

Air Force Seeks Undersecretary

The Senate in late December pondered the nomination of Erin C. Conaton to be undersecretary of the Air Force, a crucial service leadership position that had been vacant since August 2007. She had served as majority staff director of the House Armed Services Committee since 2007.

The Obama Administration on Nov. 10 named Conaton for undersecretary. Nine days later, the Senate held her confirmation hearing, with no apparent opposition. In mid-December, however, Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-Ala.) put a hold on Conaton's nomination, effectively blocking any further Senate action.

Spokeswoman Sarah Haley said Sessions' action was related to USAF's major aerial tanker competition, declining to elaborate. A team comprising Northrop Grumman and EADS is competing for the tanker contract, and would assemble its aircraft at a plant in Alabama. Northrop/EADS has threatened to skip the competition unless DOD and USAF alter their request-for-proposal documents.

CV-22s End First Combat Tour

A contingent of six CV-22 tilt-rotor aircraft and airmen from the 1st Special Operations Wing at Hurlburt Field, Fla., returned home Nov. 12 from what had been a previously undisclosed three-month deployment to the Middle East for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

This was the first combat tour for the CV-22, whose Marine Corps cousin, the MV-22, has already served in Iraq and arrived last fall in Afghanistan. Air Force Special Operations Command, as is its practice, kept a tight lid on this mission and did not divulge information on the mission until the CV-22s were back home.

Lt. Col. Matt Glover, operations officer with the wing's 8th Special Operations Squadron, said he was pleased with how the mission went. "[The maintainers] generated airplanes and spares every night, and the aircrew did a great job flying them. I don't think we could have asked for more," he said.

Johns, Welsh Moving Up

■ Gen. Raymond E. Johns Jr. on Nov. 20 assumed command of Air Mobility

Command, succeeding Gen. Arthur J. Lichte, who had led AMC since September 2007. Lichte had set his official retirement for Jan. 1, wrapping up 38 years on active duty. Johns last July was nominated for AMC's top post, and the Senate confirmed him in that same month. In the three years before he assumed command of AMC, Johns had served on the Air Staff as the deputy chief of staff for strategic plans and programs.

■ The Senate on Oct. 28 confirmed Lt. Gen. Mark A. Welsh III to receive a fourth star and take command of US Air Forces in Europe. He will replace Gen. Roger A. Brady, who has led USAFE since January 2008 and who is retiring with more than 40 years of service. Welsh's most recent assignment was as the CIA's associate director for military affairs, where he was the "bridge" between the CIA and Department of Defense.

Gates Sees ISR Gains

Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates said Nov. 12 he now believes that the Air Force is on the right track in its efforts to quickly field more intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance capability.

"The Air Force has significantly expanded its capability," Gates told a press group, adding, "And we intend to keep expanding it." He had complained back in 2008 that the service was not turning out unmanned ISR airframes and crews to operate them as quickly as it should.

However, he said, the Air Force is "pushing a lot into the theater. ... It's not just the airframes, both the [MQ-1] Predators and [MQ-9] Reapers and the [MC-12] Liberty aircraft, it's the ground analysis, ground stations, interpreters, intelligence analysts, pilots, and crews for these things."

SDB II Bids In

Teams led by Boeing and Raytheon in early November submitted their proposals for the engineering and manufacturing development phase of the Air Force's Small Diameter Bomb II program.

The Air Force is expected to choose the winner this spring to complete development of the 250-pound-class air-dropped weapon system and then

USAF photo by TSgt. Kevin Wallace



supply thousands of these bombs, which are designed to defeat moving surface targets in all weather conditions. Fielding is anticipated around 2014.

“The Boeing SDB II solution builds on our success with SDB Increment I,” said Debra Rub, Boeing weapons programs vice president. Conversely, Raytheon spokesman Mike Nachshen said his company’s design uses a proven “form-factored integrated seeker” and other mature technology.

F-22s Debut in Middle East

The Air Force in early November dispatched F-22 Raptor stealth fighters to the Middle East for the first time—for training, not combat. They participated in Exercise Iron Falcon at the United Arab Emirates’ Air Warfare Center from mid-November to Dec. 10.

Six F-22s and a contingent of airmen from the 1st Fighter Wing at Langley AFB, Va., made the trip, which Air Forces Central said provided the F-22 aircrews with

the opportunity for “bilateral training with coalition partners.” USAF F-16s also took part in Iron Falcon, according to AFCENT.

November also marked the debut of the Langley-based F-22 aerial demonstration team in the region as it performed at the Dubai Air Show in the UAE that ran Nov. 15-19.

Space Arms Race? No.

