



Policy Letter

Digest

U.S. AIR FORCE

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

January 2002

Headquarters staff faces reorganization

by Staff Sgt. A.J. Bosker
Air Force Print News

The top two Air Force leaders announced plans to transform Headquarters Air Force into a more streamlined, effective and efficient organization during a Dec. 18 briefing at the Pentagon.

“The goals of this reorganization are to improve business processes, eliminate unnecessary bureaucratic duplication and oversight, and combine appropriate headquarters functions to better support the nation’s warfighters,” said Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche.

“First, we must become more agile,” Secretary Roche said. “Second, and most important, the Air Force’s reorganized headquarters structure will now follow our strategy.”

“We are aligning the secretariat and air staff to speed decision making, and to facilitate effective handling of multiple

issues ranging from the management issues of running the Air Force to providing support for operations Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom,” the secretary explained.

“Integration is the main leg of our transformation,” said Gen. John P. Jumper, Air Force chief of staff. “Having two decision chains delays and blocks good leadership and management, instead of allowing the service to be more agile, smarter and more efficient.

“We owe it to our people to reduce workload by ending duplicative staffing efforts on the secretariat and air staff,” General Jumper said. “We are confident this initiative will help us break down barriers, improve communication and create a more integrated and effective staff.

“To the world outside the beltway, this should be a transparent change, but what it will do is improve the way we are established to train, organize and equip the world’s greatest air and space force,” he said.

One such initiative is the formation of a new deputy chief of staff for warfighting integration who will focus on the modernization of command, control, communications, computer, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems.

The service’s desire for an office dedicated to the horizontal integration of its various systems highlights the growing

importance of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, especially during the war on terrorism.

Another objective of the headquarters transformation is to fully enable the Air Force, through the

undersecretary, to fulfill its responsibilities as the Defense Department’s executive agent for space programs.

This will allow the effective management of all classified and unclassified space programs in the Department of Defense and the National Reconnaissance Office.

“The secretary of defense charged us with the task of working together to execute our joint responsibilities to provide global reconnaissance and strike capabilities for this nation,” Secretary Roche said.

“This approach reflects the reality of how we find we have to work together to serve the secretary of defense, our joint responsibilities, as well as our airmen deployed worldwide,” he said.

“First, we must become more agile. Second, and most important, the Air Force’s reorganized headquarters structure will now follow our strategy.”

Dr. James G. Roche

Air Force opens homeland security directorate

*by
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Air Force Print News*

In one of the many responses to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on America, the Air Force activated the directorate of homeland security on Jan. 2.

This directorate falls under the deputy chief of staff for air and space operations and focuses on crafting policy, guidance and operational expertise for homeland defense and military support to civil authorities, the two pillars underpinning homeland security, officials said.

The interim director of the new organization said its conception parallels what is happening around the Air Force.

“As we look around the Air Force, there’s a lot of activity now in homeland security,” said Brig. Gen. Jeffery B. Kohler, who also serves as the director of operational plans for the Air Force deputy chief of staff for air and space operations. “Several major commands have created homeland security points of contact and some have created small offices. The focus of this organization will be to bring this all together with policy and guidance to make sure the Air Force is marching with one vision in homeland security.”

General Kohler said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper thought that, given the events of the last three months, and the new thrust taken by the president and Congress, the Air Force needed to step up as well.

This office will be the focal point for the Air Force in matters concerning homeland security, he said.

The leadership at the Department of Defense level is very appreciative that they will now have one central place to call, General Kohler said.

Initially, the office will work on a concept of operations, policy and guidance issues from

an air staff perspective, but General Kohler said this is a “work in progress.”

“It will take a little bit of time before we have clearly defined roles and responsibilities, but I think we have a pretty good idea of where we are headed,” General Kohler said.

An average airman at the squadron and unit level will probably not see much change as a result of this new directorate, General Kohler said; however it is the expeditionary airman who does the job.

