

## Gorenc To Be USAFE Commander

Lt. Gen. Frank Gorenc has been confirmed by the Senate to take the reins as commander of US Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa at Ramstein AB, Germany. Officials with the command announced the news on July 2, although the Senate's action came several days prior, according to the Senate's website.

"I have roots in Europe and as an airman have been fortunate enough to spend three tours there, most recently as the commander of 3rd Air Force," said Gorenc, who has been the Air Force's assistant vice chief of staff since April 2012.

President Obama tapped Gorenc in June to lead at Ramstein, filling the void created when Gen. Philip M. Breedlove left in May to become NATO's Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, and head of US European Command.

In his new post, Gorenc will also lead NATO's Allied Air Command at Ramstein and the nearby Joint Air Power Competence Center.

## Poland Joins Surveillance Program

Poland is set to become the 15th

nation to join the consortium of NATO nations procuring a fleet of five radar-equipped RQ-4 Global Hawk Block 40 air vehicles and associated ground control equipment. The partnership is under the NATO Alliance Ground Surveillance program, according to a NATO official.

"We are in the final stage of negotiating the entry of Poland in the program. This is a process, not just an event, because it involves discussion on industrial participation in the program," said the official, speaking to *Air Force Magazine* during a June 28 interview at NATO headquarters in Brussels. "We believe that by October-November Poland will be a full member of the group of nations procuring the system."

Last September, NATO nations signed the procurement contract for this equipment, which is expected to be fully operational by the end of 2017. It will provide the Alliance with a high-altitude, long-endurance ground-surveillance and reconnaissance capability.

## Boneyard B-52G Fleet Shrinks

The Air Force had 24 out-of-service B-52G bombers in its aircraft boneyard,

## Navy Offers Airplane-Building Advice

The Navy has three times as many airplane projects in production or on the drawing board as the Air Force, and it's because of rigorous and painstaking efforts to reduce costs, Navy Secretary Raymond E. Mabus said.

Speaking with defense writers on June 13 in Washington, D.C., Mabus acknowledged his service is buying three variants of the F/A-18, two variants of the F-35, the P-8 patrol airplane, V-22 tilt-rotors, and has both a new stealthy remotely piloted combat aircraft and a new-start advanced fighter underway. The Air Force, by contrast, is only buying F-35s and C-130Js. It also is preparing to buy tankers and has a bomber in the conceptual phase.

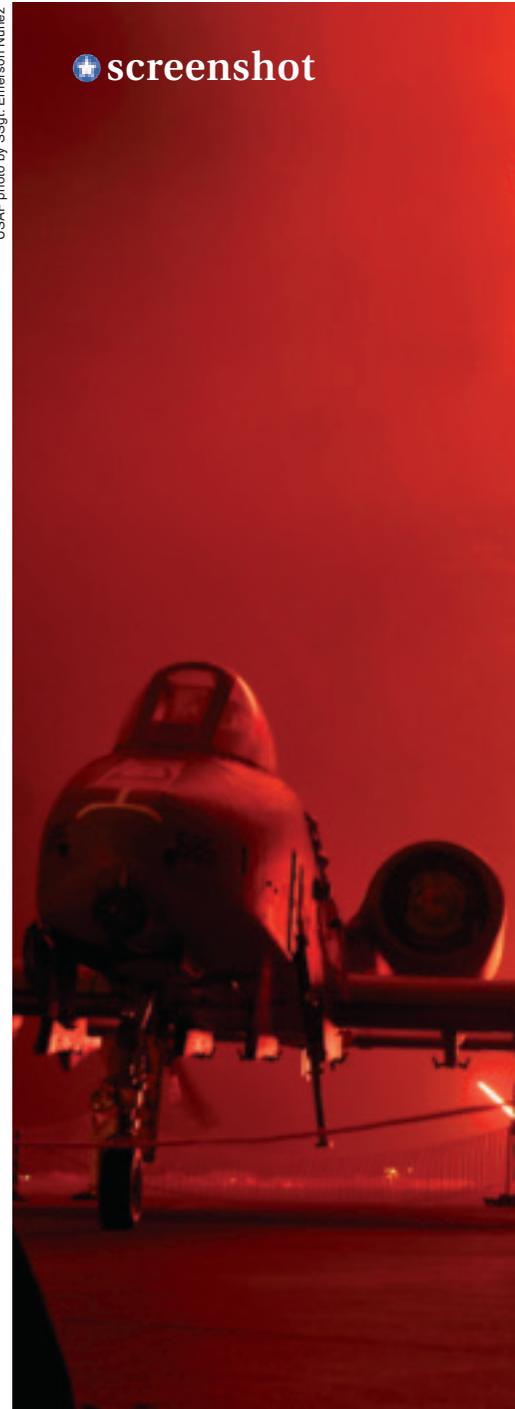
Mabus said the Navy has "done a good job in acquisition, in shipbuilding, and in aircraft programs" by using mature technology—"build the things you know how to build"—as well as should-cost methods—"firm fixed-price contracts with incentives for bringing cost and particularly overhead in contractors down" and using commercial derivatives "to the extent you can." Getting foreign partners to buy the same aircraft also helps reduce unit cost, he added. The big money-saver, though, has been multiyear contracts in which the service agrees to buy a certain number, and the contractor, with solid numbers to plan for, can most efficiently buy materials, hire labor, and schedule work.

