

Air Force World

F-16 Finishes Torture Test

An F-16C Block 50 finished 32 rounds of torture tests inflicted over two years in Lockheed Martin's Full Scale Durability Test facility in Fort Worth, Texas. The results will develop data needed to conduct a service life extension program on the type, the company announced Nov. 3.

The aircraft endured 27,713 equivalent flight hours in a stress rig designed to push, pull, and twist its structure to simulate flying the aircraft well past its 8,000 equivalent flight hours design life. After the test was completed, the F-16 was subjected to maximum-load conditions to prove it could still operate within the full flight envelope.

It's now being torn down for inspection of the parts to see which ones held up, which ones fractured, and which ones broke. The data will help the Air Force figure out what kinds of replacement parts and reinforcements it'll need to SLEP 300 F-16s so the aircraft can serve to 12,000 hours.

Boosting European Force Structure

The US needs to build up its presence in Europe because its current force structure is not enough to counter Russian influence in Eastern Europe, said Gen. Philip M. Breedlove, commander of US European Command and NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe.

★ screenshot

Air National Guard photo by Lt. Col. Gabe Johnson

Speaking to reporters Oct. 30 at the Pentagon, Breedlove said the US position in Europe “is not adequate to the larger Russian task that we see,” but acknowledged that the permanent force structure probably won’t change.

That’s why the military is working to pre-position equipment forward, including one heavy brigade of materiel, to go along with theater security package deployments of aircraft. The deployment of materiel is needed to rapidly reinforce Europe if called on, Breedlove said.

US Shifting Intel to Russia

Gen. Philip M. Breedlove, commander of US European Com-

mand and NATO Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, said he is asking the Pentagon for more intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance support to better keep track of Russia.

The decision comes as the US Intelligence Community reverses a decades-long trend where attention shifted away from Russia toward counterterrorism operations.

“We are gently turning the nose of this ship to get back to what do we need to be looking at,” Breedlove told reporters at the Pentagon on Oct. 30.

For the past 20 years, the US has tried to partner with Russia, but recent actions, such as air strikes supporting Syrian President Bashar al Assad and the incursion into Ukraine, have



11.10.2015

A NATO E-3A Sentry AWACS is refueled by an Arizona ANG KC-135 over northern Germany during a NATO aircrew training mission.

made that difficult. While the US is able to track Russia's broader strategic ambitions, it has not been good at predicting smaller-level activities or tactical moves.

Airman Lost in 1952 Crash Recovered

An airman who was killed when a C-124 Globemaster II crashed in 1952 has been recovered and will be returned to his family.

A3C Loyd L. Matthews was one of 52 people onboard the C-124 when it crashed en route to Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, from McChord AFB, Wash., according to a news release.

Search parties were not able to find or recover any of the service members in November or early December of 1952. However, in June 2012 an Alaska National Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter flying a training mission over the Colony Glacier, near Mount Gannett, saw aircraft wreckage, later determined to be that of the C-124. Crews were able to recover more artifacts in the summer of 2013 and during a short time period each summer since then.

Matthews will be buried with full military honors.

Eleventh GPS IIF Launched

The Air Force on Oct. 31 launched the 11th GPS IIF satellite from Cape Canaveral AFS, Fla., aboard a United Launch Alliance Atlas V launch vehicle, after a leak in ground support equipment pushed the launch window back a day.

Medi-ready: SrA. Edward Checkcinco (l) and Capt. Elyssabeth Casteel (r) transport a "patient" during simulated medical evacuation training at Yokota AB, Japan. The training was completed as part of a readiness inspection being conducted in conjunction with Exercise Vigilant Ace, a US-South Korea combined exercise aimed at enhancing operational and tactical level coordination.

The 10th GPS IIF satellite launched successfully in July and the final GPS IIF satellite, delivered to Cape Canaveral in October, is scheduled to launch in early February.

The satellites help enhance precise GPS for warfighters and civilians, according to an Air Force news release. The GPS constellation is operated by Air Force Space Command's 50th Space Wing at Schriever AFB, Colo.

KC-46 Preferred Reserve Bases Named

Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C., is the Air Force's preferred location to be the first Reserve KC-46 Pegasus tanker base, the service announced on Oct. 29.

The announcement launches the start of an environmental impact analysis process. Given a favorable outcome, it will confirm the choice. The base could receive the aircraft as soon as 2019.