Air Force Gen. Kevin P. Chilton, commander of US Strategic Command,



12.08.2009

Four Royal Danish Air Force F-16s form up behind a USAF KC-135 aerial tanker during a mission over Europe. This KC-135, assigned to USAF’s 100th Air Refueling Wing at RAF Mildenhall, Britain, is one of 15 Stratotankers permanently assigned to the European theater. The wing constitutes a key part of the US air refueling “bridge” that allows Air Force and allied expeditionary units to deploy worldwide.

Air Force Posts Best Year Ever in Flight Safety

The Air Force recorded its safest flying year ever in Fiscal 2009. The year-end total of 17 Class A mishaps surpassed 2006's record of 19 mishaps.

The rate of 0.8 mishaps per 100,000 flying hours was even more impressive. It was just the second time USAF ever recorded a rate better than one mishap per 100,000 hours, and was more than 10 percent better than the old record.

In a nutshell, 2009 was an "absolute superb year in the Air Force for aviation," said Maj. Gen. Frederick F. Roggero, USAF's chief of safety. Six airmen died in 2009's crashes, however. This was well below the 10-year average of 9.9 deaths, but did not match the best years—just three airmen died in aviation mishaps in 2006 and 2007 combined.

Accidents that result in a death, permanent disability, loss of an aircraft, or more than \$1 million in damage are considered Class A.

The million-dollar threshold led to some end-of-year adjustments after USAF released 2009's preliminary results.

An incident where an A-10 hit a black vulture at Barksdale AFB, La., was this fall upgraded to Class A status after the damage estimate surpassed \$1 million. This was the Air Force's only Class A bird strike the entire year.

At about the same time, the repair bill for a B-1 engine mishap came in less than expected, and that incident was downgraded.

The threshold for Class A mishaps was raised to \$2 million for the current fiscal year, and Roggero said safety officials expect this will result in roughly 20 percent fewer mishaps considered Class A just for their dollar damage. Under the old standard, he said, when a high-performance engine was damaged, the incident almost inevitably became a Class A mishap.

Despite inflation and an old, heavily used fleet, mishap rates have trended downward. Officials credit continued focus on safety in maintenance, training, risk analysis, and better understanding of the human factors that lead to crashes.

Record flight safety has unfortunately not translated into improved safety for off-duty airmen, an area where "we have issues," said Roggero. Airmen "need to remember to take that risk mitigation and apply it outside the gate," he said.

Fifty-five airmen died in off-duty accidents last year. Personal motor vehicle accidents claimed 49 airmen, a number that is about average, and safety officials consider roughly 70 percent of the PMV deaths to be "preventable."

Motorcycles have proved particularly deadly. In 2009 alone, 20 airmen were killed in off-duty motorcycle accidents—more than three times the number killed in aviation mishaps.

said Nov. 3 he wants to avoid increased tension between the US and China over space, and views greater dialogue between the two nations as a means to mitigate increased competition in the space realm.

"I don't think either country ... is interested in a future arms race," said Chilton during a speech at a strategic space symposium in Omaha, Neb., the *Omaha World-Herald* reported Nov. 4.

According to the newspaper, Chilton reiterated that the US would welcome more transparency by the Chinese military to better understand Chinese intentions as China rapidly expands its space and satellite capabilities. At the end of October, Chilton hosted a senior Chinese military delegation at STRATCOM headquarters at Offutt AFB, Neb.

Defense Policy Bill Enacted

President Obama on Oct. 28 signed the Fiscal 2010 defense authorization bill into law that provides \$550.2 billion for defense and national security programs and \$130 billion to support overseas contingency operations.

The White House was successful in the end in getting Congress to go along with the Pentagon's desire to cap F-22 stealth fighter production and terminate

The Real Thing: A C-17 Globemaster III participating in Mobility Air Forces Exercise on Nov. 18 takes off from an airfield on the Nevada Test and Training Range near Nellis AFB, Nev. The joint exercise provides realistic training for combat air forces, mobility air forces, and US Army soldiers.

USAF photo by A1C Brett Clashman



big-ticket projects such as the VH-71 Presidential Helicopter.

But lawmakers did go against the President by including \$560 million to keep alive the second engine initiative—the General Electric-Rolls Royce F136—for the F-35 stealth fighter. The measure also slows the Air Force plan to retire some 250 legacy fighters in 2010 and boosts military pay by 3.4 percent.

Strike Command Defines Mission

During a senior leadership meeting in mid-October, Air Force Global Strike Command officials crafted the mission statement and vision for the new organization, which will oversee the nation's ICBMs and nuclear-capable bombers.

The command's mission, they determined, is to: "Develop and provide combat-ready forces for nuclear deterrence and global strike operations, ... safe, secure, credible, ... to support the President of the United States and combatant commanders."

This mission "needs to be understood by everyone in the command, because we truly have been given a special trust and responsibility for our nation's strategic deterrence mission," said Lt. Gen. Frank G. Klotz, the AFGSC commander.