“Our expeditionary airmen are equipped today to do the kinds of things we think they’re going to have to do under homeland security,” General Kohler said. “In fact, we’re doing that in Operation Noble Eagle.”

Currently, the Air Force Reserve and the Air National Guard, with some active-duty units, have mobilized to perform increased duties for air defense in support of Operation Noble Eagle.

“We’ve already done a lot of the things that are required in homeland security, and we did (them) in an expeditionary manner,” General Kohler said. “We folded homeland security duties right into our expeditionary concepts.”

The definition of homeland defense has not been clearly established, he said. But that has not deterred the Air Force from its very active role in providing security in the skies over the nation today.

“Our vision of the future is that this homeland security mission is going to evolve into much more than providing combat air patrols,” General Kohler said. “It’s not just the traditional air-breathing threat like Soviet bombers. We know what we have today, the question is, what are the national requirements for the future?”

Savings plan sign-up ends Jan. 31

The Thrift Savings Plan open season for the uniformed services expires Jan. 31.

“People can get started in TSP with no pain by signing up now so that contributions begin around the same time as the first-of-the-year pay raise,” said Maj. Jeffrey T. Keef, chief of Air Force military estate and special pays policy at the Pentagon

“There are some who will be able to start out contributing the maximum basic pay and

realize no decline in their take-home pay.”

Major Keef said that with world events and the holidays, it is easy to forget about programs such as these. While participation is voluntary, Major Keef urges Air Force people to give the program some serious consideration.

“The TSP is a great opportunity that can pay off in a big way,” Major Keef said. “Participating in this program might mean

you'll be able to afford that 35-foot recreation vehicle you've always dreamed about sitting in your driveway ready to roll."

The Air Force has made signing up for the program as easy as possible, Major Keef said.

"For investment do-it-yourselfers, you're going to find that it couldn't be easier to get started and manage your TSP account," he said. "You can make an election and get things started from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service Employee/Member Self Service Web site. You can then manage your account via the TSP Web site. All of this can be done right from your home computer."

Up to 7 percent of basic pay can be contributed initially, which will increase to 10 percent by 2005. The limit on basic pay contributions will disappear altogether in 2006, and total contributions will only be subject to

Internal Revenue Code limits. While the Internal Revenue Code's annual elective deferral limit of \$11,000 will apply, there is no other special limit on incentive, special and bonus pay contributions like there is for basic pay.

This program is totally separate from, and in addition to, a person's regular military retirement plan.

The TSP can add up to a significant supplemental retirement fund. A six-year staff sergeant, whose base salary is \$21,351, could decide to invest 7 percent of monthly income, or \$125 per month. Assuming an 8 percent return, and not including any future salary increases or increases in the percentage saved, after 14 years, more than \$32,000 would accumulate. After leaving the fund alone for another 30 years, it could grow to more than \$350,000.

Defense Travel System test complete

Travelers may soon have a new way of completing orders, making reservations and filing vouchers.

The Joint Interoperability Test Command recently wrapped up an assessment of the Defense Travel System, conducted at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D. Given the green light on the program, the travel system will become operational at 10 Defense Department pilot sites this fiscal year.

Air Force locations are Ellsworth AFB and Minot AFB, N.D.

This decision is a significant step forward, said Col. Larry Schaefer, Defense Department's program director.

"Thanks to the Ellsworth team, we were able to gather good data on how the Defense Travel System works in an operational environment," he said. "This enabled important improvements in the system that will benefit the user communities in the years ahead."

The Air Force uses three travel systems, two electronic and one manual. The new system is eventually expected to replace all of these systems.

"The Defense Travel System is envisioned as a temporary duty travel tool where an individual can go to his or her computer, prepare orders and vouchers and

send these documents to the approval official electronically," said Lt. Col. Tony Grogean, Air Force travel re-engineering division chief at the Pentagon.

Although the Air Force's current travel systems allow electronic actions, the new travel system has several functions that set it apart.