Other "reasonable alternatives" named were Tinker AFB, Okla., Westover ARB, Mass., and Grissom ARB, Ind.

Seymour Johnson was chosen "based on operational analysis, results of site surveys, cost, and military judgment factors," USAF Deputy Assistant Secretary for Installations Jennifer L. Miller said in a news release. The Air Force previously named Altus AFB, Okla., as the KC-46 training base; McConnell AFB, Kan., as the first Active Duty base, and Pease ANGB, N.H., as the first Guard base for the Pegasus tanker.

Guard F-16s Track Wayward Aerostat

Two New Jersey Air National Guard F-16s were scrambled on Oct. 28 to track an Army Joint Land Attack Cruise Missile Defense Elevated Netted Sensor System aerostat that broke free from its mooring station in Maryland and floated into Pennsylvania.

The jets, assigned to the 177th Fighter Wing at Atlantic City Airport, monitored the aerostat and kept local air traffic clear before the blimp came down near Muncy, Pa.

USAF photo by Osakabe Yasuo





Photo by Jimmy May, Bloomsburg Press Enterprise

The JLENS aerostat is about 243 feet long and carries radar and communications payloads. It was stationed at Aberdeen Proving Ground north of Baltimore. Approximately 6,700 feet of the aircraft's metal tether dragged behind the wayward craft, severing power lines and causing power outages in Pennsylvania before it went down near Moreland Township about four hours later.

New Sexual Assault Prevention, Response Strategy

The Air Force on Oct. 28 released a new five-year sexual assault prevention and response strategy intended to “eradicate the crime from our ranks,” said service Secretary Deborah Lee James.

Although the news release says airmen will be familiar with the response portion of the strategy, the document adopts a new “public health approach to prevention,” said Andra Tharp, an Air Force sexual assault prevention expert. The document aims to standardize SAPR education and training throughout an airman's career.

USAF is working with a “contracted prevention training company” to tailor the training program to specific groups and cultures within the service. Focus groups at Little Rock AFB, Ark., and Keesler AFB, Miss., are underway, and the Air Force expects to roll out the new training program in January 2016, states the release.

CV-22 Crew Awarded DFC

A 20th Special Operations Squadron CV-22 Osprey aircrew was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal with Valor Device for a combat rescue mission last year in the US Central Command area of operations.

Pilots Capt. Jonathan D. Seagle and Capt. John F. Vandenbenden and flight engineers SSgt. Spencer J. Seymore and SSgt. Daniel J. Teel were decorated by Air Force Special Operations Command boss Lt. Gen. Bradley A. Heithold in a ceremony at Cannon AFB, N.M., Oct. 16, according to an Oct. 22 release.

On Dec. 5, 2014, the crew—on a “presidentially directed” nighttime mission—responded to an urgent evacuation request from special operations forces under intense fire. The crew successfully maneuvered the tilt-rotor aircraft into a

Up, Up, and Away: An unmanned US Army surveillance blimp drags a tether line as it floats through the air south of Millville, Pa., on Oct. 28. The huge helium-filled blimp broke from its mooring in Maryland and drifted, tracked by two fighter jets, across rural Pennsylvania for hours, finally coming down near Muncy.

severely restricted landing zone with minimal visibility, during an ongoing firefight in a “dangerous insurgent-held village,” according to two of the citations.

Seymore exited the CV-22 despite enemy fire to assist in loading the critically injured special operations troops. The

KC-46 Tests Boom and Drogue

The first Boeing KC-46A Pegasus tanker fully equipped with refueling gear extended both its boom-type and probe-and-drogue-type equipment in two separate test flights conducted in early October, according to the Air Force.

Drogue hoses and baskets—needed to refuel Navy, Marine Corps, and many types of allied aircraft—were deployed from the centerline and wing pod stations during an Oct. 8 flight, and the flying boom was extended on a flight the next day. The flights were, respectively, the third and fourth for the prototype tanker, which made its first flight Sept. 25.

Air Force tanker Program Executive Officer Brig. Gen. Duke Z. Richardson, in a statement, said the tests signal “real progress” toward the goal of demonstrating in-flight refueling. Such a test, likely with an F-16, is tentatively scheduled for late this month or early next year, a Boeing spokesman said.