Boeing Wins KC-135 Appeal

The US Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit on Nov. 17 overturned an earlier ruling by a lower court and restored a \$1 billion KC-135 maintenance contract to Boeing that had been disputed by Alabama Aircraft Industries.

The appeals court said the lower claims court erred in its fall 2008 ruling when it called USAF's "price-realism analysis" during the contract award process "arbitrary and capricious."

The Air Force awarded Boeing the contract in September 2007. AAI protested the award to the Government Accountability Office, which eventually upheld the Air Force's decision in June 2008. AAI then filed its lawsuit in federal claims court and won that round.

Chinese Stealth Fighter Nears

A top Chinese Air Force official said China will have fifth generation fighters

Lawmakers Want KC-X To Factor In "Illegal" Subsidies

A bipartisan group of 39 House members sent a letter to President Obama on Nov. 2 urging him to factor the "illegal" launch subsidies that Airbus has reportedly received from European governments for its A330 aircraft into deliberations over USAF's KC-X tanker competition.

The group, led by Rep. Norm Dicks (D-Wash.), Rep. Jay Inslee (D-Wash.), and Rep. Todd Tiahrt (R-Kan.), represents states where aerospace giant Boeing has a significant presence.

The missive was sent as the Air Force was still formulating the final version of its tanker solicitation to industry. USAF officials anticipate being able to choose a winning tanker later this year from among the bids expected from Boeing and rival Northrop Grumman, whose team includes Airbus' parent company EADS.

Failure to consider these subsidies, the lawmakers warned, would allow EADS to submit "a reduced bid price" for its A330-based tanker as part of Northrop's offering that "would not otherwise be economically viable."

Without saying so explicitly, they imply that this would place Boeing's tanker proposal at a disadvantage. It would also be "injurious" to the US economy and national security industrial base, they argued.

Last year, the World Trade Organization reportedly upheld the US charge that Airbus received illegal subsidies, in an interim ruling released to government officials on both sides of the Atlantic.

A European counterclaim before the WTO alleging illegal US subsidies to Boeing was still under review, with a decision expected later this year.

The Pentagon has indicated that it would not consider WTO findings on subsidies in choosing the new tanker.

But these House members state, "One way or another, it is imperative that the bid price of the Airbus tanker reflect this illegal subsidization."

fielded within eight to 10 years—putting it ahead of the timeline that Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates projected in arguing to curtail F-22 production at 187 aircraft.

Gen. He Weirong, Chinese Air Force deputy commander, said in an interview with China Central Television that this new aircraft would match or exceed the capability of similar fighters in existence today, the *Global Times*, reported Nov. 10. Another Chinese officer told GT that the new fighter would definitely be stealthy.

In July 2009, Gates told the Economic Club in Chicago that Beijing would have "no fifth generation aircraft by 2020" and would have only "a handful" by 2025. The Chinese statements came less than two weeks after USAF let a \$474 million contract to Lockheed Martin for the final four F-22s to complete the 187-aircraft program of record.

USAF Shedding Some Airmen

The Air Force has too many airmen in hand—thanks to the poor economy which service officials believe has led to a higher retention rate—so it plans to shed 3,700 personnel during Fiscal 2010 to stay on target for an end strength of 331,700 airmen, Air Force Personnel Center officials announced Nov. 16.

The service, they said, plans to use voluntary and involuntary early separation and retirement programs, as needed, to cut 2,074 officers and 1,633 enlisted members and reduce a projected \$228 million personnel funding shortfall.

The officer plan includes reducing 2010 officer training school accessions by 144 and delaying entry into service of 417 ROTC graduates. AFPC expects to have to continue the officer reductions into 2011 since voluntary measures will likely not cover the entire 2,074.

Preparing for C-27J Operations

Air Mobility Command announced in late October that it had begun testing the concept of employment for the C-27J intratheater transport, which is expected to make its operational debut in Southwest Asia toward the end of this year.

Using C-130 aircraft as stand-ins for the smaller C-27Js—since the two C-27Js already in the inventory were involved in stateside testing—the COE assessment took place in Iraq. Its goal was to mature the command and control structure and validate the

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Chilton Says Minuteman III Can Last to 2030

Air Force Gen. Kevin P. Chilton, head of US Strategic Command, said in November he hadn't seen anything indicating that the Minuteman III missile cannot serve as a leg of the nation's nuclear deterrent until 2030 as Congress has mandated.

In discussions with the Air Force's Minuteman overseers, "their view is that, with the appropriate investment, they can extend the life out to 2030," Chilton said Nov. 10 during a Capitol Hill speech.

"Most of the investment," he continued, "is not actually in the missile itself, but it is in supporting infrastructure," such as aging test equipment.

