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INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, and especially in the past three years, America's Airmen have responded to dramatic changes in our force structure and the world security environment. Since 1991, we have reduced our active duty force by nearly 40% -- from 608,000 to 375,000 -- while remaining engaged around the world at levels higher than at any time during the Cold War. To prevail in a dangerous and ever-changing world, we have completely transformed our Air Force, from a heavy, forward-based presence designed to contain the Soviet Union and allied communist governments into an agile expeditionary force, capable of rapidly responding on a global scale, with tailored forces ready to deal with any contingency. Since the attacks of 11 September 2001, that transformation has taken on an even more urgent and accelerated pace to respond to the world situation as well as our domestic security environment. This transformation has produced outstanding initial results. But the journey is just beginning.

Many challenges remain before us, but we believe we have our focus in the right place: towards the future. At the heart of our efforts is our plan to create an environment, and the associated tools necessary, to more deliberately develop Airmen to be the leaders of tomorrow at all levels. This culture of force development extends across our force, encompassing officers, enlisted, civilians, and Guard and Reserve members. This developmental change is driving major cultural changes in your Air Force. Beginning with a common Airman culture that embraces diversity of thought, diversity of talent, and diversity of background and experience. This culture emphasizes the manner in which professional Airmen relate to each other, and includes a zero tolerance approach

to inappropriate behavior of all kinds. Obviously, that encompasses a straightforward, determined approach to issues such as sexual harassment and sexual assault. We will do all in our power to prevent such behavior, root it out when we find it and apply appropriate justice while providing all the support we can muster to victims of this behavior. These issues, as tough and complex as they are, need to be fully embraced and understood at all levels of our force, to ensure every member of our team experiences the mutual respect, teamwork and esprit de corps they have earned and truly deserve. Our culture is grounded in our core values as Airmen: Integrity, Service, and Excellence, which form a solid foundation for the Total Force team -- active duty, Guard, Reserve, and civilians.

We recognize the Herculean effort put forth by all members of the force to defend America and her interests abroad. We recognize in particular the stress we have placed on members of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve. We are making every effort to relieve the stress on the Airmen who make up those mission-essential forces, just as we are making every effort to relieve the stress on many of our Active Duty members in critical warfighting skills while we work to get down to our end strength objectives. As we respond to the many challenges we face, it is important that we take time to recognize and support the tremendous sacrifices made by Air Force family members, whose contributions to the overall Air Force team are as crucial as those of any other team members. Sometimes more so.

Finally, as Airmen, we have taken a renewed look at the very real demands that our people must endure, as well as their long term well being. We have refocused our health and physical conditioning efforts to emphasize fitness for life, a vision, with the needed leadership behind it that recognizes the inherent relationship between physical fitness, mental acuity, and battlefield survival. Balancing all of these inter-related priorities is a complex task, and an important one. These priorities are extremely important to our force, to our culture of service, and to the nation. We must get them right: to always be ready to respond to our nation's call.

None of this would be possible without the exceptional support Air Force personnel receive from the Congress. Over the last several years, you have approved significant advances in pay, benefits, and retention incentives for the men and women who serve in all of the military services. These initiatives have made a significant difference for the readiness of your Air Force and the quality of life of our members and their families. They improved retention and increased enlistments, essential to keeping the highly trained professionals in the ranks. The poor retention we experienced in recent years has been reversed, a testimony to both your support and the patriotism of young Americans who join and continue to serve. But we have to keep our focus. As we've experienced in the past, positive retention trends are dependent on many rapidly changing dynamics and we can't afford to take our eyes off the ball. Thus, in the coming years we will continue to watch our retention of key warfighting career fields. The battle is not won. But we have made much progress.

In addition, we would like to thank the Congress for taking the initiative to approve DoD's National Security Personnel System (NSPS). NSPS allows us to modernize our civilian personnel management system to meet the unique demands of the national security mission. We believe NSPS is essential to the Air Force's ability to accomplish its Air and Space mission in these challenging times. NSPS' flexibilities will allow us to attract and retain "the right people for the right jobs at the right time", expedite military to civilian conversions, and quickly meet the ever changing demands for support of the Global War on Terrorism.

The Air Force enthusiastically and energetically supports NSPS and is committed to implementing it aggressively and responsibly. While some of NSPS' elements may be considered radical departures from current processes, it is critical that we are not diverted from moving forward on executing NSPS. Any delay will be detrimental to our transformation efforts and our ability to move toward a more responsive posture.

