

Airmen Killed in Southwest Asia

First Lt. Joseph D. Helton, 24, of Monroe, Ga., died Sept. 8 near Baghdad, Iraq, of wounds suffered when an improvised explosive device went off near his vehicle. He was assigned to the 6th Security Forces Squadron at MacDill AFB, Fla.

Four days later, SSgt. Bryan D. Berky, 25, of Melrose, Fla., died near Bala Baluk, Afghanistan, of wounds he sustained from enemy fire during combat operations. Berky was an explosive ordnance disposal technician who had deployed to

Afghanistan from the 28th Civil Engineer Squadron at Ellsworth AFB, S.D.

Airmen Die on Deployment

SrA. Matthew R. Courtois, 22, of Lucas, Tex., died Sept. 20 in a nonhostile incident on Abdullah Al Mubarak Air Base in Kuwait. TSgt. James R. Hornbarger, 33, of Castle Rock, Wash., died Sept. 12 as a result of a nonhostile incident in the Mediterranean.

Courtois had deployed from the 366th Security Forces Squadron at Mountain

Home AFB, Idaho, to support operations in Iraq. Hornbarger had deployed from the 9th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Beale AFB, Calif., to support Operation Enduring Freedom. As of Oct. 20, the Air Force had not released information on the causes of death for either airman.

Gates Visits F-35 Plant

Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, noting the "huge investment" already made, reaffirmed his strong commitment to the F-35 Lightning II stealth

★ screenshot



10.04.2009

fighter program during his Aug. 31 visit to Lockheed Martin's F-35 assembly plant in Fort Worth, Tex.

"It is the heart of the future of tactical combat aviation for our services. So the importance of this program can hardly be overstated," he told reporters after his site tour. He continued, "I guess I would say my view is we cannot afford, as a nation, not to have this airplane."

Overall, Gates said he was "very impressed" by what he saw during his visit, in terms of the robotics and automation on the F-35 assembly line and, perhaps most especially, the dedication of its workforce. He added that he is "excited" about the program since it appears to have surmounted the high-risk elements associated with its development.

McChrystal Views Air Strike Site

US Army Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal, commander of US and NATO forces in Afghanistan, on Sept. 5 visited the site of the air strike two days earlier in Kunduz province that Afghan officials claim killed numerous civilians in addition to insurgents.

B-1B Crew Wins Mackay Award

The B-1B bomber aircrew Bone 23 is scheduled to receive the prestigious 2008 Mackay Trophy from the National Aeronautic Association on Nov. 2 for its support of ground forces during a July 13, 2008 troops-in-contact situation in Afghanistan.

The crew—Maj. Norman Shelton, Capt. Kaylene Giri, Capt. Louis Heidema, and 1st Lt. Boyd Smith—deployed from the 37th Bomb Squadron at Ellsworth AFB, S.D., was short on fuel but managed to coordinate an aerial refueling that enabled it to make three bomb runs, slowing the attack of a 200-strong enemy force and allowing coalition forces to regroup.

The crew will be presented with the trophy during the NAA fall awards banquet in Arlington, Va. The Mackay Trophy is awarded for the most meritorious flight of the year by an Air Force person, persons, or organization.

In a radio broadcast, McChrystal said, "I take this possible loss of life or injury to innocent Afghans very seriously." He promised a "complete investigation" that he would "share with the Afghan people." Shortly after assuming command in June, McChrystal issued a tactical directive intended to restore emphasis on avoiding civilian casualties.

The German commander who authorized the Sept. 3 strike by a USAF

F-15E initially denied civilians had been in the area where Taliban insurgents had hijacked two fuel trucks; however, according to a Sept. 7 Associated Press report, German officials now say it is likely some civilians died.