"Smooth these programs out," he advised, "then you're able to do stuff like this." He warned, however, that continued sequester would "start to break multiyears, which will mean you get fewer aircraft but they cost more."

—John A. Tirpak

USAF photo by SSGT Emerson Nunez

 screenshot



as of March 1, still counted as deployed heavy bombers under the counting rules of the New START agreement with Russia, announced the State Department. That total is down six from the 30 B-52Gs that were there last September, according to data the US exchanges twice a year with the Russians under the treaty's terms.

The Air Force is cutting up these retired B-52G airframes in a manner that eliminates them from the nuclear-capable

heavy bomber inventory for the purposes of the treaty. These activities are part of the service's broader drawdown of the nuclear-capable bomber force to no more than 60 deployable B-2s and B-52Hs so the United States meets New START's ceilings on strategic nuclear warheads and delivery systems by February 2018.

As of the most recent data exchange, the Air Force had a total of 111 deployed heavy bombers (B-2: 10, B-52G: 24, and B-52H: 77), according to the State

Department's July 1 fact sheet. That number grew when factoring the additional heavy bombers in nondeployed status (B-2: 10 and B-52H: 14).

#### **USAFE-AFAFRICA Stand-down**

All bases in US Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa underwent a one-day safety stand-down by the end of June, following a spate of munitions and materials handling mishaps in the command's warehousing operations,



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*Fireworks light up the night sky behind an A-10 and an F-16 on the ramp at Osan AB, South Korea, on July 4. The 51st Force Support Squadron hosted the free event, which featured local bands, traditional Korean performances, kids' games, dance groups, and static displays in addition to the fireworks.*



***She's Gonna Blow!: Air Force and Slovakian explosive ordnance disposal technicians fill a pit with unexploded ordnance prior to a controlled detonation June 12. USAF, Slovakian, and Australian personnel worked together to place the ordnance, while other NATO member states' military forces stood guard and conducted the detonations.***

USAFE-AFAFRICA spokesman MSgt. Norris Agnew told *Air Force Magazine*. The safety stand-down applied to all airmen and personnel involved in forklift and material handling operations at all of the command's wings, said Agnew.

"Each base was given the flexibility of scheduling the stand-down during a 24-day window from June 7 to June 30, in order to minimize mission impact," Agnew said.

While USAFE-AFAFRICA did not cite an exact number of incidents, Agnew in July said the command had experienced "several" recently during general warehousing operations. Although no airmen had been injured, "resources have been damaged or destroyed," said Agnew. Incident investigations determined most of these cases were preventable, which led to the stand-down period.

USAFE-AFAFRICA leadership is willing to do "whatever it takes to re-

emphasize our commitment to safety in our handling operations, even if it means briefly halting the mission," Agnew said.

