



Air Force Key Talking Points

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A monthly publication to alert Airmen of key themes and talking points.

Further information available on the AF Portal – under Air Force banner, select “Strategic Communication.”



Talking Points reflect top issues supporting AF priorities, initiatives, and programs. Senior leaders at all levels should use these to ensure AF priorities are communicated accurately and consistently.

The Message: Convey the message that the Air Force is in the fight. This fight is not just the conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan – it’s the fight to save lives through our humanitarian relief operations, it’s the fight to dissuade and deter our adversaries and it’s the fight to provide for the strategic defense of the country now and in the future.

AF Mission Areas

- **Global Vigilance, Global Reach, Global Power:** America’s Air Force provides global expeditionary air, space, and cyberspace forces providing **vigilance** that is persistent, focused, and predictive; **reach** that is reliable, rapid, and agile; and **power** that is precise, stealthy, and decisive.
- We are the only service that provides range and payload for the Nation's security -- the heart and soul of America's Air Force.

AF Priorities

We are vigilant in the pursuit of the enemy to fight and win the Global War on Terror (GWOT)

➤ **We are America’s edge and we’re in the fight.** Our first priority is to maintain focus on winning the Global War on Terror ensuring the safety and security of our nation and its citizens.

➤ **Worldwide deployed as of 5 Feb 07: Total – 32,364 (Active – 26,877; Guard – 3,757; Reserve – 1,730)**

Developing and Caring for Airmen and their families ensures readiness (Airmen)

➤ **Airmen are warfighters.** Our active duty, Guard, Reserve and civilian Airmen are our most valuable assets in fighting the GWOT and ensuring we are the world’s dominant air, space and cyberspace force.

Recapitalizing and Modernizing Air, Space, & Cyberspace Systems secures warfighting capability (Recap)

➤ **We must ensure our warfighting future.** The Air Force continues to become more capable, more efficient and more lethal. Modernization includes aggressive divestment of legacy platforms and significantly enhances what our Airmen bring to combat operations.

Key points:

- The AF has engaged in **continuous combat operations for over 16 years** and will remain in SW Asia long after ground forces depart.
- The United States depends on Air, Space, and Cyberspace power to an extent unprecedented in history.
- The AF is dedicated to Joint interdependence.
- Fiscal constraints challenge our ability to ensure dominant air and space power for the 21st Century without increasing risk.
- We are ready and engaged today, but our nation must **invest to ensure tomorrow’s air, space, and cyberspace dominance**.
- Your AF is keeping a global perspective and is what gives both nation states and non-state actors pause at strategic cross roads.
- We can hold any target set at risk any where in the world in any weather or threat environment.

What We’re Doing Today:

- 7,700 Airmen (including those in the training pipeline) are committed to **5,500 In Lieu Of** taskings.
- We fly approximately **300 daily sorties** for Enduring Freedom / Iraqi Freedom
 - *Global Vigilance*
 - 16 ISR sorties in AOR; 10 UAV (Global Hawk & Predator) orbits in CENTCOM AOR alone.
 - 15 US satellites “parked” above Baghdad.
 - Track satellites from 55 countries – 560 satellites over-flights daily.
 - 100+ operational US satellites, 450+ satellite ops events.
 - 2 AWACS on alert for Homeland Defense.
 - *Global Reach*
 - **1 AMC departure every 90 seconds...**24/7/365.
 - 250 airlift sorties, 2500 PAX, 1000 s-tons, 58 offloads.
 - 30 tanker missions in AOR.
 - 13 Air Evac missions with 50 patients.
 - 8,000 people per month off the roads in Iraqi convoy duty because of Intra-theater airlift.
 - 8 tankers on alert for Homeland Defense.
 - 49 consecutive national security space launches.
 - *Global Power*
 - 80 strike / Electronic Warfare / Non-Traditional ISR sorties in AOR.
 - 7 Special Ops / Search and Rescue sorties in AOR.
 - 40 fighters on alert for Homeland Defense.
 - 480 ICBMs on alert for the nation every day.

FY08 Budget:

- Fiscal and operational pressures are **stressing people, readiness, infrastructure, and modernization**.
 - Stresses include fiscal constraints, increasing fuel & utility costs, and aging aircraft and spacecraft.
 - In the past two years, the **AF has lost \$22B across the FYDP**.
- Personnel costs continue to rise, up 57% over the last 10 years even while end strength decreased 8%.
- **Readiness has declined 17%** since 2001 due to OPTEMPO and operating a smaller, older fleet.
- **Ops and MX costs up 179%** over last 10 years and continue to stress recapitalization efforts.
- We fight from our bases and infrastructure is critical to our readiness.
- **Investment funding has declined 19%** over the past 22 years as a % of AF TOA.
- **For FY08, the “blue” baseline is \$110.7B**, “non-blue” baseline is \$25.9B and the GWOT Supplemental Request is \$17.3B.
- FY08 Budget continues efforts begun last year to increase modernization and recapitalization.
- Defense spending as a percentage of **GDP was 4.4% in 1993 and is now 3.8%**, the lowest ever in a time of war.