New Vice Chief, ACC Boss

Gen. Carrol H. Chandler on Aug. 27 became the vice chief of staff of the Air Force. He assumed USAF's No. 2



USAF photo by SSgt. J. G. Buzanowski

At an unidentified Persian Gulf air base, two USAF airmen prep a U-2S spyplane for imminent takeoff. The aircraft and pilot, Capt. Peter Gryn, were deployed from Beale AFB, Calif., to the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing. U-2s, with a wingspan of 103 feet, can fly above 70,000 feet to provide intelligence-surveillance-reconnaissance data for combatant commanders and individual troops alike. This particular U-2, No. 68-10337, exceeded 25,000 flying hours on a mission flown two weeks after this photo was snapped.

Moseley Disciplined Over TAPS

Gen. T. Michael Moseley, USAF (Ret.), former Air Force Chief of Staff, was given a letter of admonishment by Air Force Secretary Michael B. Donley on Oct. 6. The punishment was administered on the basis of Pentagon inspector general findings that Moseley acted wrongly in the tainted award of the \$50 million Thunderbird Airshow Production Services contract canceled in 2006. Moseley disputed the findings and rejected the IG's conclusions that he did anything wrong.

Moseley will continue to be retired at the four-star rank and loses no retirement benefits.

Moseley wrote a Sept. 28 memo to Donley asserting that the second investigation found no new facts and therefore the punishment was unjustified.

He insisted that over the course of the TAPS contract, his actions were vetted by Air Force lawyers.

"The only guidance I gave anyone during the evolution of this endeavor was to 'Do this right,'" Moseley argued to Donley, rejecting "categorically ... the notion of any wrongdoing" on his part. The monetary value of the gifts Moseley received, he said, "fell well within the allowable standard under the existing regulations."

Moseley asserted that the TAPS investigation "appears to have been politicized," and charged that there was "public pressure brought to bear on the DOD/IG" by members of Congress and their staffs "to continue to vilify senior Air Force leadership and to find some type of wrongdoing on my part."

Donley issued a statement that "Moseley's years of dedicated service temper, but do not excuse, his failure in this case to live up to the well-established standards of conduct expected of all airmen. Everyone is accountable for his or her actions. This is especially so for our senior leaders, who must also create an environment where subordinates respect established standards and are willing to engage when things are not right."

The TAPS contract was meant to create a multimedia, jumbotron-style show to accompany demonstrations by the Thunderbirds aerial demonstration team. In 2006, an internal Air Force review raised questions about how the contract was awarded, and a subsequent Defense Criminal Investigative Service probe found that the contract was "tainted with improper influence, irregular contracting practices, and preferential treatment" for the winning contractor, Strategic Message Solutions, according to a USAF statement. (See "Washington Watch: L'affaire Thunderbird," June 2008, p. 8.)

The initial investigations didn't pin any blame on Moseley, although one Air Force general officer and four other officers received punishment. However, Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.) and Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), the chairman and ranking member, respectively, of the Senate Armed Services Committee, said they wanted closer scrutiny of the role senior serving or retired officers may have played in the affair, and in spring 2008 asked the Pentagon IG to look deeper.

The IG concluded its second probe over the summer, and told Donley that Moseley had "violated well-established standards of conduct in the Joint Ethics Regulation and the Federal Acquisition Regulation. Specifically, he provided preferential treatment" to SMS, "created the appearance of improper disclosure of nonpublic information to Strategic Message Solutions; misused subordinates' time and government property; and solicited a gift and accepted gifts from a prohibited source."

Undecided at the time of the admonishment was whether Moseley can conduct business with the government. At a press conference, Donley said the Navy is conducting an impartial review of the issue. —*John A. Tirpak*

uniformed post after an almost two-year stint as commander of Pacific Air Forces.

Chandler succeeds Gen. William M. Fraser III, who held the vice chief's office since October 2008. Fraser took charge of Air Combat Command, assuming leadership responsibilities on Sept. 10 during a ceremony at Langley AFB, Va.