Chilton said the Air Force is making those investments, leading him to have a "high" degree of confidence in the Minuteman's long-term viability.

However, he added, "I don't think it is too early in the next year or two to begin thinking about" whether there will be a Minuteman follow-on and what it would look like.

The Air Force has already pumped more than \$7 billion to upgrade the Minutemen III force so that it remains viable until 2020. Examples include updated guidance and propulsion.

But subsequent to the development of that modernization plan, Congress mandated that the service keep the missile fleet out to 2030.

The Minuteman III inventory is currently 450 operational missiles, plus test assets. It remained unclear as of mid-December whether the fleet size would be reduced as part of the new arms control treaty that the United States and Russia were negotiating.

Chilton said there are enough test assets to keep conducting Minuteman flight tests out to 2030 to help discover any issues that could impact the missile's performance or reliability.

Emirates, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton A. Schwartz said the service would be making changes to its fledgling effort to produce more remotely piloted vehicle (RPV) operators more quickly.

"We are trying to find the sweet spot where we don't train too much and don't train too little," Schwartz said during a meeting with reporters, according to news reports. He said he believed that the service was "on the right path."

USAF put its first batch of freshly minted undergraduate pilots into RPV training in late 2008. Last September, its first beta class of officers with no flying training graduated from initial flight screening and RPV training.

Air Force Gets 190th C-17

The Air Force on Oct. 28 took delivery of its 190th production C-17 transport aircraft. Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., Air Force Reserve chief, accepted the aircraft from Boeing at the company's assembly plant in Long Beach, Calif.

He then accompanied an all-Reserve crew aboard the C-17 on the cross-country flight to bring the aircraft to its new home at Charleston AFB, S.C., where it joined Air Force Reserve Command's 315th Airlift Wing. This C-17 was the 58th to be stationed at Charleston.

Congress, as of mid-November, had authorized the Air Force to procure 213 C-17s, 205 of which had been ordered. The service, as of then, was still awaiting the final version of the Fiscal 2010 defense appropriations bill to know if

requirements for the direct intratheater airlift support of the Army envisioned with the C-27J.

The C-27J represents the first new airframe that will be solely owned, operated, and maintained by Air National Guard aircrews. The Air Guard is slated to acquire 38 C-27Js under current planning. Air Guardsmen from the 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield, Ohio, and the 175th Wing in Baltimore will be the first to train and deploy with them.

GAO Warns of Airlift Gap

The US military still faces a looming capability gap in moving Army medium-weight weapon systems by air within a combat theater, the Government Accountability Office warned in a report Nov. 12.

GAO said "only" the C-17 is currently capable of transporting heavier equipment, such as armored Strykers and mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles, within theater, as these are "too large and bulky" for C-130s. Yet, C-17s cannot transport these vehicles "into austere, short, or unimproved landing areas," according to GAO.

While the Air Force-Army joint future theater lift concept will address this shortfall, its fielding is not expected until 2024, said GAO. This means that C-17s may have to be used more in tactical heavy lift roles to mitigate—but not fill—this gap, potentially impacting

its "primary role as a strategic airlifter," said GAO.

USAF Will Adjust RPV Training

Speaking in mid-November during the Dubai Air Show in the United Arab



Sniffing Out Trouble: TSgt. Harry Harris, 9th Security Forces Squadron, leads his narcotics detection dog Ben through a drug sweep of luggage at a security checkpoint during a major accident response exercise at Beale AFB, Calif. The test was held to determine the base's ability to safely take in evacuees in case of an emergency.

USAF photo by SSgt. Aaron Oelrich

Operation Enduring Freedom—Afghanistan

Casualties

By Dec. 16, a total of 929 Americans had died in Operation Enduring Freedom. The total includes 927 troops and two Department of Defense civilians. Of these deaths, 666 were killed in action with the enemy while 263 died in noncombat incidents.

There have been 4,683 troops wounded in action during OEF. This number includes 1,930 who were wounded and returned to duty within 72 hours and 2,753 who were unable to return to duty quickly.

Airpower Supports Major Kunduz Operation

US and coalition forces, backed up by airpower assets, conducted a major operation in Kunduz province, Afghanistan, in early November, with NATO and Afghan officials claiming more than 130 Taliban fighters and eight enemy commanders killed during the five-day operation. No NATO or Afghan troops were killed.

A force of 700 Afghan soldiers and 50 NATO troops cleared several villages of Taliban fighters in and around the province's Char Dara district from Nov. 3 to Nov. 9, according to Afghan and NATO officials.

Aircraft, including A-10s, F-15Es, F-16s, and MQ-9 Reaper remotely piloted vehicles, were utilized several times during the operation to deter enemy activity, conduct reconnaissance, and strike key positions, according to Air Forces Central statements.

