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Two Dead in Shooting at Lackland

Lt. Col. William A. Schroeder, commander of the 342nd Training Squadron, and TSgt. Steven D. Bellino, a 342nd Training Squadron student, died in an April 8 shooting at JBSA-Lackland, Texas.

Officials with the Bexar County Sheriff's Office said the shooting appears to have been a murder-suicide. The *San Antonio-Express News* reported that a senior noncommissioned officer was escorting Bellino to a disciplinary hearing when Bellino opened fire on his commander and then shot himself. The senior NCO was not injured, according to the paper.

"I worked closely with Lt. Col. Schroeder, and my wife, Vanessa, and I knew his family. He was an amazing airman, father, and husband," said Brig. Gen. Trent H. Edwards, commander of the 37th Training Wing, in a Facebook post. "Our focus at this time is to take care of Lt. Col. Schroeder's family, who is here in the local area. He leaves behind a wife and two small children.

We will care for and comfort them as best we can. We will also take care of the family members and friends who are grieving the loss of TSgt. Bellino."

The base was locked down after a 911 call about a possible active shooter at the Medina Training Annex at Lackland, and authorities were on the scene within three minutes of the initial call, Brig. Gen. Robert D. LaBrutta, commander of 502nd Air Base Wing and JB San Antonio, told reporters in a press conference at the base.

The bodies of the two airmen were found in an office on the first floor of Forbes Hall, a large building with classrooms, a theater, and office space, LaBrutta said. Two Glock handguns also were found at the scene, he said. Law enforcement swept the building until the scene was declared safe and the fire chief took over, said Lt. Col. Robert Ford, commander of the 802nd Security Forces Squadron.

04.03.2016

Thunderbird pilots perform a knife-edge pass over an F-35A Lightning at Luke AFB, Ariz.

USAF photo by TSgt. Christopher Boltz



FBI Assistant Special Agent in Charge Robert G. Saale said they do not believe the shooting was an act of terrorism. Air Force special investigators are leading the investigation with support from the FBI.

B-52s Join ISIS Fight

Several B-52s from Barksdale AFB, La., arrived April 9 at Al Udeid AB, Qatar, for operations in the anti-ISIS campaign.

The deployment marked the first time in 26 years the Stratofortress was to be based in the US Central Command area of responsibility, though the long-range heavy bombers took part in Operation Enduring Freedom in May 2006. B-52s operating out of Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Storm were the last to be based in the AOR, according to an April 9 news release. “The first thing about the B-52 is the historical presence it brings with it. When an enemy sees a B-52 fly overhead it strikes fear

into their hearts, and that’s something that we absolutely want to take advantage of,” said one of the deployed pilots.

The B-52, which can carry about 70,000 pounds of mixed ordnance, can perform a variety of roles, including strategic attack and close air support.

“The B-52 will provide the coalition continued precision and deliver desired airpower effects,” said Air Forces Central Command boss Lt. Gen. Charles Q. Brown Jr. “As a multirole platform, the B-52 offers diverse capabilities, including delivery of precision weapons and the flexibility and endurance needed to support the combatant commanders’ priorities and strengthen the coalition team.”

Eielson To House First Operational OCONUS F-35s

Eielson AFB, Alaska, was chosen as the home base for the Air Force’s first operational F-35A strike fighters outside the contigu-



ous United States, the service announced April 4. The base will get two squadrons of the stealthy fighters.

“Alaska combines a strategically important location with a world-class training environment. Basing the F-35s at Eielson will allow the Air Force the capability of using the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex for large-force exercises using a multitude of ranges and maneuver areas in Alaska,” Secretary of the Air Force Deborah Lee James said in a written press release.

The decision will “double our fifth generation fighter aircraft presence in the Pacific Theater,” noted Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III. Construction on base is slated to begin in Fiscal 2017 and airplanes will begin arriving in 2020, states the release, a slight delay from previous plans.

The service will “slightly” accelerate the arrival of F-35As at Burlington Arpt., Vt., to the fall of 2019, allowing it to stick to its overall F-35 rollout schedule, said Lt. Gen. John B. Cooper, deputy chief of staff for logistics, engineering, and force protection.

