

## ★ screenshot



12.07.2015

*A USAF F-22, French air force Rafale, and a British RAF Typhoon fly in formation during an exercise at JB Langley-Eustice, Va., in early December. The exercise simulated a highly contested, degraded, and operationally limited environment such as in a conflict with advanced nations like Russia and China, so US and partner nation pilots and ground personnel could test their readiness.*



### **Combat, Special Ops Roles Opened to Women**

The Pentagon will open all military jobs to women, Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter announced Dec. 3.

“To succeed in our mission of national defense, we cannot afford to cut ourselves off from half the country’s talents and skills,” Carter said in a press conference at the Pentagon. “We have to take full advantage of every individual who can meet our standards.”

The policy excluding women from combat roles was rescinded by then-Defense Secretary Leon E. Panetta in 2013, who directed that all positions be opened to women by Jan. 1, 2016. However, the Secretaries of the Air Force, Army,

and Navy, and the commander of US Special Operations Command were given three years to request exceptions.

Carter said about 10 percent of military jobs are still closed to women. The Marine Corps asked to keep some jobs closed, but Carter said he chose to make a decision that applies across the joint force.

### **Air Force Expands Base Security**

The Air Force has implemented a series of new steps to improve base security following an order from Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter to improve the safety of military facilities after the July shooting at a recruiting center in Chattanooga, Tenn.

USAF photo SrA. Kayla Newman



Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James said the service has increased the number of armed security forces on bases through multiple programs, has expanded force protection measures at off-installation facilities, and is working on a long-term mass notification system, according to a Dec. 3 release.

#### **Air Force Concerned by LRS-B Leaks**

The Air Force is unhappy about information published about the Long-Range Strike Bomber program when Boeing protested the contract award to Northrop Grumman in October.

“We did have a concern about end data that should not have been released,” Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III said at an Atlantic Council event in Washington, D.C., Dec. 1. “It was made known to the press in some way, shape, or form and I think it’s our duty to try and keep the process as pure as we can. And so that’s why the Air Force highlighted that as an issue.”

Welsh was referring to a *Forbes* magazine article claiming that both LRS-B competitors bid about half of what USAF thought the LRS-B would actually cost. William A. LaPlante, then USAF acquisition chief, labored to tell the press that USAF was required by law to factor in historical bomber costs when making LRS-B estimates.





### Study: Air Evacuation Could Worsen TBI

An Air Force-funded study conducted by the University of Maryland School of Medicine found that immediately evacuating patients by air to hospitals outside of the battle zone could cause “more damage to already injured brains,” according to a Nov. 30 summary of the study.

“This research shows that exposure to reduced barometric pressure, as occurs on military planes used for evacuation, substantially worsens neurological function and increases

**He’s Not Looking So Good:** USAF and Polish aeromedical evacuation personnel discuss the proper treatment of a simulated patient at Ramstein AB, Germany, Dec. 3. USAF specialists showcased their skills for the Polish medical officials to familiarize them with Air Force aeromedical evacuation techniques.

brain cell loss after ... [traumatic brain injury]—even when levels are kept in the normal range,” said lead researcher Alan I. Faden, a Maryland professor specializing in trauma.

He said that the study, published in the *Journal of Neurotrauma*, “suggests that we need to carefully re-evaluate the cost-benefit of air transport in the first days after injury.”

### Protecting LRS-B

Over the next few months, the Air Force needs to “figure out how to live with” significantly less funding in Fiscal 2017, while still looking to protect its major procurement programs—the Long-Range Strike Bomber, the KC-46 tanker, and the F-35, Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James said.

Although budgeters are happy the bipartisan budget deal provides some relief for the next two years, the Pentagon as a whole faces a \$17 billion cut in 2017, James said. Still, USAF is committed to buying the top number in the range of 80 to 100 LRS-Bs the service has repeatedly said is required.

“The number is 100,” James said during a Dec. 2 speech at the National Press Club at Washington, D.C.

The Air Force announced Northrop Grumman won the contract to produce the LRS-B fleet in late October, with a target cost of about \$550 million per aircraft and an initial operational capability goal of the mid-2020s.

### Holloman F-16 Crashes, Pilot Ejects Safely

An F-16C from Holloman AFB, N.M., crashed during a training sortie over the White Sands Missile Range in November, officials announced.