This combined statement of both the Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs and the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel, develops each of the themes just mentioned in greater detail. This statement represents our vision of the way ahead for Air Force people.

To place these issues in context, we will begin by discussing the Air Force core competency that directly affects every Air Force member: Developing Airmen. This core competency is at the heart of our strategic vision for Air Force personnel.

DEVELOPING AIRMEN -- RIGHT PEOPLE, RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME

At the heart of our combat capability are the professional Airmen who voluntarily serve the Air Force and our nation. Airmen create air and space power. Our Airmen turn ideas, tools, tactics, techniques, and procedures into global mobility, power projection, and battlespace effects. It is with this understanding that the Air Force embraced a new Personnel Vision and Strategic Planning Construct to help transform management of “Airmen” across the Total Force (active duty, Air National Guard, and reserve; officer, enlisted, and civilian).

We are refocusing our personnel processes and delivery systems on achieving the capabilities and creating the effects which produce for our Air Force the Right People, possessing of the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to perform their missions at the Right Place and Right Time. This New Vision succinctly states the role of our manpower, personnel, and training professionals: defining mission requirements; continually refreshing the pool to maintain an effective balance of youth and vigor, age and experience; deliberately developing the skills, knowledge and experience required by our combatant and support missions; sustaining the Force by meeting the needs of our Airmen and their families; and providing synchronized and integrated program management and service delivery systems.

Our strategic goals focus on the effects of the personnel mission and the specific capabilities our system offers to our Airmen and their leaders:

Define: Implement a capabilities-based requirements system that meets surge requirements and optimizes force mix (Active duty, Air Reserve Component, civilian, and contractors) to produce a flexible and responsive force

Renew: Maintain a diverse, agile workforce that leverages synergy between active duty, air reserve and civilian components, and private industry to meet requirements and sustain capabilities

Develop: Synchronize training, education, and experience to continuously create innovative, flexible, and capable Airmen to successfully employ air and space power

Sustain: Sustain required force capabilities through focused investment in Airmen and their families

Synchronize: Implement a robust strategic planning construct, understand Air Force Human Resource investment, and link programming and legislative development to the plan

Deliver: Transform customer service by delivering a leaner, more cost-effective, customer-focused Human Resource Service to support the Air Expeditionary Force

The four overarching goals (Define, Renew, Develop and Sustain) will serve as our framework for the written testimony that follows, just as they serve as the underlying framework for our personnel vision. In each of these areas we will discuss key issues facing the Air Force today, and what we are doing in each of those cases to look forward and ensure we are building the right force for tomorrow. (Note: The goals “synchronize” and “deliver” focus on the specific means by which we achieve the four overarching goals).

DEFINE:

As we define the Air Force of the future we must determine our end strength needs, we must shape the force to meet those needs, and we must relieve the current stress on our most heavily stressed career fields. These are complex and inter-related issues.

The process by which we approach this challenge involves how we manage our Total Force of Air Force active duty members, Air National Guard, Air Reserve, and Air Force civilians. It also encompasses the steps we are taking to relieve pressure on our Guard and Reserve forces.

-- End Strength:

During the last several years, the Air Force has brought thousands of sharp, motivated people into our ranks--essentially, those who wanted to serve in the Air Force were welcomed. To meet end strength, we rolled up our sleeves and increased recruiting. Incredible patriotism prompted by the attacks on 11 September 2001 surged our growth and put us well above end strength. We are proud of the efforts of our outstanding Air Force professionals in the war on terrorism and are delighted that so many people want to be a part of our winning team. This very positive fact and the slowed economy have reduced what would have been normal attrition. In other words, not as many people left the Air Force in the last several years as we had anticipated.

As a result, for the last several years we have exceeded our mandated active duty end strength of 359,000. Air Force active duty military end strength (i.e. billets) are capped

at 359,300 for FY 04, 359,700 for FY 05, and 360,000 for the years FY 06 through FY09. The actual number of personnel assigned to the Air Force at the end of FY03 was 375,000 -- approximately 16,000 personnel above our currently authorized limit. This is a temporary situation fueled by the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), and we are working to get in compliance. As we work to reduce the size of our active force by 16,000 people over the next several years, we will also work to reshape the force to correct existing skill imbalances and account for a new range of missions in the GWOT.