On Nov. 4, A-10s provided armed overwatch and attacked an enemy mortar position with precision guided munitions and several strafing runs, while an MQ-9 monitored enemy forces massing for an attack, responding with precision munitions and missiles on their position, according to AFCENT.

On Nov. 5, numerous aircraft, including F-15Es, F-16s, and MQ-9s, conducted armed overwatch. When enemy forces were observed at several fighting positions, the aircraft destroyed several targets with precision guided bombs, missiles, and strafing runs.

Kunduz province, located in Afghanistan's rugged north, has only recently experienced a surge of militant and Taliban activity, according to NATO officials.

Operation Iraqi Freedom—Iraq

Casualties

By Dec. 16, a total of 4,373 Americans had died in Operation Iraqi Freedom. The total includes 4,360 troops and 13 Department of Defense civilians. Of these deaths, 3,477 were killed in action with the enemy while 896 died in noncombat incidents.

There have been 31,603 troops wounded in action during Operation Iraqi Freedom. This number includes 17,710 who were wounded and returned to duty within 72 hours and 13,893 who were unable to return to duty quickly.

Iraqis Acquire Advanced Radar System

The Iraqi Air Force on Oct. 26 obtained the capability to monitor portions of its airspace effectively, when the Digital Air Surveillance Radar system at Kirkuk Regional Air Base was transferred from US to Iraqi control.

The DASR system includes a radar and a radar control facility that give Iraqi air controllers the ability to track aircraft from up to 138 miles away, thereby enabling coverage of the entire northern quadrant of Iraq as well as into Iran, Syria, and southern Turkey, according to officials with USAF's 506th Air Expeditionary Group at Kirkuk.

"They'll know if anybody enters their airspace," said Capt. Jeremy Kruger, the onsite program manager with USAF's 521st Air Expeditionary Advisor Squadron.

Work on the DASR system began back in August 2006, when Air Force advisory teams and contractors collaborated with the Iraqis to install more than \$53 million in air traffic and navigation equipment for the Iraqi air arm.

The new radar system is part of a larger modernization package for Kirkuk that includes new lighting, signs, and weather observation tools meeting international civil aviation and surveillance standards.

Eventually, Kirkuk's radar system will be remotely accessible from Baghdad's international airport to allow for a more unified air picture over the entire country.

it would receive funding for up to 10 more C-17s.

A-10 Flies With Synthetic Fuel

The Air Force conducted flight tests Nov. 2-3 with an A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft operating with the synthetic fuel blend that it intends to introduce fleetwide by early next decade. Full certification for unconstrained use of this fuel for the A-10 was expected by the end of December.

USAF is pursuing this fuel initiative as one means to decrease US dependence on foreign sources of energy. The fuel blend comprises 50 percent JP-8 jet fuel and 50 percent synthetic paraffinic kerosene. The latter is currently derived from natural gas, but can also be made from coal, of which the US has an abundant supply.

As of mid-November, the Air Force had cleared the B-1B, B-52H, C-17, F-4 (USAF flies QF-4 target drones), F-15, and F-22 to operate on this fuel. Besides the A-10, the C-5, C-130J, F-16, KC-135, and T-38 had run on it in tests and were awaiting certification. Yet to fly with it were the B-2A, T-6, HH-60, MQ-9, and RQ-4.

Space Sensor Explored

The Air Force's Space Based Infrared System program office announced Nov. 3 that it intended to award Raytheon a contract to determine the feasibility of taking existing hardware that the company has held in storage and building an infrared sensor payload that could be used in space to warn of missile launches.

The office said it would like the company to carry out this assessment over a period of 90 days. It sought insights on the quality of IR package that could be assembled and the costs and effort required to create this payload.

The Air Force already has two advanced IR sensor payloads operating in space on classified intelligence satellites to warn of missile launches, alongside existing Defense Support Program early warning spacecraft. And it plans to place the first SBIRS satellite, GEO-1, in space in 2011.

Ramstein Sheds Final C-130E

The last C-130E transport assigned to the 86th Airlift Wing at Ramstein AB, Germany, left the base for good on Nov. 2, marking a historic step in the unit's transition to the new C-130J model.

This C-130E, with tail No. 1299, departed for Poland, which is acquiring five C-130Es from the Air Force under a foreign military sales arrangement.

The wing is in the process of building a force of 14 C-130Js. Lockheed Martin on Nov. 9 delivered the seventh of those 14 C-130Js to the Air Force at the company's production facility in

Senior Staff Changes

RETIREMENTS: Gen. Arthur J. **Lichte**, Lt. Gen. Terry L. **Gabreski**, Maj. Gen. David E. **Clary**, Maj. Gen. Douglas L. **Raaberg**, Brig. Gen. Theresa M. **Casey**, Brig. Gen. Daniel R. **Dinkins Jr.**

NOMINATION: To be ANG Brigadier General: Frank J. **Sullivan**.

