

Note from AFA President -- Air National Guard Force Structure

Saturday, November 15, 2008

AFA members, Congressional staffers, Civic leaders, and DOCA members, I came across some very interesting charts on the Hill. They are very complicated. [And you need excel to read them].

Start first with this one:

http://www.afa.org/EdOp/spreadsheets/All_States_FY34v2_3.xls

It has all the abbreviations you need (at the end) to look at the next two slide sets:

http://www.afa.org/EdOp/spreadsheets/All_States_FY34CAFv2_3.xls

http://www.afa.org/EdOp/spreadsheets/All_States_FY34MAFa.xls

The last slide is the Air Defense mission area:

http://www.afa.org/EdOp/spreadsheets/All_States_FY34CAFvASA.xls

My comments on them are below.

As always, I look forward to your comments - however, I will be out for a couple of weeks ... to our symposium on LA. So I won't be able to answer you until later this month.

Mike

Michael M. Dunn
President/CEO

As I mentioned above, I ran across these briefing slides on the Hill. They are really, really significant for the following reasons:

1. They show the aging of the ANG fleet – as well as the many unit transitions to non-flying or to UAV missions. What is significant is that many units do not have replacements identified after their present aircraft "age out of the force." Just because their equipment ages out doesn't mean that the demand for their missions goes away. ANG forces carry a lot of weight and are critical partners on numerous missions. Remember ... it was a Guard F-16 that killed Al-Zarqawi in Iraq.
2. To remind you – in the past, when the age of the AD fleet was in the single digits, as new airplanes were brought on-board, the ANG (and Air Force Reserve) received the older ones and their former aircraft were retired. As the AD fleet aged (and many times, they aged faster than was planned ... with 18 years of

constant combat), new aircraft were not in the queue to replace them. Thus their aircraft were generally not available to move to the ARC.

3. Today, there is about an 800 airplane active duty gap – where their older airplanes age out, yet they do not have new ones coming into the force.
4. People point to the F-35 as the solution ... yet the Air Force receives its first F-35 in 2013 and is not buying them fast enough to solve this problem. Hopefully, this will change with the next budget submission.
5. The ANG has the same problem as the active duty force. They don't get their first F-35 until 2021. **We need to understand that this isn't an Active Duty vs. Guard issue**—it's what happens when you don't buy aircraft consistently ... and when you take a so-called procurement holiday. And it is exacerbated by 18 years of constant high use in combat.
6. Note the Air Surveillance mission area. As we go into the out-years, nothing is in the queue to replace those aircraft. Also note the JSTARS mission. The E-8 fleet is already approaching 60,000 hours—will it really make it another 20 years as programmed?
7. The life-span of F-22s and F-35s will be consumed faster because the legacy force won't be there to augment them. The Air Force previously planned to manage the risk associated with purchasing fewer than 381 F-22s by keeping more high-end F-15s in the inventory. The fighter bathtub may impact this option.
8. Naturally, this is becoming evident to the Congress ... and we have started to get some questions on it from both the Hill and the press. People have been talking about the aging fleet for a long time, but this is a prime example of what happens when the average age of the force goes from 8 years old to a quarter of a century old. What sort of risk does this entail for the country?