One function is the use of a digital encrypted signature. Colonel Grogean said people will be issued a disk with their digital signature. Once vouchers are complete, people insert their signature disk into the computer and electronically sign the voucher. Another option is use of the new identification cards. The cards will slip into a computer slot, allowing people to validate their documents. In the future, the disks will be phased out and only identification cards will be used.

Another advantage is its reservation process. Currently, people are required to make hotel, rental car and airline reservations by calling or visiting a commercial travel office. With the new travel system, people request reservations electronically.

"Upon your return, simply adjust your expenses when you fill out your voucher and add your digital signature," Colonel Grogean said.

“Once your boss reviews it and adds his or her digital signature, it goes through the accounting system electronically, and two days later you get paid.”

Units have the option to add another person to the review process, such as a funds manager, Colonel Grogean said.

The new system also allows for units to process orders and vouchers at a central location, such as an orderly room. Although all orders can be processed through this location people must be present to validate their own vouchers with their electronic signature, Colonel Grogean said.

While the initial setup can be time-consuming, once functional, the Defense Travel System is faster than all existing systems and more convenient for users, Colonel Grogean said. Other electronic systems are server based, which require each base to have a server

where information is stored. The Defense Travel System is a Web-based application. This means there will be one location and one server for the entire Defense Department, Colonel Grogean said.

Using the new system, all temporary duty data will be consolidated at one location. Currently, if people need information on a past trip, they have to contact the base where the voucher was filed. The Defense Travel System allows one stop for all the information.

Colonel Grogean said the system will be implemented at all Air Force bases by the end of fiscal 2006, followed by satellite and all other locations.

“What we are aiming for is a travel system that meets the needs of travelers, commanders and process owners in a fashion far superior to what most of us have experienced in the past,” Colonel Schaefer said.

First-term airmen can extend for ‘personal convenience’

Airmen serving their first term of enlistment now have the choice to extend one year for their “personal convenience.” Prior to this change, first-term airmen could only apply to extend for mission-related reasons.

“The initiative originated with the major command senior enlisted leadership,” said Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Jim Finch, “and it makes sense to implement the change, given our current focus on retention.”

The change falls under Rule 28, Best Interest of the Air Force, in Air Force

Instruction 36-2606, Reenlistment In the United States Air Force. Airmen wishing to extend under this expanded rule must be reenlistment eligible, must not fall under any of the other 27 rules, and must extend for the entire 12-month period.

First-term airmen can only extend under this rule once, and the total of this and any other extensions cannot exceed 23 months.

For more information on enlistment extensions, individuals can contact their local military personnel flights.

Senate confirms Teets

Peter B. Teets was confirmed by the U.S. Senate Dec. 7 as the undersecretary of the Air Force.

“I’m very genuinely honored and pleased to be selected to be the undersecretary of the Air Force,” Mr. Teets said when introduced by Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche at a recent senior staff meeting. “I intend to work hard and be a positive contributor to this great organization. I’m proud to be a part of the U.S. Air Force.”

As the Air Force’s number two civilian, Mr. Teets is responsible for all actions of the Air Force, under the direction of the secretary. He is also dual-hatted as the director of the

National Reconnaissance Office. This job again falls on the undersecretary following recommendations of the Jan. 11 Space Commission Report. The most recent time in Air Force history that the undersecretary was responsible for running the NRO was from 1981 to 1986.

The Space Commission report also assigns the undersecretary as the designated Air Force acquisition executive for space, and gives the undersecretary milestone decision authority for defense space programs through the secretary of the Air Force

Mr. Teets has an extensive background in space systems and defense programs,

beginning as a flight control analysis engineer for the Titan III Space Launch Vehicle in 1963 while with Martin Marietta. He later served as the president of the Denver operations for Martin Marietta Astronautics from 1985 until 1993. In 1999, he retired as the president and chief operating officer for Lockheed Martin Corp.

Mr. Teets holds an honorary doctorate

degree, a master's degree and a bachelor of science degree in applied mathematics from the University of Colorado.

