



**U.S. AIR FORCE**

# Policy Letter

## Digest

Policy, News and Issues from Headquarters U.S. Air Force

November 2001

### Transformation continues in midst of conflict

“Today, we have airmen in harm’s way, doing the nation’s business, just as they always do,” Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper told congressional and defense industry leaders Oct. 16 at an aerospace power seminar on Capitol Hill.

General Jumper is adamant about providing these men and women in uniform with the proper resources to accomplish their missions. In the long run, he said, our continued transformation will accomplish this goal.

It will allow the Air Force to leverage the nation’s technology and what the service brings to the fight — stealth, precision, standoff, information technology and space — to create asymmetrical advantages against the enemy, he said.

“In our transformation, we have several things going for us,” General Jumper said. “The first is stealth. The F-22 (Raptor) will bring stealth into the daylight for the first time.” The F-22 not only can protect itself, but it also can protect B-2 Spirits and F-117 Nighthawks, normally restricted to operating only on moonless nights, giving them more freedom to operate, he said.

Although people often speak of the F-22 as an air-to-air fighter only, the aircraft, equipped with the latest precision munitions and taking advantage of its supercruise capability, will be vital in eliminating the most difficult, next-generation surface-to-air missile threats, General Jumper said.

Transformation will also rely on tying the information gathered from various intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance assets into an advanced command and control network. “This is where we are proposing some of the more radical changes — the horizontal integration of manned, unmanned and space platforms,” General Jumper said.

Manned is not only flying platforms, it includes people on the ground who can put

eyes on target; unmanned includes unattended sensors on the ground; and space includes both manned and unmanned space assets, he said.

“(Continued development of) information technology will have these platforms communicating at the machine level, allowing them to resolve the ambiguities of target location and identification (digitally),” General Jumper said.

“How we parcel this out between manned, unmanned and space platforms is of little relevance,” he said. “What is important is getting the mix right.”

The Air Force will have to combine the persistence of the airborne platforms, manned and unmanned, with the high ground of space in the right proportion to make sure this horizontal integration can work, he said.

General Jumper also called for breaking down the functional stovepipes that stand in the way of the seamless integration of various assets to provide commanders with decision-quality information and target-quality data.

People and organizations should not be jealous about which platform or sensor is put to work in the air, space or on the ground, he said.

To the maximum extent possible, machines should do the talking so that horizontal integration “results in a cursor over the middle of the target,” and the technology becomes transparent, General Jumper said.

“We are putting all this together in a concept called the global strike task force,” he said.

The global strike task force construct is an example of a family of global response task forces specifically designed to accomplish certain objectives, he said. “This operational concept will describe, in a task force format, how we plan to fight and how we plan to put things together to create desired effects,” General Jumper said.

## **NATO aids in U.S. defense**

Never in the 52-year history of NATO has the alliance been used to defend the United States, but that has changed. A NATO detachment at Tinker AFB, Okla., began flying operational missions Oct. 15 after going through ground training and familiarization flights.

NATO deployed five of its E-3 Sentry airborne warning and control systems aircraft and a detachment of more than 180 people to Tinker AFB from Geilenkirchen, Germany. They are helping the 552nd Air Control Wing with Operation Noble Eagle, the defense of the United States.

Since the terrorist attacks Sept. 11, the 552nd ACW has been continuously patrolling the skies of America with its E-3s, providing radar coverage in support of the North American Aerospace Defense Command's air-sovereignty mission.

U.S. officials asked the alliance to deploy the aircraft to improve NORAD's ability to provide combat-air-patrol missions while lowering the operational tempo for the U.S. E-3 fleet.

This action is one of eight measures taken by NATO in its first execution of Article 5 of

the treaty that created it. The article states that an attack on one member is an attack on all.

"NATO has been seamlessly integrated into the mission with the 552nd," said Canadian Forces Col. Jim McNaughton, NATO detachment commander.

Working together is nothing new for the 552nd and NATO AWACS. The units train together regularly in various exercises worldwide. The most recent operational successes of this partnership were seen in Operation Allied Force, the 1999 air campaign in Yugoslavia.