The pilot successfully ejected before the jet impacted rugged terrain approximately 70 miles northwest of the base, near the city of Truth or Consequences, N.M. The 314th Fighter Squadron pilot was rescued in “good condition” and taken to a local medical facility for evaluation after the Nov. 25 incident, according to an Air Education and Training Command update.

The 314th FS stood up as Holloman’s second F-16 training squadron, relocating from Luke AFB, Ariz., to make room for F-35 training there in July. Holloman’s F-16 training squadrons report to the 56th Fighter Wing at Luke.

Loss of the aircraft is pegged at \$25 million and officials are convening an official investigation to determine the cause of the crash, according to the news release.

## Sticker Shock Shouldn't Factor in Number of LRS-Bs

Congress must not let budgetary concerns stand in the way of an adequate Long-Range Strike Bomber fleet, members of Congress said Nov. 17 on Capitol Hill.

"We have to stand firm with the numbers that the academics are telling us they need, the Pentagon is telling us they need, and, actually, the White House agrees that we need," Sen. Heidi Heitkamp (D-N.D.) said at the release of a Mitchell Institute report on the LRS-B.

Retired Lt. Gen. David A. Deptula, dean of AFA's Mitchell Institute, said the requirement for the B-2 fleet began at 132 and was gradually whittled down to just 20 aircraft. "We can't afford to let that happen again" with the LRS-B, he said.

Rep. J. Randy Forbes (R-Va.) said the LRS-B program is at a critical phase, and Congress "can't allow sticker shock to set in."

## Open Mission Systems for F-22 and F-35

Lockheed Martin is eyeing Open Mission Systems capability for the F-22 and F-35 and could begin fielding it in the next five to 10 years, company F-35 Program Manager Jeff Babione said in an interview with *Air Force Magazine*.

OMS will allow upgrades to be installed on the fifth generation jets without the need to change out large elements of internal hardware or cut into their stealthy skins, while also offering an opportunity for contractors with the lowest-cost, best solution improvements to compete for the work.

Both jets were designed in an era when hardware and software were heavily intertwined, and on the F-22 especially, different elements of the system had to be "federated"

## A Little to the Right

Retiring the A-10 Warthog attack jet will have to happen, but perhaps not as fast as the Air Force wanted, Air Combat Command chief Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle said Nov. 9.

Speaking with defense reporters in Washington, D.C., Carlisle said he'll use the A-10 as long as it's in the inventory—hence the deployment to Incirlik AB, Turkey, for the anti-ISIS fight—but delays in getting the F-35 may cause the Air Force to hold onto the A-10s a little longer.

The "majority" of A-10 retirements would move "two to three years to the right," but USAF would want to do some retirements "early," as now planned, because the service wants to retain the F-16s coming out of Hill AFB, Utah, to make room for the F-35. Some A-10 units would have to go to free up room for those F-16s.

Carlisle told reporters afterward that finding sufficient maintainers for the F-35 remains a "critical problem." USAF has looked at "contract maintenance" as a way to address "some" of the issue, as well as ways to improve retention, but there are "additive squadrons" with the F-35 buy that could lead to a maintainer deficit.

**Down Under, Up Over:** Australian Army Cpl. Teome Matamua and Sgt. Phillip McIlvaney watch a bundle of supplies drop from a C-130 to the Pacific island of Mogmog in the Marianas during Operation Christmas. Australian and Japanese airmen joined USAF airmen for the first time supporting the mission dropping critical supplies to the region. Operation Christmas is in its 64th year.



USAF photo by SSGT. Katrina M. Brislin



on a master processor to achieve sensor fusion. OMS will help speed upgrades to stay ahead of competitors rapidly catching up.

### **European-Based CSAR Shifting to Aviano**

The Air Force is moving its European-based combat search and rescue capability from RAF Lakenheath, UK, to Aviano AB, Italy, to more quickly respond to needs across Europe, Africa, and Southwest Asia.

HH-60 Pave Hawks of the 56th Rescue Squadron and Guardian Angels of the 57th RQS, will relocate to Aviano in 2017, according to a US Air Forces in Europe-Air Forces Africa news release. The shift gives the units greater access to training airspace and opportunities with regional partners and allies, according to the release.

USAFE-AFAFRICA announced earlier this year that it is also moving CV-22s and MC-130s of the 352nd Special Operations Wing out of England to Spangdahlem AB, Germany, as part of an overall infrastructure review. During the same review, leaders identified Aviano as having excess capacity, making it the ideal site to absorb the five HH-60s and some 350 pilots, maintainers, Guardian Angels, and support personnel currently at Lakenheath, according to a second release.