Fraser replaced Gen. John D. W. Corley, who formally retires Nov. 1. On Aug.

19, Chandler's replacement, Gen. Gary L. North, assumed command at PACAF.

F-35 Basing Criteria Released

The Air Force on Sept. 17 announced the criteria it will use to select the bases that will get the new F-35 Lightning II stealth fighter. The service announced it will factor airspace, flight training ranges, weather, support facilities, runways, taxi

ramps, environmental concerns, and cost factors for the more than 200 sites under consideration.

Then it will look at combatant commander requirements, the service's fighter retirement plan, maintenance and logistics support, and integration with the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve to further refine its lists, producing two candidate lists—one for operational sites and one for training sites.

Then the service will begin environmental impact analyses, at which point communities around the candidate bases will be able to provide their inputs.

In late spring 2010, USAF expects to release its preferred locations. Its record of decision with final basing choices is planned in early 2011.

USAF To Leave RAF Fairford

According to two British news reports in September, the Air Force will draw down its activities at RAF Fairford, Britain, next year, removing all uniformed airmen and some US civilian personnel.

The BBC and the This Is Gloucestershire Web site reported Sept. 15 and Sept. 16, respectively, that the US personnel withdrawal is planned for completion by September 2010. The changes will also cause the loss of jobs for some 100 British citizens employed at the base.

Thereupon, RAF Fairford, which has served as a staging base for B-52 bombers, would be run on a "care and maintenance" basis, but still be available as a NATO standby base and USAF forward operating location capable of reactivation for use within 24 hours to 48 hours, if needed.

New Command Center Running

Air Forces Central has begun operations at the newly constructed combined air and space operations center (CAOC) in Southwest Asia, the command announced Sept. 3. Work to establish the new center started five years ago.

Air Force officials have said this new CAOC, which is located at the same air base in the region as the previous command center, will tremendously enhance the ability of the combined force air component commander to plan and execute the air campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq and the air activities elsewhere in the theater.

"This new facility will bring new technologies and improved working conditions," said Maj. Gen. Stephen L. Hoog, deputy CFACC. It features 160 miles of fiber-optic cable, 2,325 monitors to display air operations, and more than 1,500 nonsecure and secure telephones.

New Sats Monitor Missiles

The Air Force successfully launched the Missile Defense Agency's two Space Tracking and Surveillance System dem-



onstructor satellites into low Earth orbit Sept. 25 from Cape Canaveral AFS, Fla., aboard a United Launch Alliance Delta II rocket.

The sensors aboard the STSS demo spacecraft are expected to detect, track, and discriminate ballistic missiles throughout their trajectories as part of MDA's layered ballistic missile defense system. MDA expects the satellites to remain in orbit for two to four years and pave the way for fielding an operational constellation.

Northrop Grumman built the STSS demo spacecraft. In a Sept. 25 release, Gabe Watson, company vice president and STSS program manager, said he expects the STSS demo to "show the inherent ad-

vantages space sensors bring to persistent missile tracking and engagement."

USAF Proposes Major Cuts

To meet spending caps imposed by the Office of the Secretary of Defense for Fiscal 2011 and beyond, the Air Force has proposed canceling or curtailing some of its major modernization efforts, Bloomberg news wire service reported Sept. 2

Included under the service's budget axe are reportedly the C-130 Avionics Modernization Program and new engines on E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System aircraft, along with new radio systems, communications satellites, Small Diameter Bombs, and Global Hawk Block 40 unmanned reconnaissance aircraft.

Painful Heritage: An Air Force rescue and safety crew inspect the wreckage of a replica of the 1905 Wright Flyer III, which crashed on Huffman Prairie Flying Field at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, on Oct. 1. The pilot and aircraft builder, Mark Dusenberry, was hospitalized with serious injuries.