Because we have more people in the Air Force than the number of our currently authorized billets, it has led some to ask: "Do we need to increase the size of the force to accomplish the mission especially with increased/extended mobilization?" The answer is that first we need to ensure that we are using the people we have in the most efficient and effective way. The Air Force and DoD are constantly reviewing end strength needs and we feel we have not exhausted all potential internal sources to address stress on the force. People costs account for a significant portion of the Department's budget—we feel strongly that the Air Force must exhaust all other possibilities before requesting an expensive increase to military end strength.

The Guard and Reserve forces that support our Total Force team are designed to meet the Nation's call in times of crisis, such as the current Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). Activation of the Guard and Reserve in times of crisis is not, in and of itself, a reason to seek an increase to end strength. As part of our review, we are taking a hard

look at missions currently assigned to Active, Guard, and Reserve in light of the foreseeable future requirements for conflicts. Our goal is to minimize the times the Air Force needs to call on the Guard and Reserve and to minimize the length of time they are activated.

-- Shaping the Force:

The Air Force is planning to implement several measures to shape the force back toward our authorized end strength -- knowing as we do so that we must also reduce the stress on many of our "over stressed" career fields. This will be a many step process, but our guiding principles will be simple. We want to properly size the Air Force to meet the needs of our Air Expeditionary Force construct, our in-garrison requirements and our training requirements. We want to ensure that we draw down smartly, by specialty (and by specific year groups within those specialties) where we have more people than we need. At the same time, we want to correct our skill imbalances. But perhaps most importantly, as we shape the force we want to be sure that we avoid involuntary "draconian" measures that break faith with our people. With these guiding principles in clearly in view, we are taking a number of deliberate and very specific steps to shape the force.

In broad terms, we are addressing force shaping in two ways: first, by reducing personnel overages in most skills; and second, by shaping the remaining force to meet

mission requirements. To reduce personnel, we will employ a number of voluntary tools to restructure manning levels in Air Force career specialties, while adjusting our active force size to our authorized end strength requirements. As we progress, we will evaluate whether we need to modify these steps, or implement additional force shaping measures.

We are taking a hard look at where our people are. We have Airmen serving in jobs outside the Air Force who don't deploy as part of an Air Expeditionary Force (AEF). Some of these, such as joint positions and some defense agency positions, require uniformed people, and we benefit by having an Airman's perspective in those jobs. Others, however, may not require an Airman or a military person at all. These are positions that we are working to legitimately reclaim into our ranks. By taking the steps to return these Airmen "to the fold", we will ensure we have more people available to support our critical warfighting skills, as well as increasing the number of personnel available to support our AEF rotations overseas, which in turn will reduce stress on the rest of the force.

Until very recently, we had not implemented all the manpower cuts at unit level we agreed to during the 1990s. We've now made the adjustments in our books -- over 13,000 positions eliminated -- but we still need to move some of the people. That means we have Airmen with advanced training and professional skills filling positions that no longer exist.

The Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel is overseeing a program that will move us toward our goal of getting our strength and skill mix right. This program includes initiatives such as restricting reenlistment in overage career fields, voluntary transfers from Active Duty to the Guard and Reserves, shortening service commitments, limiting officer continuation for those deferred for promotion, commissioning ROTC cadets direct to the Guard and Reserves, limiting reclassification of those eliminated from technical school, rolling back separation dates, and officer and enlisted retraining.

If at all possible, our goal is to give every qualified Airman who wants to stay in the Air Force the opportunity to do so. In addition, we will use every tool to shape the force we have available to avoid the extreme measures used in the early 1990s, which undermined the morale and confidence of the force.

-- Stressed Career Fields:

The events of 9/11 and the subsequent increase in deployments to support a variety of operations around the globe have resulted in a significant increase in operations tempo and sharply accelerated the existing stress on the force. Complicating this problem is the fact that the additional stress is unequally distributed across the various Air Force skill sets. Nevertheless, the Air Force is working to level the stress across the force to an acceptable rate, albeit higher than pre- 9/11 stress levels.

The Department of Defense initiated 20,000 military to civilian replacements beginning in FY 04. The Air Force share was 4,300 of these.