The boom is to be capable of passing 1,200 gallons per minute of fuel, whereas the drogue systems on the KC-46 are to be able to pass 400 gallons per minute. The KC-46 is designed to refuel one boom-type aircraft or up to three drogue-type aircraft at a time.

USAF photo by SSgt. Jarad A. Denton



Those Who Gave All: USAF Lt. Gen. Timothy Ray (l) and CMSgt. Kaleth Wright (r) gaze across rows of white cross grave markers after a Veterans Day ceremony at Cambridge American Cemetery, UK, Nov. 11. The remains of 3,812 Americans killed during World War II are interred there.

crew flew low-altitude evasive maneuvers to safely exfiltrate the area and flew the casualties for medical treatment aboard a Navy vessel.

The unplanned landing was the CV-22's first combat ship-board operation, according to Cannon officials.

Whiteman, Malmstrom Tops in Global Strike Challenge

Air Force Global Strike Command named the top bomber and ICBM wings during a ceremony marking the conclusion of the annual Global Strike Challenge at Barksdale AFB, La.

The 509th Bomb Wing from Whiteman AFB, Mo., and the Missouri Air National Guard's 131st Bomb Wing took home the Fairchild Trophy for best bomb wing for the fourth time since the competition began in 2010. The 341st Missile Wing at Malmstrom AFB, Mont., claimed the Blanchard Trophy for the best ICBM wing for the first time as part of the Global Strike Challenge. The wing last won the trophy in 2008 during Air Force Space Command's Guardian Challenge, a wing spokeswoman told *Air Force Magazine*.

Airmen from AFGSC's nine wings participated in the 2015 challenge along with units from Air Combat Command, the Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve Command.

McCain Slams USAF for OCX Delays

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) slammed the Air Force for the delays and cost growth of its ground-based satellite control system. The

system, known as OCX, is a critical part of the Air Force's next generation Global Positioning System.

In a new report in his "America's Most Wasted: Indefensible" series, McCain said modernizing GPS technology is so critical, "we can't afford to get it wrong." The report notes that because of poor contractor performance and weaknesses in the Pentagon's acquisition and software development practices, OCX will likely be delivered four years late and cost more than twice the price estimated in 2010.

Keeping the A-10 Fight Alive

Ten senators, including Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman John McCain (R-Ariz.), penned a letter to Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James on Oct. 9 criticizing the Air Force for what they called a "gradual backdoor divestment" of the A-10 fleet, which they said is "inconsistent with congressional intent."

A-10 depot-level maintenance funding has dropped 40 percent from Fiscal 2014 to Fiscal 2015, from \$79.4 million to \$47.5 million, stated the letter.

"This dramatic cut in the Air Force's support for A-10 depot-level maintenance has created an A-10 readiness deficit that endangers the Air Force's ability to provide a sufficient number of deployable A-10s to meet combatant commander requirements," according to the letter.

Rep. Martha McSally (R-Ariz.), a retired Air Force colonel and A-10 pilot, said troops on the ground "will die" if the A-10 is retired.

The War on Terrorism

US Central Command operations: Freedom's Sentinel and Inherent Resolve

Casualties

By Nov. 16, a total of 15 Americans had died in Operation Freedom's Sentinel in Afghanistan, and a total of 10 Americans had died in Operation Inherent Resolve.

The total includes 25 troops and one Department of Defense civilian. Of these deaths, six were killed in action with the enemy while 19 died in noncombat incidents.

There have been 63 troops wounded in action during OFS and five troops in OIR.

Senators Push for Syria No-Fly Zone

Members of the Senate Armed Services Committee on Oct. 27 expressed their frustration that the US has not enacted a no-fly zone in Syria to stop the regime of President Bashar al-Assad from using barrel bombs and to protect coalition-supported forces from Russian air strikes.

"This is not only harmful to our interests, it is immoral," said Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), the committee chairman, at a hearing on Capitol Hill.

Joint Chiefs Chairman Marine Corps Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr. said the US is still supporting the troops it previously trained, and that the US has the capability to defend other coalition-supported troops if they are attacked by the Russians.

Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter said the US does not have "a concept of operations for a no-fly zone at this time," but said there is a "moral obligation" to support the

troops that went through the train and equip program. But McCain said Carter was making "a distinction without a difference." He added, "These are American-supported and coalition-supported men who are going in and being slaughtered."