Citing Air Staff planning documents, Bloomberg said the Air Force's moves were intended to shed \$24.2 billion, or about 3.8 percent of its projected five-year budget, while protecting funding for the F-35, CV-22, and its future KC-X tanker aircraft. The Air Force is not alone, as all of the services have been told by OSD to make cuts in future years.



Bright New Wings: Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz has approved a new set of wings to be given to unmanned aerial vehicle operators. The wings, designed by SSgt. Austin May, were first presented to the graduating Beta class, Creech AFB, Nev., on Sept. 25.

Final F-15s Depart Eglin

The last three F-15s of the 33rd Fighter Wing at Eglin AFB, Fla., were flown Sept. 8 to their final destination in Tucson, Ariz., as part of the wing's transition from an F-15 operational combat unit to a training wing for the new F-35 stealth fighter.

Col. Todd Harmer, 33rd FW commander, flew the wing's flagship aircraft to Tucson, where it, along with the two others, will be placed in storage with the 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group.

"It's bittersweet knowing that once I'm airborne, it's the end of the Eagle's 30-year association with the 33rd Fighter Wing, and the ramp will sit empty until the F-35s arrive next year," said Harmer before the flight. The wing formally switched over to a training unit Oct. 1.

Senate OKs Spending

On Sept. 9, the Senate Appropriations Committee unanimously passed its version of the Fiscal 2010 defense spending bill proposed by its defense panel, which added \$2.5 billion in funds for 10 additional C-17 transport aircraft not requested by the White House but did not fund the F136, the competing engine for the F-35 stealth fighter, per the Pentagon's request.

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Defense Policy Bill Funds Second F-35 Engine

House and Senate defense authorizers agreed in conference in early October to retain a markup in the Fiscal 2010 defense authorization bill that provides \$560 million for the General Electric-Rolls Royce F136 engine, the competing power plant to Pratt & Whitney's F135 for the F-35 Lightning II stealth fighter.

The House passed the conference version of the bill on Oct. 8. The Senate had not voted on it as of midmonth.

The F136 funds, originally added by the House to its version of the bill, would keep the F136 program alive over the objections of the Obama Administration, which wants to terminate it. The Department of Defense has said there is not enough money to pursue both engines and favors the F135 because it is comparatively more mature at this point.

The \$560 million would not come out of DOD's baseline budget request for the F-35, but would be in addition to it, ostensibly not disrupting the fighter's development in Fiscal 2010. Despite that, the Office of the Secretary of Defense said in mid-October it was evaluating the Congressional move and whether to recommend a White House veto of the defense policy bill when it came before President Obama.

"The action taken thus far by the Congress is clearly troubling, but we need to gain a better understanding of its impact," said Pentagon spokesman Geoff Morrell Oct. 14. He said OSD remained committed to ensuring that the F-35 program "is not adversely impacted by pursuing a second engine."

The White House had said earlier in the year that Presidential advisors would likely recommend a veto to the President if the bill contained F136 funding.

Also in October, House and Senate defense appropriators moved into conference to hash out the final version of the Fiscal 2010 defense spending bill. As was the case with the authorization bill, the House funded the F136 in its version of the legislation, while the Senate did not.

Although the bill contained no funds to continue production of the F-22 fighter—just as the House bill did not—the Senators did include a provision to push forward with an export version, urging the Air Force to "start this effort" from within funds appropriated for continued F-22 research and development.

Sen. Daniel K. Inouye (D-Hawaii), SAC chairman, said Sept. 9 he believed that the Department of Defense "will eventually conclude" that buying more C-17s is "the right solution." The House version of the spending bill included money for three C-17s.

The full Senate approved the measure on Oct. 6. House and Senate conferees then had to work out differences before it would be sent to the President.

Space Monitoring Beefed Up

The Joint Space Operations Center at Vandenberg AFB, Calif., is now capable of monitoring all of the more than 800 active maneuverable satellites on orbit to warn of pending collisions with other satellites and known space debris, the Air Force announced Sept. 1.