The Air Force had also been working on realigning our military into stressed career fields that better address post 9/11 workloads. The Air Force has addressed reducing and balancing stress with numerous manpower and personnel initiatives. These efforts to relieve stress go back to the FY04 POM when approximately 1,400 authorizations freed up by programmatic changes were redirected to Security Forces to address pressing security and force protection requirements. In addition, 1,110 initial accession/training students were redirected to stressed skills in FY 03 -- plus an additional 1,060 training redirects for FY 04. Currently, we are finalizing the required training adjustments for FY 05.

Significant technology solution purchases made during FY 03 are also offsetting manpower requirements. A Security Forces \$352M technology purchase reduced unfunded Security Forces manpower requirements by 3,000 (with 1,600 of these in the active duty) beginning in FY 04.

The Air Force will realign approximately 4,600 military positions to our most stressed career fields (such as Security Forces and Intelligence) in FY04 and FY05. During FY04 1,800 military authorizations are being realigned from less stressed skill sets to more stressed career fields. In the FY 05 Presidents Budget (PB), the Air Force is

dedicating an additional 3,800 military authorizations to relieve stress across the force in FY 05. Additional significant efforts are underway to further relieve and balance stress. We continue to work with Defense Agencies to reduce our total number of military positions in these functions, replacing them with civilians where appropriate. Collectively, these efforts provide examples of the kinds of steps the Air Force is taking to meet the Secretary of Defense's vision of moving forces "from the bureaucracy to the battlefield."

-- Total Force Management – Active, Guard, Reserve and Civilian:

Today we are also shaping what our Total Force will look like in the future. As we carefully review what each component brings to the fight, we work to ensure the best capabilities are retained and nurtured. Just as in combat overseas, we are continuing to pursue seamless ARC and active duty integration at home, leveraging the capabilities and characteristics of each component, while allowing each to retain their cultural identity. We continue to explore a variety of organizational initiatives to integrate our Active, Guard, and Reserve forces. These efforts are intended to expand mission flexibility, create efficiencies in our Total Force, and prepare for the future. Today's Future Total Force team includes a number of blended or associate units that are programmed or already hard at work. The creation of the "blended" unit, the 116th Air Control Wing at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia, elevated integration to the next level. With an initial deployment of over 730 personnel, and significant operational achievements in OIF, we are now examining opportunities to integrate Active, Guard, and Reserve units elsewhere in order to produce even more measurable benefits,

savings, and efficiencies. The reasons for this type of integration are compelling. We can maximize our warfighting capabilities by integrating Active, Guard, and Reserve forces to optimize the contributions of each component. Reservists and Guardsmen bring with them capabilities they have acquired in civilian jobs, leveraging the experience of ARC personnel. As an added benefit, this integration relieves PERSTEMPO on the active duty force. Because ARC members do not move as often, they also provide much needed corporate knowledge, stability, and continuity. Finally, integration enhances the retention of Airmen who decide to leave active service. Because the Guard and Reserve are involved in many Air Force missions, we recapture the investment we've made by retaining separating active duty members as members of the ARC.

-- Relieving Pressure on the Guard and Reserve:

We are reviewing our Guard and Reserve manpower to minimize involuntary mobilization of ARC forces for day-to-day, steady state operations while ensuring they are prepared to respond in times of crisis. Since 9/11, we've mobilized more than 62,000 Air Force Guard and Reserve personnel in over 100 units, and many more individual mobilization augmentees. Today, 20 percent of our Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) packages are comprised of citizen Airmen. In addition, members of the Guard or Reserve conduct 89 percent of Operation NOBLE EAGLE missions. We recognize these demands have placed significant stress on our ARC forces, and we are taking steps to relieve the pressure on the Guard and Reserve.

In FY05, we plan to redistribute forces in a number of mission areas among the Reserve and Active components to balance the burden on the Reserves. These missions include our Air and Space Operations Centers, remotely piloted aircraft systems, Combat Search and Rescue, Security Forces, and a number of high demand global mobility systems. We are working to increase Guard and Reserve volunteerism by addressing equity of benefits and tour-length predictability, while addressing civilian employer issues.

We are entering the second year of our agreement to employ Army National Guard soldiers for Force Protection at Air Force installations, temporarily mitigating our 8,000 personnel shortfall in Security Forces. As we do this, we are executing an aggressive plan to rapidly burn down our need for Army augmentation and working to redesign manpower requirements. Our reduction plan maximizes the use of Army volunteers in the second year, and allows for demobilization of about one third of the soldiers employed in the first year.