Sen. Joe Donnelly (D-Ind.) also asked Carter why the US is "unwilling to send a message to Assad that if he continues with barrel bombing, we will stop him and crater his runways." Carter said the US has not "taken that step" to engage with the Syrian military. "Our priority has been to combat [ISIS]," Carter said.

F-16 Hit by Small-Arms Fire in Afghanistan

A US F-16 on Oct. 13 was hit by small-arms fire during a mission in Afghanistan, forcing the pilot to jettison two fuel tanks and three weapons before returning to base, Pentagon spokesman Navy Capt. Jeff Davis said.

The jet was hit in a stabilizer of one of its munitions during a low-level flight, he added. It was flying in the Sayid Karam district of eastern Paktia province, an area largely under Taliban control, reported Agence France-Presse.

Militants posted pictures online posing with the discarded fuel tanks and weapons. Initial reports ruled out any larger weaponry, such as surface-to-air missiles, involved in the incident, Davis said.

A contingent of F-16s from Aviano AB, Italy, are assigned to the 555th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.

"It is simply unacceptable that the American taxpayer is now on the hook for an additional \$1.1 billion because the Air Force continues to bungle the development" of OCX, he said.

Matthew Gilligan, vice president of navigation and environmental solutions at Raytheon, said in a statement emailed to *Air Force Magazine* that the OCX program "is on a strong foundation," in spite of past challenges.

US Deploys Troops to Cameroon

The US is deploying up to 300 military personnel to conduct airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance in Cameroon to help African troops fight the terrorist group Boko Haram, President Obama said in an Oct. 14 letter to Congress.

The initial group of 90 troops began deploying Oct. 12 to the country following an agreement with the government of Cameroon. "These forces are equipped with weapons for the purpose of providing their own force protection and security, and they will remain in Cameroon until their support is no longer needed," Obama wrote in the letter.

The deployment to an undisclosed "expeditionary contingency support location" will be temporary, Defense Department spokeswoman Army Lt. Col. Michelle L. Baldanza told *Air Force Magazine*. The ISR flights will help African partners secure their borders, and the information collected from the unarmed remotely piloted aircraft will support counter-extremist operations.

Airmen March Honored Fallen Brothers

Twenty special tactics airmen marched a combined 812

miles over the course of 10 days in October in memory of two of their comrades who were killed in an insider attack in Afghanistan.

Capt. Matthew D. Roland and SSgt. Forrest B. Sibley died from injuries sustained in an attack by two men dressed in Afghan security forces uniforms at a forward operating base in Helmand province on Aug. 25.

The continuous relay began Oct. 4 at JBSA-Lackland, Texas, with each two-man team walking about 12.6 miles per leg, carrying a 50-pound rucksack and baton engraved with the name of one of the two fallen airmen, according to a press release.

By the Numbers

50

Tons of small-arms ammunition Air Force C-17s air-dropped to a newly vetted group of moderate Syrian rebels on Oct. 11. The airdrop was the first step in a new approach to training and equipping US-approved fighters in Syria and included 100 bundles of ammunition, such as machine gun rounds, mortars, hand grenades, and rocket-propelled grenades.

The group ended the march together, walking the final mile from Hurlburt Field's front gate with Sibley's and Roland's friends and family. The first memorial march was in 2009, to honor SSgt. Tim Davis, who was killed by an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan.

Scientific Advisory Board Unveils 2016 Studies

The Air Force Scientific Advisory Board on Oct. 9 unveiled its studies for 2016, focusing on directed energy, anti-access, area-denial operations, data analytics to support decision-making, and responding to uncertain and adaptive threats in electronic warfare.

The board, led by former USAF chief scientist Werner J. A. Dahm, will first meet in January and finalize its reports in June. The board's quick-look study on directed energy, determining whether a laser-equipped AC-130J is feasible, will finish in April, Dahm said.

For the long-term studies, the study of data analytics will examine whether the service can use industry's lessons learned on challenges with multisource data and multiple classification levels. The board will examine machine-learning techniques for aircraft to probe, sense, and respond to adaptive electronic threats. The Air Force has had to develop responses to electronic warfare to be uploaded to a platform, but future threats could force aircraft to "change their waveforms on the fly," Dahm said.