"It's no longer 'we,' 'they' or 'a NATO force,'" Colonel McNaughton said. "We are one group here."

"We've taken these planes to a lot of places, but the reception here has been incredible," Colonel McNaughton said.

People from 13 nations make up the NATO detachment: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States.

## **Roche lists future challenges**

During an October visit to Hill AFB, Utah, Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche said the biggest challenges facing the Air Force are adapting air and space strategy to fit the current era; an aging workforce; finding ways to work more efficiently; and rebuilding the number of aerospace companies to 1985 levels. During the summer, studies were done on how best to adapt air and space strategy to meet today's needs when the Sept. 11 bombings underlined the need for rapid change, he said. Paradoxically, America's military dominance works against it.

"If countries or groups oppose us they can't do it in a classic fashion, so they'll do it asymmetrically," he said. To counter that, the Department of Defense is currently devising asymmetric responses.

"It means you emphasize different things in terms of doctrine and strategy," Secretary Roche said.

After talking doctrine, he said the second major challenge facing the Air Force is its aging workforce. Nearly 35 percent of the civilian

work force will be eligible for retirement within seven years.

"There's an enormous amount of knowledge that resides in the minds of employees who have worked technical issues for a long time," Secretary Roche said.

To soften the impact of the anticipated "brain drain," the Air Force is pushing to bring in young people while there is still an opportunity to pass on corporate memory.

In the area of improving efficiency, Secretary Roche said he wants to get rid of old airplanes and further consolidate bases.

"I point out to senators that we have people guarding 20 percent of bases we don't need, yet we're short (of manpower) across the whole system," he said.

For the first time since World War II, the military needs to protect bases at home as well as abroad, and there is a shortage of trained people to perform guard duties in spite of using active duty, Reserve and Air National Guard security forces.

The last item on his list of challenges deals

with fostering growth in the country's aerospace industry.

America's industrial base has shrunk to worrisome levels in the last 15 years, and he'd like the diversity restored to 1985 levels, Secretary Roche said. Innovation comes from many companies rather than the few we have now.

Secretary Roche said he was determined to modernize the Air Force as quickly as possible.

Aging intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft, such as the E-3 Sentry air warning and control system and the E-8C Joint STARS, joint surveillance target attack radar system, are old and will be wearing out faster now that they are deployed.

He said he wants to move immediately in the area of unmanned and unattended vehicles to replace them, and retire old aircraft like B-52 Stratofortress aircraft that are parked and have no air crews.

He said he also wants to get rid of about

100 old C-130 Hercules aircraft and stop buying Boeing 707s.

"We're not talking about classic cars here; we're talking about old cars," he said. "There's newer technology. Ease of maintenance and reliability is programmed in from the start."

When he took office he had no idea how bad it was in terms of maintenance and modernization, Secretary Roche said.

"If the crews that are having to maintain aircraft and they don't have any spare parts, then it's our fault; it's not their fault," he said. "We hold the crews responsible for getting the plane ready to fly, but if we don't provide them with the tools, the test equipment and the spare parts, it's on us."

Congress now understands it will require a massive investment to keep the Air Force flying, he said.

The 2001 supplemental budget contains more money for spare parts and test equipment, and more of the same can be expected in 2002.

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## **Relief possible for some debt incurred before active-duty service**

Reservists called to active duty may qualify for reduced interest rates under a law passed 61 years ago. The Soldiers and Sailors Civil Relief Act provides a variety of civil law relief to all servicemembers.

Congress passed the relief act to provide protection for people entering or called to active-duty military service. The act serves to postpone or suspend certain civil obligations so servicemembers can devote full attention to their military duty.

An earlier Department of Defense news briefing and related stories made servicemembers aware that they may be eligible for some of the act's protections, said Maj. Melinda Davis-Perritano, deputy chief of the legal assistance division, Air Force Legal Services Agency.

"Our legal offices have been inundated with requests for additional information," she said.

Relief under the act is not automatic.