### **First AC-130J Prototype Declared Loss**

Investigators declared the first prototype AC-130J Ghost Rider gunship a total loss after the airframe was severely overstressed departing controlled flight during a test sortie from Eglin AFB, Fla., officials announced.

As a result of the incident, the mishap aircraft “exceeded its design limit load (DLL) to an extent that rendered it unsafe for flight and is considered a total loss to the Air Force,” according to Air Force Materiel Command’s Accident Investigation Board report, released on Nov. 6.

The crew was performing a high-angle sideslip 47 miles south of Eglin during handling tests of the developmental gunship when the aircraft departed controlled flight at 15,000 feet altitude over the Gulf of Mexico, according to the AIB. The AC-130J tumbled inverted before test pilots were able to recover controlled flight, entering a vertical dive, on April 21. The aircraft lost 5,000 feet altitude, pulled 3.19 Gs, and oversped the flaps’ maximum allowed airspeed by 100 knots (115 mph) before returning to level flight.

The AIB determined the pilot’s excessive rudder input and failure to quickly recover from uncontrolled flight were the primary causes of the mishap. Problems with the aircraft’s warning system, pilot disorientation, confusion from being hit with unsecured equipment, and inadequate technical guidance contributed to the mishap.

The aircraft, serial No. 09-5710, also suffered a similar incident in February and has been grounded since the April mishap. A second AC-130J prototype was delivered to commence operational testing at nearby Hurlburt Field, Fla., in July.

Loss of the aircraft is estimated at \$115.6 million.

### **High-End Fight Comes to Langley**

F-22s launched a high-end anti-access, area-denial integration exercise with British and French fighters at JB Langley-

## **The War on Terrorism**

### **US Central Command Operations: Freedom’s Sentinel and Inherent Resolve**

#### **Casualties**

By December 17, a total of 15 Americans had died in Operation Freedom’s Sentinel in Afghanistan, and a total of 11 Americans had died in Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq and Syria.

The total includes 25 troops and one Department of Defense civilian.

There have been five troops wounded in action during OIR and 68 troops in OFS.

#### **Pilots Awarded Mackay Trophy for Sinjar Flight**

Two F-16 pilots who flew an eight-hour night operation to break an ISIS assault on tens of thousands of stranded Yazidi civilians in August 2014 have made the “most meritorious” flight of that year.

The pilots, Capt. Gregory R. Balzhiser and Capt. David A. Kroontje, were awarded the Mackay Trophy for 2014 on Dec. 3 by the National Aeronautic Association during a ceremony in Arlington, Va.

Both deployed with the 13th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron from Misawa AB, Japan, and made up Ironhand Flight 41. They were called on to provide air support to protect 40,000 Yazidi civilians trapped on Mount Sinjar.

They flew four attacks during the mission, killing ISIS fighters and destroying ISIS blockades, armored vehicles, and an

observation post. The attacks helped Peshmerga forces the next day set up a safe egress corridor from Mount Sinjar.

#### **Human Error Blamed for Deadly Hospital Attack**

The air strike that destroyed a Doctors Without Borders hospital in Kunduz, Afghanistan, in October was a “tragic but avoidable accident caused primarily by human error,” Army Gen. John F. Campbell, commander of US forces in Afghanistan, told reporters on Nov. 25.

The US investigation into the strike found that human error, compounded by systems and procedural failures, led an AC-130 crew to strike the hospital instead of a different building where there had been reports of combatants, Campbell said.

Thirty staff, patients, and assistants were killed, and 37 more were injured in the strike, the investigation found.

#### **Reaper Crashes in Afghanistan**

An MQ-9 Reaper crashed during a combat sortie near Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, on Nov. 24. The remotely piloted aircraft was assigned to the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing and launched from Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, according to a wing press release.

The aircraft went down in a remote area away from any civilian population centers and it was a total loss,

**Going Cold Turkey:** An F-15E on the flight line at Incirlik AB, Turkey. USAF Strike Eagles deployed to Incirlik to aid in the fight against ISIS in Iraq and Syria as part of Operation Inherent Resolve. Six F-15Es arrived at Incirlik from RAF Lakenheath, UK, in November.



455th AEW spokesman Capt. Bryan Bouchard told *Stars and Stripes*. “The munitions onboard were also destroyed with the aircraft,” he said.

