

Global Reach and Hope for Today & Future Generations

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1/4/2008 - **Scott AFB, Ill.** -- To the Men and Women of Air Mobility Command:

As my first 100 days in command draw to a close, I wanted to take a moment to share my impressions of the outstanding things I have seen and experienced in these few short weeks. Simply put, I am awestruck by the professionalism, dedication and accomplishments of mobility Airmen command-wide, and energized by the opportunities on the horizon.

I've had a chance to spend time at almost every organizational level in the command--beginning with the AMC headquarters staff and ending at the unit level for my KC-10 flight training. Everywhere across the command, the pride and service of the total mobility partnership is humbling. These mobility Airmen -- Active Duty, Reserve, Air National Guard, civilians, family members and industry partners -- truly form a critical part of our championship team.

I saw pride in the eyes of Airmen at the 19th Air Refueling Group's 80th Anniversary Banquet at Robins AFB. As heroes from the "greatest generation" sat side-by-side with today's heroes to celebrate a legacy 20 years older than the Air Force itself, it was a glorious reminder of the combat heritage that forms the foundation of our warfighter ethos. It's the same pride in the eyes of Security Forces NCOs at McGuire AFB as they returned from deployments supporting convoy operations in Iraq. As we fight and win this Global War on Terror, it is the service and sacrifice of those NCOs (and of all Airmen) that not only reinforces our rich warfighting legacy, but also extends it to future generations.

At Charleston AFB and Andrews AFB, mobility Airmen are keeping our sacred promise to the sons and daughters of America and saving lives. By working overtime to ship Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles (MRAPs) to Iraq, the heroes at Charleston AFB are ensuring that our nation's troops have the best armor protection possible as they take the fight to the enemy on their soil. And, at Andrews AFB, aeromedical evacuation professionals work tirelessly to fulfill our moral obligation to provide life-saving airlift and "care in the air" to fellow soldiers, sailors, Airmen and Marines, and return them safely to their loved ones.

Everywhere I visited, the effects of Airmen working together to improve the mobility system was a sight to behold. By refusing to accept inspection checklists for the 60K Tunner loader that took twice as long to complete as the entire pre-flight inspection for C-130s, a command-wide team re-wrote the checklists, cut the timeline by two-thirds, and saved Aerial Port crews one hour of work per shift for every 60K Tunner loader in the entire Air Force. Likewise, from the first transcontinental C-17 flight with alternative fuels to the regionalization of C-5 ISO inspections, mobility Airmen are helping the Air Force transition from foreign to domestic sources of fuel and effectively adding more than two C-5s to our fleet without buying a single aircraft. At every turn, you're making things better. As Airmen, that's what we do, and it has been priceless to see it all in action.

By rallying behind our "Top 3" priorities to fight and win the Global War on Terror, care for Airmen and their families, and recapitalize & modernize our fleet, mobility Airmen are not only providing leading-edge support to our fellow joint warfighters, but you're also ensuring that future generations of Airmen can do the same. I am proud of our current vector, and I want to thank you for your support because in the words of Yogi Berra, "You got to be careful if you don't know where you're going, because you might not get there."

The bottom line is simple. Over the last 100 days, I have seen mobility Airmen providing Global Reach and hope for today and future generations.

You provide the clenched fist of Global Reach for our nation's leaders, and the outstretched hand of hope to those who wear the uniform and to our nation's friends in need. I am confident that with the appropriate national investment today, we will secure the rewards of strategic air mobility for future generations of Americans.

Global Reach and hope for today & future generations: It's what I've seen in the eyes of mobility Airmen over the last 100 days. It's why we're focusing on our "Top 3" priorities. And, it's what's at stake for warfighters today and in the future.