#### **NASA Selects 2013 Class**

Air Force Lt. Col. Tyler N. Hague is

among an elite group of eight astronaut candidates selected by NASA to train for future space missions. Members of the new class—the first since 2009—could find themselves walking on an asteroid and eventually even Mars, stated a NASA release.

#### **F-35 Pushes Forward**

The F-35 program has made "major advances" over the last three years and is no longer "one of my 'problem programs,'" Pentagon acquisition, technology, and logistics chief Frank Kendall said. Speaking during a June teleconference following a multiday summit with government, contractor, and allied nation F-35 managers, Kendall said he'll green light boosting the F-35 production rate in September, going to 44 in 2015 and 66 in 2016.

The meeting had a "completely different tone" than last year's summit, noted Kendall. The program is "on track." Negotiations on Lots 6 and 7 are going "more quickly and more smoothly" than on Lot 5, which were tough because it was the first based on DOD's should-cost analysis, he said.

Air Force Lt. Gen. Christopher C. Bogdan, program executive officer for the F-35 Lightning II Joint Program Office, reported far better communication between government and vendor managers and agreed that Lot 6 and 7 talks are moving fast. "We started negotiations about a month ago, and we've made more progress ... in 30 days than we did in about 11 months last year," he said.

Kendall said, "This is not the program of 2010," and while it's too soon to "declare success," there's a clear path to fix any remaining F-35 deficiencies. Operating costs are better understood now that the Marine Corps and Air Force are training F-35 pilots, and he predicted "we can make a substantial dent in projections" of operating costs. They will be reflected in the September cost numbers, he said.

—John A. Tirpak

“These new space explorers asked to join NASA because they know we’re doing big, bold things here—developing missions to go farther into space than ever before,” said NASA Administrator Charles F. Bolden Jr.

The selection process included a year-and-a-half search and a pool of more than 6,000 applicants—the second largest number of applicants ever received by NASA, stated the release. The four female and four male candidates will report to the Johnson Space Center in Houston this month to begin training; however, they will receive technical training at various space centers to prepare for missions, according to NASA.

Prior to his selection, Hague, 37, worked as deputy chief of the Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization. He is a graduate of the US Air Force Academy and the Air Force Test Pilot School.

**Military Legal Authority Intact**

The Senate Armed Services Committee voted on June 12 to strike a proposal removing the authority to oversee the prosecution of military sexual assaults from the chain of command. The committee voted 17-to-9 in favor of an amendment sponsored by SASC Chairman Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.) over a proposal by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.). In its place would be a provision requiring an independent review by the next higher level of the chain of command in cases where a commander decides not to prosecute a sexual assault allegation.

However, Gillibrand said at the SASC hearing that she found the provision “insufficient” as it does not adequately address victims’ fear of retaliation. She said a distinguishing factor of her bill was how it requests a set of military lawyers, who do not report to the chain of command, to make decisions independently. She argued commanders are not creating a climate where victims believe they can report without “being blamed, being retaliated against, being marginalized.”



USAF photo by SSgt. Stephanie Wade

Levin said the new provision addresses the problem of retaliation by making it a crime and establishing an

**Ride 'em, Cowboy:** Pararescueman SrA. Jason Fischman hoists an Army working dog into an HH-60G Pave Hawk during a joint rescue training scenario June 21 at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. The working dogs are trained to detect explosives. The dogs work in rough, mountainous terrain, and must be trained to accept a hoist and the sound of the helicopters so that they may be extracted along with their human team members in an emergency.

expectation that commanders will be held accountable for creating a climate in which victims fear retaliation.

**Study Supports F-16 Relocation**

The proposed in-state relocation of the 18th Aggressor Squadron from

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## SAPR Office Makeover

There has been intense energy throughout the Defense Department and Congress over the past few months as leaders tackle a growing and disturbing trend in military sexual assaults. As part of that movement, the Air Force's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office is making significant structural changes to strengthen its efforts to combat the problem.

In addition to overhauling the SAPR office, the Air Force has plans to increase its reach and capability. Senior officials announced June 6 that Maj. Gen. Margaret H. Woodward would lead the SAPR office, which serves as the core of the Air Force's effort to reduce sexual assault within the ranks and to provide victims the support they need. Woodward previously oversaw the command-directed investigation into sexual misconduct at basic military training and all other Air Education and Training Command units.