The crash was not caused by enemy fire, and the RPA was obliterated to the point that the Air Force did not attempt to secure the crash site, according to the press. The cause of the crash is under investigation.

#### **Airmen Integral Part of Expeditionary Targeting Force**

Airmen will be “front and center” in the deployment of special operations teams to Iraq, service Secretary Deborah Lee James said on Dec. 2.

The teams, dubbed the “expeditionary targeting force,” will be made up of about 100 troops and will “assist the Iraqi army and Kurdish Peshmerga to put even more pressure on ISIL,” Operation Inherent Resolve spokesman Army Col. Steve Warren said. The force’s special operators will conduct raids, free hostages, gather intelligence, and capture ISIS leaders, Warren said.

Air Force mobility forces will bring the troops to the fight, and battlefield airmen—such as combat controllers and pararescuemen—will be a part of the special operations teams. Air Force combat search and rescue crews also will provide support, James said during a speech at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.

#### **Investigation Finds Civilian Casualties in Air Strike**

A US Central Command investigation determined an Air Force jet likely killed four civilians during a March air strike on an ISIS checkpoint in Iraq.

A redacted “15-6” investigation, released Nov. 20, states that an A-10 was tasked with striking an ISIS checkpoint on March 13 near al Hatra.

Before the strike, two vehicles pulled up to the checkpoint and parked in the target area. The drivers left their cars and spoke with ISIS members for about 40 minutes while other cars drove through. Staff in the Combined Air Operations Center watched the target, determined new cars were ISIS targets, and decided to continue with the mission.

After the A-10 fired its weapon, four individuals left the vehicles. The strike hit its target and destroyed the cars—killing the individuals. US Central Command spokesman Col. Patrick Ryder said the pilots were not aware of the individuals until after the weapon was fired. He said if the pilot and staff in the CAOC had known, they would not have conducted the strike.

An Iraqi citizen whose car was destroyed notified CENTCOM of the casualties, passing the message through a non-governmental organization. The civilians killed were not family members, so no payments have been made, and the Foreign Claims Act of 1942 prohibits the military from compensating for destroyed property, Ryder said.

**Senior Staff Changes**

**RETIREMENTS:** Lt. Gen. Douglas J. **Robb**, Maj. Gen. Kelly K. **McKeague**, Brig. Gen. Bobby V. **Page**.

**CONFIRMATION: To be ANG Brigadier General:** Robert J. **Becklund**.

**NOMINATIONS: To be Lieutenant General:** John D. **Bansemer**. **To be Brigadier General:** Kenneth T. **Bibb Jr.**, Angela M. **Cadwell**, Martin A. **Chapin**, James R. **Cluff**, Charles S. **Corcoran**, James H. **Dienst**, John J. **Dego**, Sean M. **Farrell**, Chad P. **Franks**, Alexis G. **Grynkewich**, Timothy D. **Haugh**, Christopher D. **Hill**, Eric T. **Hill**, Samuel C. **Hinote**, William G. **Holt II**, Linda S. **Hurry**, Matthew C. **Isler**, Kyle J. **Kremer**, Mark A. **Koeniger**, John C. **Kubinec**, Douglas K. **Lamberth**, Lance K. **Landrum**, Jeannie M. **Leavitt**, William J. **Liquori Jr.**, Michael J. **Lutton**, Corey J. **Martin**, Tom D. **Miller**, Richard G. **Moore Jr.**, James D. **Peccia III**, Heather L. **Pringle**, Michael J. **Schmidt**, James R. **Sears Jr.**, Daniel L. **Simpson**, Mark H. **Slocum**, Robert S. **Spalding III**, William A. **Spangenthal**, Edward W. **Thomas Jr.**, John T. **Wilcox II**, Michael P. **Winkler**.

