place across the developmental career path of the military member and his/her family.