The center's capacity rose from being able to track 120 satellites to the current figure on Aug. 23, more than one month ahead of its Oct. 1 goal. The US began to place greater emphasis on satellite tracking for impact avoidance following the collision of a commercial Iridium

satellite and inactive Russian military satellite in February.

Since the JSpOC started screening all the satellites, it has warned of six possible collisions. With data provided by the center, the Air Force says satellite operators can safely steer their spacecraft from harm.

Second UAV Training Unit Up

The Air Force's new unmanned aerial vehicle formal training unit at Holloman AFB, N.M., reached initial operational capability with the MQ-1 Predator UAV on Sept. 10.

That moved USAF closer to its goal of shifting all formal training for both the Predator and the MQ-9 Reaper by 2012 from Creech AFB, Nev., to Holloman, where there is room for expansion.

"In the long term, it's going to create a lot more pilots and sensor operators than we would have had at Creech," said Col. Greg Christ, vice commander of the 432nd Wing at Creech, which will continue as the center for UAV combat operations, while Holloman will concentrate on training.

8th Air Force Reorganized

The Air Force's lead organization for nuclear-capable bombers, 8th Air Force at Barksdale AFB, La., shed its nonbomber wings on Oct. 1 as part of its transition to Air Force Global Strike Command by next February and its emerging concentration on the nuclear mission.

The changes left "The Mighty Eighth" with its three bomber wings: Barksdale's 2nd Bomb Wing, a B-52H unit; the 5th Bomb Wing, a B-52H unit, based at Minot AFB, N.D.; and the 509th Bomb Wing, USAF's sole operator of B-2A stealth bombers, at Whiteman AFB, Mo.

The numbered air force's other wings, mostly reconnaissance assets, moved to 12th Air Force and 9th Air Force. They included: the 9th Reconnaissance Wing at Beale AFB, Calif., which flies U-2s; the 55th Wing at Offutt AFB, Neb., an RC-135 Rivet Joint operator; the 116th Air Control Wing at Robins AFB, Ga., USAF's sole E-8C Joint STARS unit; and the 552nd Air Control Wing at Tinker AFB, Okla., an E-3 AWACS organization.

C-5M Claims World Records

A combined flight crew of active duty airmen from the 436th Airlift Wing, Air Force Reservists from the 512th Airlift Wing, and Lockheed Martin personnel likely set 41 world aeronautical records in altitude, payload, and time-to-climb during a one-and-a-half-hour flight of a C-5M Super Galaxy transport aircraft Sept. 13 from Dover AFB, Del.

According to the Air Force and Lockheed Martin, the C-5M climbed to 12,000 meters in less than 28 minutes with a payload of more than 176,000 pounds, breaking seven existing world marks for an aircraft weighing between 250,000 kilograms (551,155 pounds) and 300,000 kilograms (661,386 pounds) held by the C-17 Globemaster III transport and one by the Russian Tupolev Tu-160.

The C-5M also established standards in 33 categories where there had been no previous record attempt. The National Aeronautic Association documented the flight and was expected to certify the records by mid-October.

Reapers Go After Pirates

The US Navy disclosed in late August that it will operate a small contingent of unarmed MQ-9 Reaper unmanned aerial vehicles from the Seychelles islands in the western Indian Ocean to help patrol for pirates threatening sea commerce off the coast of Africa.

This overwater surveillance mission, called Ocean Look, came about at the request of US Africa Command, said Navy spokeswoman Lt. Callie Ferrari. AFRICOM spokesman Vince Crawley said the Reapers deployed for Ocean Look will be "enough to allow one air patrol per day." Unlike Air Force MQ-9s, which carry bombs and missiles, these Reapers will be unarmed.