"Most provisions are triggered only after the servicemember takes some action, such as notifying his or her financial lender," Major Davis-Perritano said. "Members, both active

and Reserve, should do a little research to find out whether they are covered by a specific protection and what they need to do to ensure the protection takes effect."

To qualify for a reduced interest rate of 6 percent on such loans as home mortgages, credit card accounts, bank or credit union personal loans, department store accounts and business loans, certain requirements must be met, Major Davis-Perritano said.

Qualification criteria under the act are:

- The loan must have been taken out during a time when the member was not on any form of active duty in any branch of the military;

- The account's interest rate is currently above 6 percent per year;

- Active-duty service must materially affect the person's ability to pay the loan at the regular, pre-service interest rate. Generally, this requirement means the person made more money as a civilian than on active duty; and

- The person notified the lender and provided a copy of active-duty orders to the lender.

## **Merger enhances senior leadership options**

Although the act applies equally to active duty and reservists called to active duty, Major Davis-Perritano said this portion is most widely used by recently activated reservists and National Guard people whose military income is less than their pre-service income.

“Active component members seldom qualify for this provision because the obligation must predate the active-duty service,” she said.

Educating military people about the act’s protections remains a high priority for his department, said Maj. Gen. William Moorman, Air Force judge advocate general.

“Legal assistance attorneys have been distributing an excellent quick-reference guide on the act to servicemembers,” he said. “All servicemembers should review the guide to become aware of when their circumstances make them eligible for protection.”

The Act’s many provisions contain separate requirements to trigger protection, so servicemembers should visit their legal office to determine whether the act applies to their situation, General Moorman said.

For more information, military people should visit their local legal office.

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The Air Force general officer matters and the senior executive service matters offices in the Pentagon merged Sept. 1 to become the senior leader management office.

“The merger of these two offices is a landmark effort,” said Brig. Gen. Richard S. Hassan, chief of the senior leader management office. “It will better prepare us to realize the vast potential of our Air Force leaders.”

General Hassan said the change gives the Air Force a number of advantages over the old system.

“It will not only allow us to better use our leadership team, but will also allow us to develop that team more deliberately,” he said. “This will lay a solid foundation, giving us a bigger pool of talent to meet the challenges of the future.”

The new structure will provide a number of different benefits for the Air Force of the 21st century, said Dr. James Roche, secretary of the Air Force. He noted that the merger was the vision of retired Gen. Michael E. Ryan, former Air Force chief of staff.

“This combination will help us realize one of General Ryan’s goals as chief of staff — to build an enduring, unified cadre of aerospace leaders,” Secretary Roche said. “In today’s total Air Force, we simply must identify, develop and motivate talented individuals, military and civilian, to fulfill the missions of our expeditionary aerospace force. By merging our general officer and senior executive service programs, we will enhance operating efficiencies and reduce costs, while dramatically boosting ‘cross-cultural’ awareness among officers and senior civilians in the Air Force.

“The development of leaders who understand the requirements of our total force — active-duty military, civilian, Guard, Reserve, and contractor personnel — will serve as yet another tangible hallmark of the tremendous contributions that Mike Ryan has made to his country during his military career,” Secretary Roche said.

The general officer matters office provided “lifecycle” management of Air Force flag officers, from the time they were selected for promotion to brigadier general until their retirement. That included all assignments, awards, housing and enlisted aide matters — essentially any personnel matter that would involve a general officer, General Hassan said.

The senior executive service matters office provided policy guidance and assistance for the management and administration of the SES corps with the civilian personnel flights around the Air Force handling the day-to-day operations.

Combining the two offices will essentially do two things for the Air Force, General Hassan said.

“This will send a strong message to the force that we definitely consider both general officers and SES civilians as part of the senior leadership of the Air Force,” he said. “It also gives us the capability to more effectively use our leaders’ various talents. In the future, we will look at certain challenges — jobs — and we’ll be better positioned to find the most competent, talented individual to handle the task at hand.”

## **Insurance coverage extends to family members**

The Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance began providing coverage on family members beginning Nov. 1.