Will Boeing Make the Tanker Deadline?

The Defense Contract Management Agency expects Boeing to miss its August 2017 deadline to deliver 18 KC-46A tankers by seven to 14 months, the agency said in a statement to *Air Force Magazine*.

A delay in delivery could mean penalties to Boeing, which is already absorbing more than \$1.5 billion in cost overruns in the program. Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. David L. Goldfein said earlier in March that the KC-46 program was still on track to receive the required amount of aircraft, and the service expected to still reach initial operational capability in 2017.

However, boom trouble has delayed KC-46 tanker refueling trials, reported Flightglobal. A turbulent “bow wave effect” generated when connecting with a C-17 created “higher-than-expected boom axial loads” and prevented the system from passing fuel, according to the April 4 article.

Additional planned boom testing with the C-17 and the A-10 is on hold until a fix is found. “We are working to resolve the issue and will have a better understanding of any program impact shortly,” Boeing spokesman Charles Ramey said April 5. “It’s important to remember that this is a developmental program where issues are discovered and fixed. While we’re working the issue, we continue to conduct other required flight testing.”

He noted the program’s first 767-2C aircraft just recently completed its 100th flight. The Pegasus tanker first successfully refueled an aircraft, the F-16C, using the boom delivery system in January and has successfully refueled a Marine Corps AV-8B Harrier II and a Navy F/A-18C using its hose and drogue system.

ULA Probe Launched

The Department of Defense’s Inspector General is investigating United Launch Alliance’s dealings with the Pentagon, the oversight body said in a March 22 letter. Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter asked for an investigation after Brett Tobey, ULA’s former vice president of engineering, asserted the company refrained from bidding on a request for GPS launch services—in what should have been the first competitive national security space launch—to avoid a cost shoot out.

ULA spokeswoman Jessica Rye told *Air Force Magazine*, the company “is committed to serving all our customers with excellence and transparency. As a part of this commitment we look forward to fully supporting any investigation into launch service procurement to address concerns.” In the IG’s letter—sent to Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James and DOD acquisition chief

Frank Kendall—the IG said it also will probe whether contracts awarded to ULA were done so in accordance with regulations. The investigation will include site visits, interviews, and document review.

Robinson Tapped for NORTHCOM

President Barack Obama has nominated Gen. Lori J. Robinson to serve as the next commander of US Northern Command and NORAD. If confirmed, she will become the first woman to head a US combatant command.

Robinson, who serves as commander of Pacific Air Forces, would replace Adm. William E. Gortney, who has led the command since December 2014. Defense Secretary Ashton B. Carter said Robinson “has very deep operational experience” and is now “running air forces in the Pacific, which is a very challenging place for the Air Force and a very intense operational tempo.”

USAF Assistant Vice Chief Fired for Misconduct

Lt. Gen. John W. Hesterman III, assistant vice chief of staff of the Air Force, was removed from office March 17 after an Air Force Inspector General investigation substantiated misconduct that took place five years ago before he pinned on a third star.

Most of the report’s analysis has been redacted, but the investigation found that “a string of suggestive emails supports the conclusion” that between March 2010 and May 2011, Hesterman “wrongfully engaged in an unprofessional relationship” with an Air Force lieutenant colonel. The investigation also substantiated an allegation that the “inappropriate relationship ... seriously compromised his standing as an officer” and violated Article 133, conduct unbecoming of an officer and gentleman, of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

By the Numbers

\$7.2 Billion

Amount of the Air Force’s unfunded priorities for Fiscal 2017. About \$691 million would go toward buying the five F-35As deferred in its Fiscal 2017 budget request. In addition, \$88 million would pay for updates to F-16s, \$724 million would fund replacement of eight C-130Hs with C-130Js, and \$145 million would help grow the Active Duty force to 321,000. Another \$1.2 billion would go to facilities sustainment, restoration, modernization, and information technology projects.

The War on Terrorism

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

Casualties

As of April 13, 22 Americans had died in Operation Freedom's Sentinel in Afghanistan and 15 Americans had died in Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq and Syria.