At the center of our efforts to relieve pressure on the Guard and Reserve are our efforts to use innovative personnel management initiatives to enhance flexibility and reduce involuntary mobilization. A number of these initiatives focus on promoting volunteerism among Guard and Reserve members. For example, relative to the aforementioned efforts to mitigate the Security Forces shortfall is the ARC Security Forces augmentation program. In December 2003 the Air Force initiated a prototype program to use ARC volunteers (of all specialties) to assist in installation force protection. The initiative

allows ARC members to serve flexible tours as force protection augmentees, assisting in such duties as vehicle inspection and entry control. This centrally funded program allows commanders to access a ready pool of willing volunteers and enables reservists to augment their military skills.

We are also exploring a concept called Sponsored Reserve. This initiative involves a pre-contracted, voluntary agreement among the military, the ARC member, and industry to fill high-demand, critical skills that are honed in the civilian sector and that the Air Force requires for contingency situations.

An essential element in our efforts to promote volunteerism is to provide predictability via the AEF rotation schedule. Not only are ARC members integrated into a predictable Total Force AEF schedule, but units are also afforded flexibility through internal Guard and Reserve rotations for AEF support in the case of high-demand/low density specialties. For example, in executing the COMMANDO SOLO Special Operations mission, the Pennsylvania Air National Guard's 193d Special Operations Wing uses predictable 45-day rotations. In this way, even with a high operational tempo, members are afforded a high degree of predictability, which eases pressure on them, their families, and their employers.

There is no doubt that in the Global War on Terror, the United States Air Force has relied on the critical mission skills that our Guard and Reserve warriors bring to the fight. Simply put, we could not have accomplished the mission without them. But we also recognize that, in the long-term, we must make every effort to relieve the pressure on our ARC forces. Just as we must take steps to ensure the long-term health of our active duty forces, so too must we ensure the long-term health, combat capability, and career viability of our citizen soldiers in the Air Guard and Reserve. We are committed to doing so.

RENEW

Our focus on renewing our force will examine the issues of recruiting, retention, and diversity, and their overall effect on the health of our force.

-- Recruiting:

To renew our force, we target our recruitment to ensure a diverse force with the talent and drive to be the best Airmen in the world's greatest Air Force. We will recruit those with the skills most critical for our continued success. In FY03, our goal was 5,226 officers and 37,000 enlisted; we exceeded our goal in both categories, accessing 5,419 officers and 37,144 enlisted. For FY04, we plan to access 5,795 officers and as many as 37,000 enlisted. We are considering whether to reduce our recruiting goal below 37,000 enlisted this year to complement our overall force shaping goals. In FY05 we plan to reduce new accessions from 37,000 to 35,600. In FY06 they have been revised still lower to 34,600.

These measured decrements in our recruiting goals are part of our very deliberate effort to bring down the overall size of the force (to meet our end strength objectives) without jeopardizing the long-term health of the force by drastically slashing the number of our new accessions. As we learned after the post-Cold War drawdown when we slashed the number of accessions and associated training (we cut pilot training, for example, from 1,500 per year to 500 per year) we discovered that by doing so we build long term structural personnel deficits into our inventory of trained personnel, with the result that shortages of particular year groups will be with us for up to 20 years. This time, in our efforts to solve a short-term problem, we are determined not to create a long-term problem of even greater significance. This is the one of the cornerstones of our approach to renewing the force in the environment of the early 21st century.

We also closely monitor recruitment for the Air Reserve Component (ARC). Historically, the ARC -- comprised of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve -- access close to 25 percent of eligible, separating active duty Air Force members with no break in service between their active duty and ARC service.

Although we are currently meeting our recruiting goals and maintaining high standards for accessions, we need to keep our focus. Your continued support of our recruiting and marketing programs goes a long way to keeping the Air Force competitive in an uncertain job market. We are mindful of our experience of a decade ago. In a period when recruiting and retention looked positive, we allowed our recruiting investments to lag behind the growing challenges of the market place and found ourselves chasing a

“sine wave.” In the past several years, we reversed course and made the investments needed to tune our recruiting engine. We need to sustain that engine now with proper care and maintenance. Additionally, these investments contribute to improved esprit de corps within our force, and further our efforts to retain the right people and shape our force for the future.