"No one cares more about fixing this issue than we do," said Woodward in a statement to *Air Force Magazine*. "Not only because this is our family, but also because our lives inherently depend on our trust in our wingmen. We must restore the trust of the American people and, more importantly, the trust our airmen have in each other." The changes aligned the office directly under the Air Force vice chief of staff, raising it to a directorate level as opposed to the branch-level position it previously held.

The Air Force also intends to expand the size and scope of the office. Authorized manning will increase from four people to around 30—all with a range of skill sets, said Lt. Col. Jill Whitesell, spokeswoman for the SAPR office. The Air Force will add an analysis team to take a more analytical and methodical approach to eradicating the problem.

Airmen are expected to play a direct role in the changes too. They will be asked to participate in cultural surveys and focus groups. "We want every airman to be a part of the solution, and by participating in these data polls, [it] will help ensure we are addressing the issues at their root cause," Whitesell said.

The new SAPR office will incorporate some social media elements as well, developing a blog as an attempt to create a platform for open dialogue where airmen can express ideas and thoughts on topics related to sexual assault prevention and response.

While the structural and staff improvements have no set timeline, Whitesell said it needs to be a top priority for Air Force leadership. "We are trying to build the team as quickly as possible in order to move forward with assessing and addressing the issues."

The reorganization of the Air Force SAPR office follows a May directive from Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel aimed at bolstering the Pentagon's response to sexual misconduct. In addition, the House of Representatives in late June passed HR 1864, a bill that strengthens protections of victims against retaliatory personnel actions taken in response to reporting crimes related to sexual assault in the military.

Jarrett echoed Hagel's comments, commending him for the emphasis he has placed on eliminating sexual harassment and discrimination within DOD.

The event capped off with a speech by Fanning, the highest-ranking openly gay official in the Defense Department. "Your presence here . . . means more than you could possibly understand," Fanning told Hagel during his speech. He said, "Events like this give voice not just to us, but to those who support us."

## Navy Receives First F-35C

The Navy's first F-35C carrier variant production aircraft arrived at Eglin AFB, Fla., on June 22, announced manufacturer Lockheed Martin. Navy test pilot Lt. Cmdr. Christopher Tabert flew the aircraft, dubbed CF-6, from Lockheed Martin's Fort Worth, Tex., facility. In April 2012, Tabert had become the first military test pilot to fly all three variants.

Strike Fighter Squadron 101, based at Eglin, will be the F-35C fleet replacement squadron and will train pilots and maintainers. Four additional F-35Cs will arrive at Eglin and will join a dozen of the Air Force's F-35A conventional takeoff and landing variants and 13 of the Marine Corps' F-35B short takeoff and vertical landing variants already based there.

"We are committed to the Navy's vision for the F-35 that will revolutionize forward-based combat power in current and future threat environments," said Lorraine Martin, the company's executive vice president and F-35 program general manager.

The Navy plans to declare the F-35 ready for combat in 2019, stated the Lockheed Martin announcement. The sea service will use the aircraft to replace its older F/A-18s.

## CRAF Demand Post-Afghanistan

A recent Government Accountability Office report has directed the Secretary of Defense to shift some of its peacetime airlift workload to commercial sources to buttress the Civil Reserve Air Fleet.

The Defense Department exceeded the flying hours needed to meet military training requirements for mobility aircrews from Fiscal 2002 through Fiscal 2010 due to increased operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to the report, released on June 20. However, after the Afghanistan drawdown, demands on airlift are projected to decline by at least 66 percent to pre-9/11 levels, reducing both training opportunities for military aircrews and business opportunities for participants in the CRAF, stated the report.

Because there is no linkage between DOD's process for monitoring flight hours and its allocation of eligible airlift missions

Eielson AFB, Alaska, to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson would save the Air Force \$227 million over a five-year period and help achieve operational efficiencies, stated the draft report on the move's environmental impact.

