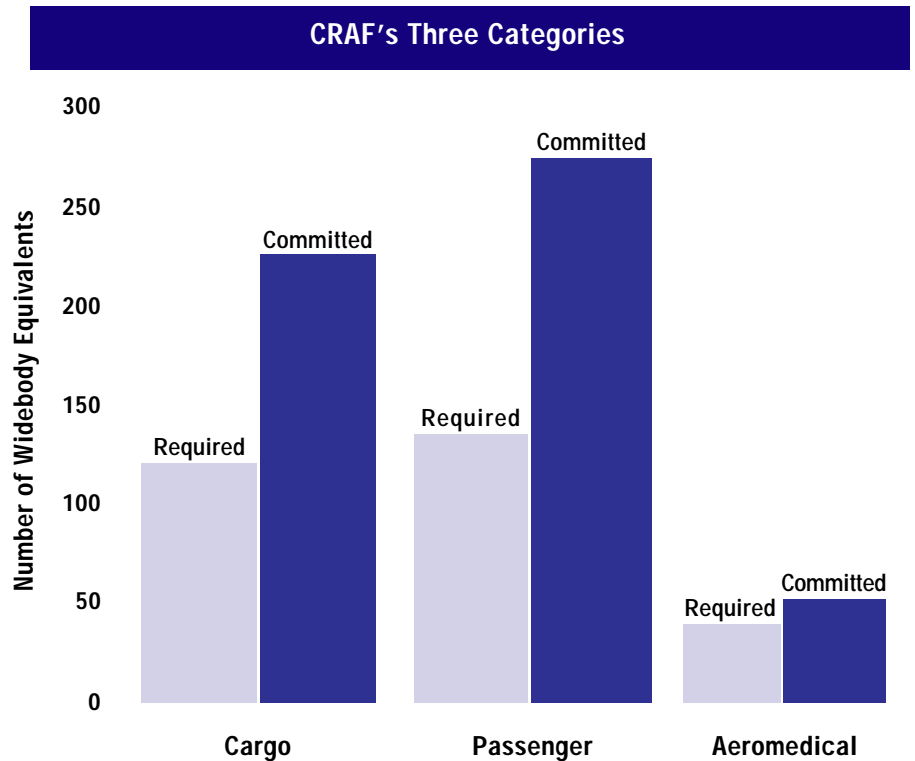


The Chart Page

By Tamar A. Mehuron, Associate Editor

The Current and Future State of CRAF

Currently, the Air Force has more commercial aircraft committed to its Civil Reserve Air Fleet than it needs to meet wartime demand, but the number required could be going up just as some carriers are considering leaving the CRAF program. Due out by 2004 is a new mobility requirements study that may call for increased CRAF use for cargo, passengers, and medical evacuation.



A Typical Round-Trip Cost

Aircraft	Capacity	Trip Cost
747	90 tons	\$200,356
MD-11	86 tons	\$191,451
DC-10	75 tons	\$166,963

Note: Cost is based on round-trip from Dover AFB, Del., to Ramstein AB, Germany.

Greater CRAF participation may be hard to find, however. According to the General Accounting Office, one of CRAF's key incentives for an air carrier—the ability to bid on peacetime defense cargo business—may now be waning because USAF limits most of that work to one type of aircraft—the 747. Conversely, 747s account for only 38 percent of the widebody cargo aircraft in CRAF, and GAO found that more than 40 percent of the 747s used in 2002 flew without full loads.

Source: GAO: "Civil Reserve Air Fleet Can Respond as Planned, but Incentives May Need Revamping," December 2002.