CHANGES: Lt. Gen. (sel.) Kurt **Cichowski**, from Vice Cmdr., AFSOC, Hurlburt Field, Fla., to Assoc. Dir. of Central Intel. for Mil. Spt, CIA, Washington, D.C. ... Brig. Gen. (sel.) Kory **Cornum**, from Command Surgeon, ACC, Langley AFB, Va., to Cmdr., 81st Medical Grp., AETC, Keesler AFB, Miss. ... Brig. Gen. Dwyer L. **Dennis**, from Spec. Asst. to the Cmdr., AFMC, AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, to Dir., Intel. & Rqmts., AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... Gen. Raymond E. **Johns Jr.**, from DCS, Strat. Plans & Prgms., USAF, Pentagon, to Cmdr., AMC, Scott AFB, Ill. ... Maj. Gen. Ellen M. **Pawlikowski** from Dep. Dir., Natl. Recon Office, Chantilly, Va., to Cmdr., AFRL, AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... Maj. Gen. (sel.) James O. **Poss**, from Dir., ISR Capabilities, DCS, ISR, USAF, Pentagon, to Dir., Strategy, Integration, & Doctrine, DCS, ISR, USAF, Pentagon ... Lt. Gen. Janet C. **Wolfenbarger**, from Dir., Intel & Rqmts., AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, to Vice Cmdr., AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... Brig. Gen. Daniel O. **Wyman** from Cmdr., 81st Medical Grp., AETC, Keesler AFB, Miss., to Command Surgeon, ACC, Langley AFB, Va.

SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE RETIREMENTS: David C. **Bond**, Hanferd J. **Moen**, Kenneth I. **Percell**.

SES CHANGES: Barbara J. **Barger**, to Spec. Asst. to the DCS, Manpower & Personnel, USAF, Pentagon ... Jack L. **Blackhurst**, to Dir., Human Effectiveness Directorate, 711th Human Performance Wg., AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... Audrey Y. **Davis**, to Dep. Dir., AF Staff, USAF, Pentagon ... Gerald L. **Freisthler**, to Exec. Dir., ASC, AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... James F. **Geurts**, to Dep. Dir., Ctr. for Spec. Ops. Acq. & Log., SOCOM, MacDill AFB, Fla. ... Edmundo A. **Gonzales**, to Dep. Asst. SECAF for Force Mgmt. Integration, Office of the Asst. SECAF for Manpower & Reserve Affairs, Pentagon ... Clyde R. **Hobby**, to Dir., Strat. Prgms., Defense Log. Agency, Ft. Belvoir, Va. ... Randall J. **McFadden**, to Dir., Acq. Mgmt. & Integration Ctr., ACC, Langley AFB, Va. ... Jarris L. **Taylor Jr.**, to Dep. Asst. SECAF for Strat. Diversity Integration, Office of the Asst. SECAF for Manpower & Reserve Affairs, Pentagon ... Angela L. **Tymofichuk**, to Dir., Engineering, Ogden ALC, AFMC, Hill AFB, Utah.

COMMAND CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT CHANGE: Eric R. **Jaren**, to Command Chief Master Sergeant, AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, ■

Marietta, Ga. All 14 are expected to be with the unit this year.

Cyber Support Careers Kick In

The Air Force's new family of career specialty codes for cyberspace support took effect on Nov. 1, supplanting the three former career fields of communications-electronics, knowledge operations management, and communications-computer systems.

About 43,000 active duty, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve personnel from former communications career fields now fall under the 11 new cyberspace support specialty codes, as do more than 8,800 civilian-equivalent positions.

This conversion process was part of USAF's drive to bolster its cyber force. Airmen in this field will receive a new occupational badge that will become mandatory wear by June.

Beale Project Axed

The Air Force announced Nov. 3 that

it had terminated negotiations with a private commercial developer to build a waste-water treatment facility at Beale

AFB, Calif., under the Department of Defense's enhanced use lease initiative that would have serviced the communities surrounding the base.

"Business developments and market conditions" occurring after the Air Force selected Beale Community Partners LLC in March 2009 for this leasing opportunity "caused steep reductions in the returns the Air Force was to realize from the project."

Those reductions, the service noted, coupled with "other aspects" of the proposed development, drove the decision. "At this point," said Air Force spokesman Gary T. Strasburg, "there are no known plans for any future development," when asked if the service would seek another potential leasing partner.

F-22 Lawsuit Switches Venues

A federal district court in California on Nov. 2 granted Lockheed Martin's motion to transfer an F-22 lawsuit filed in 2007 by a former employee to a federal court in Atlanta, close to the company's F-22 assembly facility in northern Georgia.