The total includes 35 troops and two Department of Defense civilians. Of these deaths, 14 were killed in action with the enemy while 23 died in noncombat incidents.

There have been 100 troops wounded in action during OFS and 13 in OIR.

F-16 Crashes Near Bagram, Pilot Safe

An F-16 assigned to the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing crashed during takeoff March 29 near Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, but the pilot was able to safely eject, according to an Air Force release.

The pilot was recovered and was medically evaluated at Craig Joint Theater Hospital while coalition forces secured the crash site. The cause of the crash has not yet been identified, but officials said enemy fire was not a factor.

F-16s from Bagram provide 24-hour overwatch and close air support for ground troops in Afghanistan. The 421st Fighter Squadron from Hill AFB, Utah, arrived at Bagram in late October for the unit's final F-16 deployment. (The unit is transitioning to the F-35.)

New Medal for OIR Troops

The Defense Department on March 30 announced the creation of the Inherent Resolve Campaign Medal for troops who have contributed in the fight against ISIS in Iraq and Syria; however, many airmen supporting the mission may not be eligible for the new medal and will instead receive the Global War on Terrorism service medal.

The Inherent Resolve Campaign Medal was created by executive order to highlight the service of those fighting ISIS. The medal's criteria only cover those who have served inside Iraq, Syria, or within contiguous airspace or waters extending out to 12 nautical miles. The criteria state that service members are eligible if they were permanently assigned, attached, or detailed for 30 consecutive days or 60 nonconsecutive days to a unit in the area of eligibility; or engaged in combat during an armed engagement; or were killed or wounded and medically evacuated from the area of eligibility.

Aircrew members accrue one day of eligibility for each day they fly into or out of the area. This means a pilot or aircrew deployed to a base such as Incirlik AB, Turkey, or Al Udeid AB, Qatar, flying into the airspace would be eligible for the medal. However, maintenance airmen de-

ployed to the same base and working on the same aircraft would not be eligible, because they did not enter Iraqi or Syrian airspace. These airmen would instead receive the Global War on Terrorism medal.

Return of Lend-Lease

Even though it's short of "preferred munitions" for the war on ISIS, the Air Force is also providing them to its coalition allies in Operation Inherent Resolve, because they're running dry, too, said Lt. Gen. John W. "Jay" Raymond, deputy chief of staff for operations.

Speaking with defense reporters in Washington, D.C., on March 27, Raymond said that "almost 100 percent" of the weapons being used in the anti-ISIS fight are precision guided types—either laser or GPS-guided—and they're being used "in great abundance."

He admitted USAF is "concerned" about its own stockpiles and is looking to "expand the procurement" of PGMs "for future needs," although he insisted USAF has what it needs to accomplish near-term efforts. The issue is one of usage rate versus contractor capacity, he observed.

USAF doubled its previous request for munitions spending in its Fiscal 2017 budget request, emphasizing Hellfire missiles fired from remotely piloted aircraft, JDAM, and laser-JDAM bombs.

Cost Conscious Warhorse

The OV-10G Broncos employed in Inherent Resolve were specifically being evaluated to improve air-to-ground coordination in low-intensity combat.

The six-month deployment tested the upgraded OV-10's ability to "find, fix, and finish" targets while improving "coordination between aircrew and ground commanders," US Central Command spokesman Capt. Bryant Davis told *Air Force Magazine*.

Aircraft such as the B-1B, F-15E, and the Navy's F/A-18 fly these types of missions over Iraq and Syria, but lower-cost aircraft like the Bronco could cut costs and cut wear and tear on "high-end special aviation resources," said Davis.

Two OV-10Gs armed with precision guided munitions completed several months of evaluation in the US before deploying to the Middle East in May 2015. The aircraft returned to Pope Field, N.C., last October and CENTCOM is drafting a report to the Office of the Secretary of Defense Joint Requirements Oversight Council to allow leaders to "determine if this is a valid concept that would be effective in the current battlespace," added Davis.