Top 5 procurement priorities:

1. KC-X: “The tanker is our number one procurement priority. In this global Air Force business, the single point failure of an air bridge, the single point failure for global ISR, or the single point failure for global strike is the tanker.” –CSAF

➤ The final RFP was released 30 January 2007.

➤ KC-X replacement tanker will have additional capabilities that will not significantly impact its critical fuel offload capability: cargo & passenger transport, aero-medical evacuation & communications relay missions, as well as specialized missions for special ops and U.S. nuclear forces.

2. CSAR-X: The Air Force has selected the Boeing CH/MH-47 as our newest Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) aircraft. (*The contract award is under GAO review with a GAO decision expected by the end of February.*)

3. Space Systems

➤ Space Based Infrared System (SBIRS): SBIRS will deliver a new generation of space-based satellites providing missile warning, missile defense, technical intelligence and battlespace awareness to combatant commanders.

➤ Transformational Satellite Communications System (TSAT): TSAT will provide unprecedented connectivity extending the Global Information Grid to space allowing protected worldwide internet access and an order-of-magnitude increase in capacity and capabilities.

➤ Space Radar: SR will provide persistent, day/night, worldwide, all-weather intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities for military, intelligence and civil applications.

➤ Space Situational Awareness: SSA is more than cataloging what’s in space. It is understanding what’s up there, when a satellite maneuvers, when something is deployed off a satellite or bus, and determining the capabilities of the satellite and intent of the operator.

4. F-35 Lightning II: 5th Generation, multi-role, stealth, precision strike fighter meets operational needs of AF, Navy, USMC and Allies.

➤ With an IOC of FY13, the projected AF buy of 1,763 aircraft replaces preponderance of our fighters.

5. Next Generation Long Range Strike – a new bomber by 2018: A new long-range strike platform is *the* critical piece to upgrading our portfolios to ensure range and payload, the soul of our AF, and persistent access in enemy environments for the future.

Other AF Priorities and Initiatives:

Cyberspace Domain: 8th Air Force is the service’s lead command for cyberspace. “There will be careers and a strong future for the Airmen whose work is in the cyberspace domain.” –SECAF

➤ Military operations in cyberspace cannot be a pick-up game. As a preeminent nation with a technologically advanced military, **we cannot afford vulnerability in the neural network.**

➤ We must be properly organized, trained and equipped – fully prepared and ever vigilant to protect cyberspace.

Assured Domestic Energy Initiatives: The AF remains committed to energy conservation and the use of renewable energy. Since 1985, the AF reduced energy consumption enough to power 20,000 average-sized homes for 10 years. “**Green purchases**” make up 11% of AF electricity.

Facts:

➤ **53% of Active Duty and 40% of the Total Force (213,000)** are "on-line" supporting COCOM requirements every day.

➤ 25,000 Airmen are deployed to CENTCOM today exceeding steady state.

➤ The AF flies 82% of all OIF sorties and 78% of all OEF sorties.

➤ Since DESERT STORM in 1991, we’ve averaged 2.3M flying hours per year, but with 2,500 fewer aircraft and higher OPTEMPO.

➤ **Average aircraft age is 24 years** (KC-135E, 48 yrs; B-52H, 45 yrs; C-130E, 42 yrs).

➤ 14% of the fleet is grounded or has mission-limiting restrictions.

➤ Since 9/11 the **AF has lost 127 aircraft in the GWOT or training** (48 contingency losses and 79 non-contingency).

➤ The AF procured 390+ fighters in 1980 and is procuring 26 in FY08 (112 aircraft total) increasing to 48 in FY13.

➤ The AF **aircraft recapitalization rate is greater than 50 years**.

➤ From FY07 to FY08 **costs have increased:** contracts +3-5%, spare parts +6%, fuel +9%, and utilities +16%

➤ Recruiting and retention are strong but key warfighting skills are stressed: \$649M in bonuses to train and retain Critical Skills.

➤ **Recruiting standards maintained:** 1 of every 100 recruiter contacts becomes an AF Airman; 30 of every 100 an officer.