Eielson's 21 F-16s and associated personnel would shift to Elmendorf under the proposal, while Eielson would continue to support major training exercises with a much-reduced personnel footprint, according to the report's executive summary.

Sen. Mark Begich (D-Alaska), a critic of the move, challenged its "phantom cost savings." Similarly, Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) called the plan a "backdoor BRAC" with no validated cost savings.

The Air Force also looked at three alternatives: relocate the F-16s to Elmendorf, but deploy them to Eielson for 12 weeks a year for major exercises; station

the F-16s at Elmendorf and deploy them with tanker support for exercises for 12 weeks per year; and take no action. The release of the final environmental report is expected this fall.

## Hagel Hosts LGBT Event

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, the President's Senior Advisor Valerie B. Jarrett, and acting Air Force Secretary Eric K. Fanning all highlighted the issue of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender members of the military at an LGBT pride event at the Pentagon.

"All of us are created equal," said Hagel in his opening speech, stressing the efforts DOD has made to secure equal rights for its employees. Hagel said allowing LGBT service members to serve openly makes "our military and our nation stronger, much stronger."

### Operation Enduring Freedom

#### Casualties

As of July 15, a total of 2,245 Americans have died in Operation Enduring Freedom. The total includes 2,242 troops and three Department of Defense civilians. Of these deaths, 1,763 were killed in action with the enemy, while 481 died in noncombat incidents.

There have been 18,957 troops wounded in action during OEF.

#### Afghanistan Leads Security Mission

Afghanistan's National Security Forces took the lead in all security missions in mid-June as US and coalition forces continue the transition from a combat to a support role.

Such an announcement kick-started the final phase of the transition process, stated a June 18 Pentagon news release. Marine Corps Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr., commander of US and International Security Assistance Force troops in Afghanistan, called the move a "monumental step forward." Speaking to the Afghan people, Dunford said the milestone is "cause for celebration, not apprehension."

During a joint press conference with Afghan President Hamid Karzai, NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen praised both Afghan and coalition troops.

"We have worked hard, and fought hard, to make this possible. And we can be proud of what we have achieved together," said Rasmussen. "Your forces are showing great courage, great skill, and making great sacrifices."

Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel said in a statement, "This achievement keeps us and our coalition partners on track to bring our combat mission to a close next year and transition to a noncombat, train, advise, and assist mission that will help ensure Afghans can sustain security into the future."

#### Logistical Balance

Afghanistan's geography, weather, security, and limited transport infrastructure present much larger obstacles to the upcoming drawdown than what logistics planners faced in Iraq in 2011, said Scott M. Anderson, US Central Command's deputy director for logistics and engineering.

Kuwait, what Anderson called "the catcher's mitt" for supply and rolling stock coming out of Iraq, has no corollary with Afghan operations. "You can't just go next door to

Pakistan or up into Uzbekistan and park," he said. "Once the movement begins, you have to keep moving ... until [the shipment] gets home to the US."

He said agreements are now in place to channel a growing amount of equipment through Pakistan, which has ample capacity to support the drawdown. Currently, the Northern Distribution Network, through the Hindu Kush mountains and several former Soviet republics in Central Asia, only supports about four percent of retrograde equipment. Most US forces operate in eastern Afghanistan now, Anderson noted, and it would be prohibitively expensive to send them out through the northern passage—particularly in the winter months.

However, Anderson said he is optimistic the drawdown remains on path to meet President Obama's goal of 34,000 troops in country by February 2014 (today's force in country stands around 60,000).

#### Afghan Wing Lacks Personnel, Expertise

The Afghan Special Mission Wing—charged with counternarcotics and counterterrorism operations—does not have enough personnel or expertise to conduct its mission, according to a report from the US Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction. Still, the Defense Department is going ahead with a \$772 million plan to procure 48 aircraft—30 Mi-17 helicopters and 18 PC-12 fixed-wing airplanes—for the fledgling Afghan wing, stated the June report.