-- Retention:

The Air Force is a retention-based force. Because the skill sets of our Airmen are not easily replaced, we expend considerable effort to retain our people, especially those in high technology fields and those in whom we have invested significant education and training. In 2003, we reaped the benefits of an aggressive retention program, aided by a renewed focus and investment on education and individual development, enlistment and retention bonuses, targeted military pay raises, and quality of life improvements. While we are still grappling with skewed retention numbers affected by STOP LOSS in 2002, we are nevertheless seeing very positive signs overall. Our officer retention rates for FY03 and so far in FY04 are above previous years. For the enlisted force, our retention is healthy, but we must continue to actively manage our force. Our current first term retention rate is 67% which is well above our goal of 55%. For second term, we are on the mark with 75% and we are exceeding our 95% goal with 98% of our career Airmen being retained.

Part of our ability to succeed in our recruiting and retention efforts stems directly from our ability to offer bonuses and incentives to groups where we have traditionally needed

the extra help. Our retention efforts reflect what has already been stated about recruiting: Our efforts right now are paying dividends for the Air Force and we must sustain this trend for the future. We fully recognize our ability to offer bonuses is a valuable and scarce resource, which is why we've ensured active senior leadership management in these programs, including semi-annual reviews of which career specialties, and which year groups within those specialties, are eligible for bonuses.

-- Diversity:

In this new era, successful military operations demand much greater agility, adaptability, and versatility to achieve and sustain success. This requires a force comprised of the best our nation has to offer, from every segment of society, trained and ready to go. In the Air Force, the capabilities we derive from diversity are vital to mission excellence and at the core of our strategy to maximize our combat capabilities. Our focus is building a force that consists of men and women who possess keener international insight, foreign language proficiency, and wide-ranging cultural acumen. Diversity of life experiences, education, culture, and background are essential to help us achieve the asymmetric advantage we need to defend America's interests wherever threatened. Our strength comes from the collective application of our diverse talents, and is a critical component of the air and space dominance we enjoy today. We must enthusiastically reach out to all segments of society to ensure the Air Force offers a welcoming career to the best and brightest of American society, regardless of their background. By doing so, we attract people from all segments of society and tap into the limitless talents resident in our diverse population.

DEVELOP

Over the past year, the Air Force has implemented a new force development construct to get the right people in the right job at the right time with the right skills, knowledge, and experience. Force development combines focused assignments and education and training opportunities to prepare our people to meet the mission needs of our Air Force. Rather than allowing chance or happenstance to guide an Airman's experience, we will take a deliberate approach to develop officers, enlisted, and civilians throughout our Total Force. Through targeted education, training, and mission-related experience, we will develop professional Airmen into joint force warriors with the skills needed across the tactical, operational, and strategic levels of conflict. Their mission will be to accomplish the joint mission, motivate teams, mentor subordinates, and train their successors.

One of the first steps in implementing our development efforts was the creation of individualized development plans. These plans are a critical communication tool capturing the member's "career" development ideas, including desired career path choices, assignment, and developmental education preferences. These plans are routed through the chain of command, to include their most senior commanders, for endorsement. The newly created Development Team (DT), comprised of senior leaders from the functional community, carefully reviews each individualized career

plan, along with commander's comments, and Senior Rater input. Targeting Air Force requirements, the teams place a developmental "vector" into the plan as input for our assignment teams, and immediate feedback to the member and commander regarding their expressed development plans. Assignment Teams match members to assignments using DT vectors; thus, "developing" our people to meet Air Force requirements.

This year also saw a continued focus on Developmental Education (DE) with continued expansion to include not only traditional Professional Military Education (PME), but also advanced academic degree programs, specialty schools, fellowships, education with industry, and internships. Our development teams are using the individualized development plans, along with the member's record and Air Force requirements, to make educational recommendations to the Developmental Education Designation Board. This board designates the right school for the right member at the right time. Intermediate Developmental Education and Senior Developmental Education prepare members for a Developmental Assignment (DA) following the respective schools. This two-dimensional process facilitates the transition from one level of responsibility to the next. All developmental education assignments are made with the emphasis on the best utilization the member's background, functional skills, and valuable time.