Darrol Olsen, a stealth engineer whom Lockheed Martin fired in 1999, alleges that the company knowingly used "defective" stealth coatings on the F-22 in the late 1990s. He wants the company to pay the government back \$50 million per F-22 built, the Associated Press reported Nov. 11.

A Lockheed spokesman said Nov. 5 the company requested the move since northern Georgia is "where the relevant documents and witnesses are located." Lockheed Martin "does not believe there is any merit to the allegations and will vigorously defend this matter in court," he said.

Baldacci Opposes Condor Plan

Maine Gov. John E. Baldacci said Nov. 13 the Air National Guard had failed to

Air Force Releases F-35 Basing Short List

The Air Force on Oct. 29 issued its list of 11 candidate bases that are the potential beddown locations for the first 250 to 300 F-35 Lightning II stealth fighters scheduled to enter its inventory by 2017.

On the short list of operational bases are: Hill AFB, Utah; Mountain Home AFB, Idaho; and Shaw AFB, S.C., as well as McEntire Joint National Guard Base, S.C., and the Air National Guard stations in Burlington, Vt., and Jacksonville, Fla.

The candidate training locations are: Eglin AFB, Fla.; Holloman AFB, N.M.; and Luke AFB, Ariz., as well as the ANG stations in Boise, Idaho, and Tucson, Ariz.

The Air Force said it selected these candidate installations out of the pool of more than 200 USAF sites using a "deliberate, repeatable, standardized, and transparent" process.

That process made Air National Guard leaders "really happy," since the Air Guard received five of the 11 slots, said Maj. Gen. Patrick J. Moisis, ANG deputy director. The Air Guard has been calling for the active duty component and Air Guard to receive F-35s concurrently and proportionately.

USAF expects to issue its record of decisions on the final basing choices in early 2011.

respond to questions about proposed low-level training flights over western Maine.

This, said the Maine Democrat, prompted him to write a letter to Lt. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III, ANG director, registering his "opposition to this proposal."

Last August, Baldacci asked the Air Guard to delay a public hearing in September on the Condor Military Operating Area plan for at least six to nine months and to address a "series of questions regarding the safety, noise, and environmental impacts" of the proposed low-level training route for ANG F-15 and F-16 units in New England.

ANG delayed for 60 days, holding the latest public hearing Nov. 14 in Farmington, Maine. According to Baldacci, Wyatt responded to him only with a rationale for "doing no further analysis."

Call for US-made Attack Platform

Republican lawmakers Sen. Sam Brownback (Kan.) and Rep. Todd Tiahrt (Kan.) on Nov. 15 sent a letter to Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates protesting the Pentagon's purported negotiations to buy 100 Super Tucano aircraft from Brazil-based Embraer to serve as Air Force Light Attack/Armed Reconnaissance platforms.

Purchasing foreign-built aircraft, they wrote, would be "inappropriate," namely because it "would harm US companies and workers" and "weaken the industrial base." They also noted that an arrangement with the company would "prejudge" the review undertaken last August by USAF to find an aircraft for the LAAR role.

Brownback and Tiahrt invited Gates to visit the production line of Hawker Beechcraft Corp., in Wichita, Kan. The company is teamed with Lockheed Martin in proposing the AT-6B, an armed version of the Beechcraft T-6 trainer, to be the LAAR.

Willow Grove Cut Loose

Pennsylvania Gov. Edward G. Rendell on Nov. 12 informed Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates that he was withdrawing a plan aimed at giving new life to NAS JRB Willow Grove near Philadelphia.

The Pennsylvania Democrat's letter to Gates said the initiative for Willow Grove to host military, homeland defense, and emergency preparedness missions no longer made sense since "federal authorities have firmly signaled that they do not intend to assign an [Air National Guard] flying mission to this installation.

"Lacking that mission," he continued, "it's difficult to justify state expenditures." BRAC 2005 put the facility on its hit list, sending the Air Guard's 111th Fighter Wing and Air Force Reserve Command's



In For the Kill: USAF and Lockheed Martin recently concluded flight tests on the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile (JASSM). Sixteen attempts were made between Sept. 10 and Oct. 4, using B-52 and F-16 aircraft against a wide range of targets and in many operational scenarios. Fifteen of the 16 tests were successful.

913th Airlift Wing aircraft elsewhere. Navy and Marine Corps aircraft also moved out.

Airmen Help Save Bayou

More than 400 airmen from Barksdale AFB, La., worked tirelessly around the clock, starting Oct. 31, to help local officials in northern Bossier Parish reinforce a levee meant to contain the Red Chute Bayou against rising waters after heavy rainfall ravaged northwest Louisiana.

The airmen filled sandbags and hauled them to the affected areas along

the bayou to prevent the floodwaters, which had surged nearly 10 feet above normal levels, from overtaking local residences.