The government has always had an excellent estate program to protect family members in case of a servicemember's death, said Maj. Jeffrey T. Keef, chief of Air Force military estate and special pays policy at the Pentagon. However, little has been available to provide airmen financial protection in the event of a family member's death.

Under the new provisions, spouses and children will be automatically covered if the military member is an SGLI participant, Major Keef said. The maximum automatic coverage is \$100,000 for a member's spouse; except that the amount of coverage on the spouse cannot exceed the amount of coverage on the insuring member. The member will have the option to decline or reduce spouse coverage if such election is submitted on the required form. Any lesser coverage amount elected must be evenly divisible by \$10,000. Premiums for spouse coverage will be charged based upon the spouse's age and will range from 9 cents to 55 cents per \$1,000 of coverage. For example, \$100,000 of coverage could be obtained on a spouse younger than 35 for \$9 per month.

There is also a policy conversion option for the insured spouse after loss of eligibility for SGLI, he said.

Children will be covered automatically for \$10,000, and no premiums will be charged the member, Major Keef said. In cases where both parents are eligible SGLI participants, the child will not be insured by more than one member.

In the event of a family member's death, any insurance in effect will be paid to the insuring member. If the member passes away before payment can be made, then the amount will go to the people named as the member's beneficiaries.

"The Air Force sees this as a good deal for its people," Major Keef said. "By allowing members who have elected coverage only under SGLI to opt for family member coverage, we are putting them on equal ground with civilians who might obtain family coverage as a rider to their master civilian life insurance policies," he explained. "This relieves our members from having to seek out more than one provider in order to acquire coverage for the entire family."

People should contact the military personnel flights for more information about the insurance program.

## **Thrift Savings Plan opens to military**

Servicemembers can now sign up for the Thrift Savings Plan.

The Thrift Savings Plan is a retirement and investment plan that has been available to civilian government workers since 1987. Congress extended the plan to include service members in 2000.

"It's in addition to your regular retirement," said Army Lt. Col. Tom Emswiler, a tax expert with DOD's Office of Military Compensation. "It's an optional program."

Open season for signing up runs until Dec. 8, with deductions starting in January. In 2002, people can contribute up to 7 percent of their basic pay. The maximum contribution from basic pay will change.

The current limit of 7 percent of basic pay will rise to 10 percent by 2005 and become unlimited in 2006.

Unlike civilians, who cannot make lump-sum payments into the program, servicemembers may also contribute all or a percentage of any special pay, incentive pay, or bonus pay they receive.

"You can contribute from 1 percent to 100 percent of your special pays, incentives and bonuses into the thrift plan," Colonel. Emswiler said.

The total amount generally cannot exceed \$10,500 for the year. Contributions from pay earned in a combat zone do not count against the \$10,500 ceiling. Combat zone contributions are subject to a different limitation, however, 25 percent of pay or \$35,000, whichever is less.

Everyone in the plan must choose how he or she wants his or her money invested. Right now, there are three funds to choose from.

The funds run the gamut of safe — the G Fund invests in special government bonds — to riskier investments — the C Fund tied to the stock market. There is also an F Fund for investing in commercial bonds.

TSP will unveil the new S and I funds in May. S Fund investments go to a stock index fund that paces small businesses. I Fund investors will track international companies the same way.

Service members will be able to start, change or reallocate their TSP contributions during two open seasons held each year. These are November to January and May to July.

“Because bonuses are hard to predict, if you are already participating in the plan and contributing from basic pay and you receive, for example, a reenlistment bonus, you can elect to contribute at any time,” Colonel Emswiler said.

Contributions to the plan come from “pre-tax” dollars.

No federal or state income taxes are paid on contributions or earnings until they’re withdrawn.

More information is available at the thrift plan’s uniformed services page at [www.tsp.gov/uniserv/index.html](http://www.tsp.gov/uniserv/index.html).



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### **QUOTABLE QUOTE**

*“I can guarantee that we’re going to go out, hunt these terrorists down, and we’re going to take them out. It’s going to take a long time to do it, and we’re going to have to have the patience to stick with it as a nation, but it’s going to happen.”*

Gen. John P. Jumper, Air Force chief of staff

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