Lastly, the study of command and control in an A2/AD environment will focus on ways for the Air Force to map a battlespace from afar using emerging technologies such as over-the-horizon radar and uniting pictures from disparate sources of legacy aircraft.

Preventing Suicide in the Total Force

The service is still working on a comprehensive review of its suicide prevention strategy, the Air Force surgeon general told a congressional panel Oct. 8.

Last year, 62 Active Duty airmen died by suicide, up from 48 in 2013, according to a report released this month by the


Department of Defense. Thirty-one Active Duty airmen had died by suicide as of early October 2015, according to the report. Two Air Force Reservists and 13 members of the Air National Guard committed suicide during that time period.

The comprehensive review launched by Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. Mark A. Welsh III in April included a prevention summit. It took place in September and produced recommendations for refreshing strategy and building action plans.

Boeing To Overhaul ICBM Testing

The Air Force awarded Boeing \$110 million for an overhaul of the Minuteman III ICBM flight test system. Under the contract, announced Oct. 2, Boeing will redesign the flight telemetry and termination system for the Minuteman III fleet, with work set to be completed by Aug. 31, 2019.

Work begins with almost \$5 million in research, development, test, and evaluation Fiscal 2015 funding and takes place at Boeing facilities near Hill AFB, Utah, along with sites in California and Ohio.

The Air Force periodically test launches unarmed Minuteman III ICBMs from its range at Vandenberg AFB, Calif., to ensure the fleet stays reliable. 

Senior Staff Changes

RETIREMENTS: Maj. Gen. H. Brent **Baker Sr.**, Maj. Gen. Scott M. **Hanson**, Maj. Gen. Randy A. **Kee**.

CONFIRMATIONS: To be ANG Major General: Stephen E. **Markovich**. **To be ANG Brigadier General:** Michael E. **Flanagan**, Timothy J. **LaBarge**, Howard P. **Purcell**, Philip R. **Sheridan**, David W. **Silva II**, Allan L. **Swartzmiller**, Thomas K. **Wark**.

CHANGE: Maj. Gen. Sandra E. **Finan**, from Spec. Asst. to the Asst. C/S, Strat. Deterrence & Nuclear Integration, USAF, Pentagon, to Dep. Chief. Info. Officer, C4 & Info. Infrastructure Capabilities, DOD, Chief Info. Officer, Pentagon.

COMMAND CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT CHANGE: CMSgt. Anthony W. **Johnson**, from Command Chief, 31st FW, USAFE, Aviano AB, Italy, to Command Chief, 7th AF, PACAF, Osan AB, South Korea.

SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE CHANGES: Paul **Antonik**, to Chief Scientist, Info. Directorate, AFRL, AFMC, Rome, N.Y. ... David H. **Dentino**, to Dir., Instl. Spt., AF Instl. & Mission Spt. Center, AFMC, JBSA-Lackland, Texas ... Gail P. **Forest**, to Dir., Engineering & Tech. Mgmt. Directorate, AFMC, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... Robert T. **Marlin**, to Tech. Advisor, Mil. Intel. Prgm. Resources, ISR Resources Directorate, DCS, ISR, USAF, Washington, D.C. ... Michael D. **Petersen**, to Asst. Auditor Gen., Acq., Log., & Financial Audits, AF Audit Agency, Office of the Auditor Gen. of the AF, OSAF, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio ... Susan J. **Thornton**, to Dir., Info. Dominance Prgrms. Directorate, Office of Asst. SECAF, Acq., Washington, D.C.

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Encouraging Competition in Space

The Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center is working with SpaceX and United Launch Alliance to make sure both can bid on the first competitive national security space launch.

Claire Leon, director of the SMC's launch enterprise directorate, told reporters in a conference call that the center is "actively working with SpaceX to add the ... Falcon upgrade to the list of certified products," and is working with ULA to make sure they can bid despite bans on the use of Russian rocket engines.

"It is critical to the Air Force that we get more than one bidder," Leon said, noting that language in the proposed National Defense Authorization Act would allow ULA to use four Russian engines, and if that is not approved, they could pursue a national security waiver.

The Air Force in September released the final request for proposals for GPS III launch services; it is to be the first of nine competitive launch services under the Phase 1A procurement strategy. Leon said the Air Force's priorities, both mandated by law, are maintaining resilience in launch capability and "supporting competition where it credibly exists."