As of late January, SMW had just one-quarter of the personnel needed to reach full strength. Recruiting challenges include finding literate Afghans capable of passing the stringent US vetting process, the report said. The Afghan defense ministry and interior ministry also have failed to reach an agreement for the wing's command and control structure, which also is slowing recruiting. Although DOD contractors now provide 50 percent of the maintenance and repairs and 70 percent of maintenance and logistics management for the wing's current force of 30 Mi-17s, there is no plan in place to transfer those functions to the Afghans.

"We maintain that moving forward with the acquisition of these aircraft is imprudent," stated the report's cover letter to Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel.

to CRAF participants, GAO said "it cannot determine whether [DOD] is using CRAF to the maximum extent practicable."

#### Canada Is First to Use AEHF

Canada has become the first international partner to communicate using the Advanced Extremely High Frequency Satellite System, announced manufacturer Lockheed Martin. A US-Canada team made contact with the AEHF-1 satellite from a SMART-T terminal near Ottawa, Canada, allowing them to share data with the US Air Force's 4th Space Operations Squadron at Schriever AFB, Colo.

"This event was an integrated effort that spanned countries, armed services, and product lines. It shows our employees are delivering a complex system that works well, enhances capability, and improves

allied missions," said Mark Calassa, vice president of protected communications at Lockheed Martin.

Canada is one of three AEHF international partners; the other two, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, are expected to test their first terminal connections by the end of the year. The AEHF Satellite System is designed to improve communications among combatants on the ground, sea, and air, as well as provide communication links to national leaders, including the President.

#### A Call For More Nuke Cuts

President Obama called for further nuclear cuts during a speech before thousands at Berlin's Brandenburg Gate. Obama said a completed review of US nuclear forces has determined it can guarantee the potency of the country's

nuclear deterrent even with further reductions of deployed strategic nuclear weapons beyond New START levels.

"I intend to seek negotiated cuts with Russia to move beyond Cold War nuclear postures," Obama said, after announcing the US will reduce its deployed strategic warheads by up to a third of its current arsenal.

The US also will work with NATO to seek reductions in US and Russian tactical weapons in Europe, build support in the US to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and host a conference in 2016 to continue efforts to secure nuclear materials around the world. The proposed cuts would take the number of deployed strategic warheads for both countries below the limit of 1,550 set by the New START agreement. While Obama received support from

## Senior Staff Changes

**RETIREMENTS:** Maj. Gen. Lawrence L. **Wells**, Brig. Gen. Daniel B. **Fincher**, Brig. Gen. Dave C. **Howe**, Brig. Gen. Eden J. **Murrie**.

**CHANGES:** Brig. Gen. Warren D. **Berry**, from Dir., Log., Instl., & Mission Spt., USAFE, Ramstein AB, Germany, to Dir., Log., AMC, Scott AFB, Ill. ... Brig. Gen. Casey D. **Blake**, from Dep. Dir., AAFES, Dallas, to Cmdr., AF Instl. Contracting Agency, Office of the Asst. SECAF, Acq., Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... Maj. Gen. Jim H. **Keffer**, from Asst. DCS, Intel., Surveillance, & Recon, USAF, Pentagon, to C/S, CYBERCOM, Fort Meade, Md. ... Maj. Gen. (sel.) Lee K. **Levy II**, from Dir., Log., AMC, Scott AFB, Ill., to Vice Dir., Log., Jt. Staff, Pentagon ... Maj. Gen. Kurt F. **Neubauer**, from Vice Cmdr., 7th AF, PACAF, Osan AB, South Korea, to AF Chief of Safety, USAF, Pentagon ... Maj. Gen. (sel.) Terrence J. **O'Shaughnessy**, from Dep. Dir., Politico-Mil. Affairs, Asia, Jt. Staff, Pentagon, to Dir., Ops., PACOM, Camp Smith, Hawaii ... Brig. Gen. Gregory S. **Otey**, from Dir., US Forces-Afghanistan Liaison to the US Embassy, Kabul, Afghanistan, to Dir., Nuclear Spt., Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Fort Belvoir, Va. ... Brig. Gen. Bradley D. **Spacy**, from Cmdr., 81st Tng. Wg., AETC, Keesler AFB, Miss., to Dir., Log., Instl. & Mission Spt., USAFE, Ramstein AB, Germany ... Brig. Gen. David R. **Stilwell**, from US Defense Attaché, China, PACOM, Defense Intel. Agency, Beijing, to Dep. Dir., Politico-Mil. Affairs, Asia, Jt. Staff, Pentagon ... Brig. Gen. Linda R. **Urrutia-Varhall**, from Dir., Intel., SOUTHCOM, Miami, to Asst. DCS, Intel., Surveillance, & Recon, USAF, Pentagon ... Brig. Gen. James C. **Vechery**, from Dep. Dir., Strat. Plans, Rqmts., & Prgms., AMC, Scott AFB, Ill., to Dir., US Forces-Afghanistan Liaison to the US Embassy, Kabul, Afghanistan ... Maj. Gen. Joseph S. **Ward Jr.**, from Commandant, Jt. Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Va., to Dep. Dir., AAFES, Dallas ... Maj. Gen. Margaret H. **Woodward**, from AF Chief of Safety, USAF, Pentagon, to Dir., Sexual Assault Prevention & Response Office, Office of the Vice C/S, USAF, Pentagon.

**SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE RETIREMENT:** David F. **O'Brien**.

**SES CHANGES:** Mark R. **Land**, to Dep. Dir., Office of Contracts, Natl. Recon Office, AFSPC, Chantilly, Va. ... James R. **Martin**, to DUSD, Intel. Strategy, Prgms., & Resources, Pentagon ... Troy E. **Meink**, to Dep. Undersecretary of the AF, Space Prgms., Pentagon ... Kenneth D. **Watson**, to Dep. Dir., Strategy, Policy, & Log., TRANSCOM, Scott AFB, Ill. ... Steven J. **Zamparelli**, to Dir., Contracting, AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio.

Democrats, some Republicans said the approach is reckless without including China in talks.

"Any future nuclear discussions must include China," said Rep. J. Randy Forbes (R-Va.), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee's seapower and projections forces panel. Forbes said China is modernizing its nuclear forces and poses the "most direct challenge to the global rules based order."

## Military Responds to Fires

As wildfires ravaged through the Black Forest, northeast of Colorado Springs, Colo., in mid-June, military personnel and assets were on the scene to help contain the massive flames.

At least 150 Colorado National Guard members; 10 firefighters and two vehicles from the 21st Space Wing at Peterson Air Force Base; one vehicle and a contingent

**Pining for the Fjords: A CV-22 Osprey takes on fuel from an MC-130 Combat Talon II off the coast of Greenland June 21. The aircraft was on its way to RAF Mildenhall, Britain, as part of an expansion of the 352nd Special Operations Group there. Ten CV-22s and 12 MC-130Js along with 900 personnel and family members are slated to be added to the base by 2018.**

USAF photo by SrA. Laura Yahemniak



## The Syria Question

The United States left a detachment of F-16s and Patriot missiles in Jordan after a military exercise concluded there in June. Exercise Eager Lion involved some 8,000 personnel from 19 countries, including about 5,000 troops from each of the four US military services. The exercise ran from June 9 to 20 at locations across Jordan and challenged participants to respond to realistic scenarios while enhancing regional stability.

Pentagon spokesman George Little said in a statement that Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel “approved the request from the Kingdom of Jordan.” However, he also noted that “all other US personnel assigned to Jordan for Eager Lion will depart at the conclusion of the exercise.”

For seven years, the US Air Force, Royal Jordanian Air Force, and allied aircraft and personnel converged in the Jordanian desert as part of Falcon Air Meet—but this year’s iteration was different because of an unfolding crisis only a car ride away from Amman.

As fighting worsened in and around the southern Syrian city of Daraa, the White House announced plans to begin arming the rebels. The US also reportedly considered a proposed “no-fly zone” in the conflict to protect rebel groups from Syria’s potent air forces.

US officials downplayed connecting scheduled military exercises with the conflict and pointed to the ongoing Eager Lion exercises as an effort to build regional assurance to allies. Jordan already is managing a steadily growing stream of refugees from Syria. But there is no mistaking that airpower is playing a strategic role in Washington’s decision-making calculus.