"I want to extend my sincere gratitude [to the airmen] for their dedication and work during this natural disaster," said US Rep. John Fleming (R-La.), in whose district Bossier Parish and Barksdale lie, in a floor speech Nov. 2.

USAF Civilian Dies at Bagram

Frank R. Walker, 66, an Air Force civilian supporting Operation Enduring Freedom, died Oct. 28 of noncombat-



Slowly, Slowly: A1C Sarah Garrett (r), an electronic warfare specialist, and TSgt. Lee Fortner lower themselves from the tail of an EC-10 Compass Call at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, after an inspection. Both airmen are deployed from Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

related medical causes at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.

Walker, of Oklahoma City, was assigned to the 72nd Civil Engineering Directorate at Tinker AFB, Okla., according to the Defense Department. The

Tulsa World, citing a Tinker spokesman, reported Nov. 1 that Walker died of a heart attack.

Walker was a project construction manager with the US Army Corps of Engineers while overseas and was on

his fifth trip to Afghanistan, according to the newspaper.

Airman's Remains Back Home

The remains of Sgt. Robert Stinson, who died in September 1944 at age 23 when his B-24 Liberator bomber was shot down in the Western Pacific, were returned to his family on Oct. 28, ending 65 years of separation.

The Sun of San Bernardino, Calif., reported on that same day that a military honor guard accompanied Stinson's casket on its flight from Hawaii to the airport in Ontario, Calif., where two of his brothers, along with other family members, were waiting to welcome him home.

Stinson's burial took place Oct. 30 in nearby Riverside. Stinson's aircraft was found underwater in 2004 near the islands of Palau by the volunteer BentProp Project, which searches for the remains of US servicemen in the Western Pacific. His remains were identified two years later using DNA.

Obituary

Margaret A. Hamilton Tunner, a member of the World War II-era Women Airforce Service Pilots program, died Oct. 13 at her home in Virginia at age 92. During the war, she flew P-39, P-40, P-47, B-17, and B-24 aircraft, ferrying them from the factory to either coast. She also piloted a new P-51 to Canada. After the war, she served with US occupation forces in Japan and, in 1951, married Lt. Gen. William H. Tunner, the architect of the Berlin Airlift. Her interest in flying continued and, in her 70s, she learned to fly ultralights, while, at 78, she co-piloted an F-15 out of Langley AFB, Va., courtesy of the Clinton Administration. ■

News Notes

- Maj. Gen. Garry C. Dean on Nov. 12 assumed command of 1st Air Force (Air Forces Northern) at Tyndall AFB, Fla. Dean, formerly USAF's deputy inspector general, replaced Maj. Gen. Henry C. Morrow who had led 1st Air Force since November 2006.

- USAF's sole B-2A stealth bomber unit, the 509th Bomb Wing at Whiteman AFB, Mo., received an "excellent" rating after a 12-day nuclear operational readiness inspection that concluded Oct. 23.

- The Thunderbirds air demonstration squadron concluded its 2009 flying season with performances Nov. 14-15 at Nellis AFB, Nev. The team put on more than 70 shows, including a six-week tour of Asia and the Pacific region.

- Lockheed Martin said Nov. 11 the extended-range version of its stealthy AGM-158 Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile flew its preplanned course and destroyed the designated target in a

flight test, giving it a six-for-six record so far in flight testing.

- The US and Colombia on Oct. 30 signed the new bilateral defense cooperation agreement that grants the US access to at least seven Colombian military bases, from which to mount counternarcotics surveillance activities in the eastern Pacific region.

- Bradley Myers, a firefighter with the 99th Civil Engineer Squadron stationed at Creech AFB, Nev., is the Defense Department's civilian firefighter of the year for 2008, the Air Force announced in late October.

- The Air Force's Fleet Viability Board is assessing the higher-than-anticipated wear and tear that operations in Southwest Asia may have placed on the service's EC-130H Compass Call electronic warfare platforms, reported Flightglobal Oct. 28.

- Virginia Dosedel, an Air Force financial analyst, received the Air

Force's annual Spirit of Hope Award on Oct. 27 for her work with Sew Much Comfort, a nonprofit charitable organization providing clothing to cover the prosthetics of wounded warriors.

- The National Aeronautic Association on Oct. 30 confirmed as official US records the 41 altitude, payload, and time-to-climb marks set by a C-5M Super Galaxy during a Sept. 13 flight out of Dover AFB, Del.

- The Air Force's physical training uniform now is considered an official uniform with proscribed wear procedures contained in a revised Air Force Instruction 36-2903, Air Force Uniform Office officials announced Oct. 28.

- On the eve of President Obama's first visit to China in November, Chinese officials said China would help search for the remains of the 15 US airmen who were lost when their bomber aircraft crashed on Nov. 5, 1950 over China's Guangdong province. ■