

Note from AFA President -- Tankers

AFA Members, Congressional Staffers, Civic Leaders, DOCA Members, this week the Air Force released its long awaited Draft Request for Proposal for a new tanker. This occurred after Sec Gates transferred responsibility for the tanker's acquisition back to the Air Force

Concurrent with this, the Air Mobility Command (AMC) released a White Paper which talks about the Imperative for a new tanker. This document is an exceptional piece. It details not only the rationale for a new tanker, but gives the reader some idea on its concept of operations. I especially like the following parts [listed by PDF page]:

- Page 5 where AMC asks if we had ever tried to buy parts for a 1950s vintage Zenith television [I have ... but found it cheaper to replace the TV rather than get someone to provide the parts.]
- Page 6 – the chart which shows the average age of various airline fleets
- Page 9 – where a RAND study is cited saying that the present KC-135 fleet will be 90 years old when fully retired ... and the operation of a 90 year old fleet is unprecedented in aviation history
- Operational scenarios which begin on page 9 show the range of missions our tanker fleet is expected to support

You can find the White Paper on our website at:

<http://www.afa.org/edop/2009/TheImperativeforNewTankerNow.pdf>

A while back, one of you wrote me ... your were the "Grandfather" who flew as a crew member on the KC-135 in the early 60s. Your dad was the "Great Grandfather" who got into the system near the end of his career in the late 1950s. Your son flew on the aircraft in the 1980s. And you were hoping your Grand daughter – who was in pilot training at the time got the chance to fly the aircraft next year. We all hope this family tradition does not continue for 40 or more years ... as you will surely set a record for 6 generations of one family on the same system.

For your consideration.

Mike

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