While the Colorado Air National Guard’s 120th Fighter Squadron were long slated to be the lead US participant in this year’s FAM/Eager Lion activities, according to USAF and US Central Command officials, an additional deployment of F-16s from the Ohio Air National Guard’s 112th Fighter Squadron arrived in Jordan just after the start of Eager Lion activities—doubling the number of US F-16s in country.

The additional F-16s were already forward deployed to the region when they were moved to Jordan for the duration of the exercise.

of personnel from Schriever Air Force Base; two firefighters and a 5,000-gallon water tender from Buckley Air Force Base; and two Modular Airborne Firefighting System-equipped C-130s from the Air Force Reserve Command’s 302nd Airlift Wing at Peterson all provided support.

The MAFFS C-130s conducted more than a dozen airdrops and released more than 35,500 gallons of retardant. Two CH-47 Chinooks and two UH-60 Black Hawks from Fort Carson also provided support. The *Denver Post* reported the blaze had scorched more than 14,000 acres, claimed the lives of two people, and destroyed nearly 500 homes.

### Plan Addresses Claims Backlog

A 10-point plan addressing the Department of Veterans Affairs claims backlog was unveiled in June by Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski (D-Md.), chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. The plan is to be included in the Fiscal 2014 Military Construction, Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies Appropriations

**Doctor, Doctor, Gimme the News:** *SSgt. Spencer Zephan, a combat controller with the Oregon Air National Guard, provides air traffic control during Global Medic 2013 at Fort McCoy, Wis., on July 16. Global Medic brings members of both reserve components together to train on all aspects of combat theater aeromedical evacuation.*



USAF photo by SSgt. Heather Cozad



**They Got Schooled:** A1C Ryan Dirks and A1C Christopher Pritchett inspect the rudder and vertical stabilizer on an F-15 Eagle during training at Sheppard AFB, Tex. Some 62,000 people graduate from a training course at Sheppard annually—from pilots and maintainers to specialists in propulsion, fuels, munitions, avionics maintenance, and ground equipment.

66 percent of them pending for more than four months.

**World War II Remains Recovered**

Defense Department forensic scientists identified the remains of Army Air Forces Sgt. Charles R. Marshall, 19, of Martin, Ky., who had been missing in action since 1944, announced the Pentagon. DOD returned Marshall's remains to his family for burial with full military honors, according to a June news release.

Marshall was a member of the nine-person crew of a B-24H Liberator that was shot down on July 21, 1944, southwest of Munich, Germany, while on a bombing raid against enemy targets in Oberpfaffenhofen. Of the crew, six airmen parachuted to safety and a seventh airman's remains were recovered near Hadorf, Germany. Marshall and another crewman remained missing in action.

In 2012, a DOD recovery team excavated the suspected crash site after a German national claimed to have recovered human remains and aircraft wreckage at a crash site several years prior, stated the release. The team found additional human remains and aircraft wreckage, including military identification tags bearing Marshall's name. DOD scientists used dental comparisons and mitochondrial DNA testing to help identify Marshall.

Bill that aims to give the VA additional resources to address the backlog and to strengthen training and accountability.

"When our veterans return from war, they shouldn't have to face a quagmire of bureaucracy in getting their claims processed," Mikulski said. "The solution to this problem must come right from the top. ... The Appropriations Committee will keep fighting the red tape across all the agencies responsible for our veterans because our wounded warriors can't wait."

The plan includes: \$20 million above the budget request to upgrade computer hardware in VA regional offices; more training of claims processors; monthly reports by the VA on performance measures to the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations; and an additional \$12.9 million for the Board of Veterans Appeals to hire additional personnel to help the appeals process. Mikulski said the VA has a backlog of 816,839 pending claims as of June 10,



**Welcome Home, Sir:** Members of the honor guard provide planeside honors to the remains of Maj. Larry Hanley at Spokane Airport in Washington state on July 11. Hanley, an F-105 pilot, was shot down over Laos Nov. 4, 1969. He was listed as missing in action until the Joint Prisoners of War-Missing in Action Accounting Command identified his remains this March.