

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

PRESENTATION TO THE MILITARY PERSONNEL SUBCOMMITTEE

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SUBJECT: "EXAMINATION OF CRITERIA FOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS"

**STATEMENT OF: LIEUTENANT GENERAL ROGER A. BRADY
 DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF MANPOWER AND
 PERSONNEL
 UNITED STATES AIR FORCE**

6 DECEMBER 2006

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BY THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
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Mr. Chairman, Dr. Snyder, and members of the committee, thank you for holding this hearing today. We appreciate your interest in an awards process that ensures appropriate and timely recognition commensurate with the service and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform.

There are currently more than 28,500 active duty, reserve and air national guard Airmen deployed around the world supporting Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom, and various other missions in support of combatant commanders. Since October 2001, the Air Force has filled 278, 217 requirements in the CENTCOM AOR . Historically, during time of war the Airmen at risk have been primarily Aircrews. This is no longer the case. We currently have over 5,000 Airmen deployed on the ground in non-traditional roles: convoy escort, detainee duty, interrogations and provincial reconstruction teams are some examples. These are the duties usually referred to as "in-lieu-of," or ILO, taskings. Airmen from a cross-section of all military specialties are providing temporary support of these critical missions. ILO is a prominent demonstration of the flexible and growing contribution of today's Air Force to the combat environment., and many of our awards reflect service in these duties.

In war, our top priorities are to win and to take care of our people. An integral part of taking care of our people is timely and appropriate recognition of our Airmen. To that end, the Air Force awards program fosters morale, mission accomplishment, and esprit de corps by recognizing acts of valor, heroism, and exceptional service and achievement of our Airmen.

Starting with Operation Allied Force, the Air Force began a disciplined, deliberate and expeditious method of awarding appropriate recognition. Since October 2001, the Air Force has awarded 2 Air Force Crosses, 34 Silver Stars, 698 Distinguished Flying Crosses (of which 164 were awarded with valor), and 3,849 Bronze Star Medals (of which 285 were awarded with

valor). It begins with peers, supervisors and commanders who record the facts and make recommendations for awards. The awards are forwarded through the chain of command to the final award authority who, for those awards of the Bronze Star and below, is the Commander of Air Force Forces (COMAFFOR), a Lieutenant General. The COMAFFOR makes decisions regarding awards in consultation with his senior commanders who are mostly colonels and above. Our average processing time for award of the Bronze Star is 116 days, and for all other awards below Bronze Star our average processing time is 81 days. The award of the Air Force Cross, Silver Star, Distinguished Flying Cross and Airman's Medal are forwarded by the COMAFFOR to the Air Force Personnel Council, which acts on behalf of the Secretary of the Air Force and approves or disapproves the recommendations. For medals that meet the Personnel Council, the average processing time for Air Force Crosses is 134 days, Silver Stars 183 days, and Distinguished Flying Crosses, 130 days.

Mr. Chairman, your Air Force's total force--Active Duty, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard-- is a fully-engaged member of an interdependent Joint team fighting the War on Terror. We are absolutely committed to ensuring appropriate recognition is given for the incredible service and sacrifice of America's Airmen. Thank you for the unwavering support you have given to their effort. I look forward to your questions.