He also has a master's degree in management from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

He succeeds Carol DiBattiste who served as undersecretary from August 1999 until January 2001.

Troops supporting Enduring Freedom get tax break

*by
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U.S. troops serving in Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom will pay little or no federal tax this year thanks to an executive order President Bush signed Dec. 14.

The order, effective Sept. 19, 2001, declares that the country of Afghanistan and the airspace above it is a combat zone. It makes military troops involved in combat operations in or above Afghanistan eligible for certain tax benefits.

The Department of Defense will also certify the eligibility of certain troops outside of Afghanistan to receive these tax benefits. To be eligible, these troops must be directly supporting operations in Afghanistan and must be receiving imminent danger pay or hostile fire pay for reasons related to the Afghanistan operation.

In the Internal Revenue Code, different degrees of tax relief exist under the combat zone tax benefits:

- For enlisted people and warrant officers, all compensation for active service earned in a combat zone is tax free. This includes regular basic pay. Special pay, such as re-enlistment bonuses, is also tax free if the person re-enlists in a combat zone.

- For commissioned officers, the monthly tax exclusion is capped at the highest enlisted pay, plus any hostile fire or imminent danger pay received. Therefore, for 2001, the most an officer can earn tax free each month is \$5,043 (\$4,893, the highest monthly enlisted pay, plus \$150, hostile fire or imminent danger pay).

The tax exclusion applies only to compensation for active service in the armed forces. Civilians are not eligible.

Troops serving in a combat zone are also

allowed extra time to file tax returns and to attend to other tax matters. The deadline for taking actions with the Internal Revenue Service will be extended for at least 180 days after:

- The last day the taxpayer is in a combat zone (or the last day the area qualifies as a combat zone).

- The last day of any continuous qualified hospitalization for injury from service in the combat zone.

The tax deadline extension also applies to certain civilians serving in a combat zone, such as Red Cross workers, accredited correspondents, and other civilians acting under the direction of the U.S. armed forces in support of those forces.

Under the Internal Revenue Code, survivors of military troops killed or declared missing in a designated combat zone may receive certain benefits:

- Special filing status if deceased spouse was in a missing status as a result of service in a combat zone.

- Forgiveness of income taxes of troops who die in a combat zone or by reason of combat zone-incurred wounds.

- Reduction in estate taxes for troops who die in a combat zone or by reason of combat zone incurred wounds.

- Survivors may file a joint return if a spouse is in missing status as a result of service in a combat zone.

Most states follow the federal lead, but people should check with unit tax or legal advisers to be sure.

Presidents have previously designated combat zones during the Korean and Vietnam Wars, the Persian Gulf War and military operations in Kosovo.

**Uniforms
now allowed
for official
U.S. travel**

Rescinding the announcement made Sept. 21, Gen. John P. Jumper, Air Force chief of staff, is once again authorizing the wear of military uniforms for people traveling aboard commercial aircraft.

While the original announcement was a force protection measure directly related to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks on New York and the Pentagon, Lt. Col. Bruce Lovely, Air Force quality of life and uniform board chief, said rescinding the policy is just another step in returning to normal.

“Wearing the uniform on commercial

flights by Air Force senior leadership shows that the Air Force is resuming normal day-to-day activities, while increasing our visibility to the American public,” he said. “Thereby, (we) give the public a sense of pride and confidence.”

Wear of the uniform is not mandatory, but highly encouraged for all colonels and above and chief master sergeants on duty-related travel in the continental United States.

For more information, refer to Table 1.3 in Air Force Instruction 36-2903, Dress and Personal Appearance of Air Force Personnel.



RONALD T. RAND
Brigadier General, USAF
Director of Public Affairs

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QUOTABLE QUOTE

“We have fantastic people in the Air Force who are very willing to change and very willing to adapt to a new era. We have a lot of transformation going on.”

Dr. James G. Roche, secretary of the Air Force

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