**To be ANG Major General:** Robert C. **Bolton**, Charles W. **Chappuis Jr.**, Dawne L. **Deskins**, Timothy L. **Frye**, Paul D. **Jacobs**, Mark E. **Jannitto**, Edward P. **Maxwell**, Ronald W. **Solberg**, James K. **Vogel**, William L. **Welsh**, Wayne A. **Zimmet**. **To be ANG Brigadier General:** David M. **Bakos**, Vance C. **Bateman**, Sandra L. **Best**, Jeffrey C. **Bozard**, Todd M. **Branden**, William D. **Bunch**, Rafael **Carrero**, Larry K. **Clark**, Kevin D. **Clotfelter**, Marshall C. **Collins**, James N. **Cox**, Jason R. **Cripps**, Mark A. **Crosby**, Christopher S. **Croxton**, Francis N. **Detor**, Ruben **Fernandez-Vera**, John T. **Ferry**, John

E. **Flowers**, Michael J. **Francis**, Vincent R. **Franklin**, Clay L. **Garrison**, Blake A. **Gettys**, Kevin J. **Heer**, Dana A. **Hessheimer**, Gene W. **Hughes Jr.**, Clifford N. **James**, James T. **Johnson**, Gregory F. **Jones**, Marshall L. **Kjelvik**, James R. **Kriesel**, Ronald S. **Lambe**, Scott M. **Lockwood**, Andrew J. **MacDonald**, Stephen J. **Maher**, Matthew J. **Manifold**, Karen E. **Mansfield**, Maren **McAvoy**, Gregory S. **McCreary**, Stephen B. **Mehring**, Jessica **Meyeraan**, Billy M. **Nabors**, Jeffrey L. **Newton**, Peter **Nezamis**, Patrick R. **Renwick**, Stephen M. **Ryan**, Fermin A. **Rubio**, Peter R. **Schneider**, Gregory N. **Schnulo**, Greg A. **Semmel**, Ray M. **Shepard**, Marc A. **Sicard**, Paul R. **Silvestri**, Christopher A. **Stratmann**, Peter F. **Sullivan Jr.**, Tami S. **Thompson**, Joseph B. **Wilson**, Gregory S. **Woodrow**.

**To be AFRC Brigadier General:** Lee Ann T. **Bennett**, Patricia N. **Beyer**, Richard M. **Casto**, Jonathan M. **Ellis**, James J. **Fontanella**, John P. **Healy**, Daniel J. **Heires**, Robert A. **Huston**, William R. **Kountz Jr.**, Christopher W. **Lentz**, Albert V. **Lupenski**, Russell A. **Muncy**, Tyler D. **Otten**, Russell P. **Reimer**, Harold E. **Rogers Jr.**, Tracey A. **Siems**.

**CHANGE:** Lt. Gen. (sel.) John D. **Bansemer**, from Dep. Chief, Central Security Service, NSA, Ft. Meade, Md., to Asst. Dir. of Natl. Intel. for Partner Engagement, Office of the Dir., of Natl. Intel., Washington, D.C.

**SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE CHANGE:** Christopher **Kapellas**, to Dir., Human Resources, Washington Headquarters Svcs., Washington, D.C. ☆

Eustis, Va., on Dec. 2.

Eight Royal Air Force Typhoon FGR-4s, and six French air force Rafale fighters will join the 1st Fighter Wing Raptors, squaring off against F-15Es and T-38s during the three-week exercise.

“The RAF and [French air force] are our vital strategic partners and allies in the current fight against extremism, and will be in any foreseeable future conflict,” 1st FW Commander Col. Pete M. Fesler said in a press release.

Some 500 multinational personnel took part in the exer-

cise Dec. 2-18, marking the first time the three air forces’ topline fighters have gathered for a single exercise, according to Langley.

**Big League Honors, Big Price Tag**

The Air Force and other military services have paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to professional sports teams for tickets, recognition, and the opportunity to perform flag details and on-field swearing-in ceremonies, according to a new report released by Sens. John McCain and Jeff Flake (both R-Ariz.).

The report, called “Tackling Paid Patriotism,” details how the Air Force and other services entered into contracts with baseball, football, basketball, hockey, and soccer teams, as well as NASCAR, and some of the things those contracts paid for. For example, the Air Force paid the Mets \$51,000, including \$10,000 for the opportunity to perform an on-field swearing-in ceremony in Fiscal 2014, according to the report. ☆

**By the Numbers**

**1,763**

The number of F-35As the Air Force wants to buy. That number is good—for now, Air Combat Command chief Gen. Herbert J. “Hawk” Carlisle said. The Air Force is not ignoring Congress’ request for an updated assessment of how many F-35s the service needs, but delays that have been pushing the buy “to the right” may ultimately affect how many are bought, he noted. “As we look to the future and what we’re going to do, I think there is a decision to be made on how many F-35s we’re going to buy,” Carlisle said. However, he added, “it’s way too early to make that decision when we’re not even” at the point of declaring initial operational capability yet.

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