One of our most recent development efforts has been broadening the focus to include our enlisted corps. Beginning with the next promotion cycle, we will stand up a new top-level course of enlisted professional military education designed specifically for those

selected to serve as Chief Master Sergeants. The course will focus on leadership in the operational and strategic environments, and will constitute a substantial leap forward in the development of our Chiefs.

Another segment of warriors requiring special attention is our cadre of space professionals, those that design, build, and operate our space systems. As military dependence on space grows, the Air Force continues to develop this cadre to meet our nation's needs. Our Space Professional Strategy is the roadmap for developing that cadre. Air Force space professionals will develop more in-depth expertise in operational and technical space specialties through tailored assignments, education, and training. This roadmap will result in a team of scientists, engineers, program managers, and operators skilled and knowledgeable in developing, acquiring, applying, sustaining, and integrating space capabilities.

The bottom line of our Force Development efforts is to provide an effects and competency based development process by connecting the depth of expertise in the individual's primary career field (Air Force Specialty Code) with the necessary education, training, and experiences to produce more capable and diversified leaders. Every aspect of the Total Force Development construct develops professional Airmen who instinctively leverage their respective strengths as a team. The success of this effort depends on continued cultivation and institutional understanding of and interest in Force Development, promoting an understanding of the competency requirements of leaders, and funding for the associated development initiatives.

SUSTAIN

Under this final area of our strategic goals, we will focus on two issues of great importance to the health of our force: Quality of Life for our Air Force members (to include their families), and Physical Fitness.

-- Air Force Quality of Life Program:

A cornerstone of the Air Force's efforts to sustain the force centers on the "Air Force Quality Of Life Program". In the Air Force we define Quality of Life (QoL) as a system of networks – formal and informal – leveraged by leadership to provide superior support and services to our Total Force members and their families. We assess Air Force QoL based on the level of satisfaction of our service members in eight areas: compensation and benefits, workplace environment, operations and personnel tempo, health care, housing, community and family programs and educational programs.

The most recent Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF) QoL Survey was a good news story for Air Force QoL initiatives. The survey validated the current Air Force perspectives on QoL priorities. The overall response rate to the survey was 45%, the highest in the past five survey administrations. Air Force senior leaders use the QoL survey data to establish working priorities, develop or update Air Force policy, build

justification for new legislative initiatives and budget plans and establish new road maps to improve Air Force QoL.

The Community Action Information Board and Integrated Delivery System processes have made great progress in providing families access to the services they need vice trying to fit their needs around an existing menu of programs. The Air Force, in conjunction with DoD and the other Services are launching "One Source" a service that provides families with 24/7 access to information through a web site and 1-800 call-in number. The 1-800 number is staffed with highly trained personnel who can rapidly assess the needs of those who call and match them to the services they need.

One additional highlight of our quality of life focus is housing investment. Through military construction and housing privatization, we are providing quality homes faster than ever before. Over the next three years, the Air Force will renovate or replace more than 40,000 homes through privatization. At the same time, we will renovate or replace an additional 20,000 homes through military construction. With the elimination of out-of-pocket housing expenses, our Air Force members and their families now have three great options -- local community housing, traditional military family housing, and privatized housing.

-- Physical Fitness:

The final area we will examine concerns our new vision for the physical health and fitness of our force. The reasons for this emphasis are a reflection of our change in

culture, and the realities of the world situation. Today's demanding missions require Air Force personnel to deploy for long periods of time away from family, sometimes to austere conditions to work long hours in extreme temperatures. With those demands comes a renewed focus on the health and fitness of our Air Force. We have instituted new standards and regulations that require leadership at every level to take responsibility for a fitness standard that prepares our Airmen for the rigors of the mission.

The increased recognition of the fitness impact on readiness has driven emphasis on fitness center repair and construction. We will continue to aggressively provide the necessary resources to support and maintain all areas of fitness, including construction, equipment and training. These facilities, coupled with the focus of unit leaders, will give our Airmen the means to maintain and improve their health and fitness, ensuring our force is "fit to fight" now, and in the future.

CONCLUSION

The Air Force team is moving into the 21st century assured of only three things: That the challenges will be great, that the resources given to us by the American people -- to include their sons and daughters -- are resources that require our best possible stewardship, and -- most importantly -- that superior leadership will be indispensable. We are committed to providing the nation with the best-trained, best led, personnel on the planet. It's that simple and that important.