At the time, Hesterman was serving as the deputy director for politico-military affairs for Europe on the Joint Staff at the Pentagon. Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. David L. Goldfein issued Hesterman a letter of reprimand and removed him from his position as assistant vice chief. Hesterman has requested retirement, but Goldfein "also initiated an officer grade determination process, which is still ongoing," according to a USAF news release.

Needed Nuclear Investment

Even though the Defense Department is looking to double the amount it spends on its nuclear arsenal, the funds must be protected, the head of US Strategic Command said.

The issue isn't if the US can afford keeping a nuclear triad; it's "can we afford not to," STRATCOM chief Adm. Cecil D. Haney said March 11 at a symposium sponsored by AFA, the National Defense Industry Association, and the Reserve Officer Association in Silverdale, Wash.

DOD spends about three percent of its total budget on its nuclear capability, but that number is expected to increase to six or seven percent through 2020 into the 2030s as the Pentagon invests in programs such as the Ground Based Strategic Deterrent and the Navy's Ohio-class nuclear submarine replacement. However, those numbers do not reflect the "conventional piece" on top of that, including human capital and support equipment, said Haney.



USAF photo by Alejandro Peña

The RPA Shortfall

The lack of capacity and undermanning issues in the remotely piloted aircraft enterprise did not develop because of cultural issues between manned and unmanned aircraft, but instead are the result of a dramatic increase in the operational demand without building up the infrastructure for RPAs, the head of Air Combat Command said.

Gen. Herbert J. "Hawk" Carlisle told the Senate Armed Services airland subcommittee the RPA pilot career field is only about 83 percent manned, and the RPA pilots the command does have are only flying operational missions. The Air Force needs to expand its remote pilot training pipeline, and increase the total number of RPA pilots so at least one-quarter of them can be in training as opposed to constantly in combat, Carlisle said.

"We have no dwell in the RPA enterprise," Carlisle said. "Every mission they fly ... is combat." The Air Force is in the process of doubling its RPA classes and expects to train 290 pilots by the end of the year. The long-standing issues came from an increase of RPA flights from seven combat air patrols in 2007 to 65 in 2015, Carlisle said.

The service's MQ-1 Predator and MQ-9 Reaper fleets have flown three million flight hours, 2.8 million of them combat missions, Carlisle said.

F. E. Warren Cops Investigated for Drug Activity

Fourteen enlisted members of the 90th Security Forces Group at F. E. Warren AFB, Wyo., are under investigation for alleged drug activity, the Air Force announced March 18.

The airmen, all security forces airmen ranging from E-2 through E-4, now are involved in an Air Force Office of Special Investigations probe after another airman assigned to the group heard about alleged drug activity and reported it

Only You Can Prevent Simulated Chemical Fires: SSgt. Joe Burns and his working dog, Ciko, participate in K-9 training at JB Elmendorf, Alaska, March 17. Airmen of the 673rd Security Forces Squadron and soldiers of the 549th Military Working Dog Detachment trained jointly on explosive detection of the sort that would be performed in a remote village. The training mimicked what dog handlers and the working dogs may experience while deployed.

to his leadership, Air Force Global Strike Commander Gen. Robin Rand said.

The claims are "credible," and the airmen have been removed from duty, Rand said. The alleged drug activity occurred while the airmen were off duty, though Rand would not say whether it was on or off the base. The airmen are part of the security forces group responsible for both law enforcement on F. E. Warren and security of the ICBMs at silos in Wyoming. Rand said he first heard of the allegations on March 15, and the Air Force decided to announce the investigation later that week.

Small-Scale Space Fence Opens

Lockheed Martin has opened a Space Fence test site in Moorestown, N.J., that will allow for testing of the system's hardware and software while the actual, six-acre site is being built on Kwajalein Atoll in the Pacific Ocean, the company announced.

The Space Fence will use S-band ground-based radar to detect and track objects and debris in space to prevent collisions and will replace the existing Air Force Space Surveillance System.

A scaled-down version of the Space Fence system first tracked a satellite at the end of January, according to an earlier Lockheed news release. Initial operational capability is scheduled for late 2018. 