The Navy will deploy the Reapers from its pool of four MQ-9s that it has been using as flying test-bed platforms for sensor testing and integration out at

The War on Terrorism

Operation Enduring Freedom—Afghanistan

Casualties

By Oct. 16, a total of 869 Americans had died in Operation Enduring Freedom. The total includes 868 troops and one Department of Defense civilian. Of these deaths, 620 were killed in action with the enemy while 249 died in noncombat incidents.

There have been 4,302 troops wounded in action during Operation Enduring Freedom. This number includes 1,688 who were wounded and returned to duty within 72 hours and 2,614 who were unable to return to duty quickly.

Fewer Air Munitions Dropped in 2009

Based on statistics issued by Air Forces Central on Sept. 2, the rate of aircraft munitions usage in Afghanistan began to drop before US Army Gen. Stanley A. McChrystal issued his new tactical directive in early July.

McChrystal took over on June 15 as US and NATO International Security Assistance Force commander, replacing US Army Gen. David D. McKiernan to provide a fresh perspective per Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

The rate of munitions usage dropped by about 30 percent in a comparison of the first eight months of 2009 to the same time period in 2008, but, comparing the month of June alone, the rate was about half what it was last year.

Thus, it seems reasonable to say that US-NATO forces had already begun reducing their calls for air strikes under McKiernan's watch and are continuing to do so under McChrystal.

Predator Takes Out IED

Operators of an MQ-1 Predator remotely piloted vehicle spotted a team of insurgents emplacing an improvised explosive device Sept. 21 in the Sheyhabad area of Afghanistan, according to Air Forces Central.

They then fired a Hellfire missile, "eliminating the IED and the emplacement team," AFCENT said.

Operation Iraqi Freedom—Iraq

Casualties

By Oct. 16, a total of 4,352 Americans had died in Operation Iraqi Freedom. The total includes 4,339 troops and 13 Department of Defense civilians. Of these deaths, 3,474 were killed in action with the enemy while 878 died in noncombat incidents.

There have been 31,529 troops wounded in action during Operation Iraqi Freedom. This number includes 17,652 who were wounded and returned to duty within 72 hours and 13,877 who were unable to return to duty quickly.

US, Iraqi Officials Discuss Ali Base's Future

US Air Force Maj. Gen. Robert C. Kane, director of the Iraqi Training and Advisory Mission-Air Force, and Lt. Gen. Anwar Hamad Amen Ahmed, Iraqi Air Force commander, visited Ali Base, Iraq, on Sept. 24 to conduct a site survey of the airfield and facilities there, and to speak with members of the local media.

According to Air Forces Central, this was the first joint visit by these officials and marked a significant step in providing Iraqi Air Force officials with a better understanding of what assets will be available to support them at Ali Base during the drawdown of US forces there and transition to Iraqi control. Currently, USAF's 407th Air Expeditionary Group runs the base.

"We are working together to ensure the base is transferred smoothly to the Iraqi Air Force according to the security agreement," said Anwar. He added, "We have tremendous support from the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defense, and the US Air Force."

The two generals saw firsthand the ongoing construction projects across the base, including a new air traffic control tower slated for completion next January.

NAS China Lake, Calif. Ferrari said the sea service has no plans at this time to procure additional MQ-9s.

Bronze Star Medals Awarded

Lt. Col. Marc L. Cherry, assigned to 12th

Air Force, received a Bronze Star Medal on Sept. 14 for his meritorious service from July 2008 to July 2009 as deputy director of the combat operations division of the 609th Air and Space Operations Center in Southwest Asia.

Also receiving Bronze Star Medals for service in Iraq were: Capt. Richard S. Glade, 12th Air Force, Sept. 14; CMSgt. Dominick Tallarida, a Reservist assigned to Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C., Aug. 31; MSgt. Joseph Houlihan of Buckley AFB, Colo., Aug. 26; MSgt. Matthew Strube, Buckley, Aug. 26; TSgt. Benjamin Aylward of Malmstrom AFB, Mont., Sept. 10; TSgt. Mark Brady of Andersen AFB, Guam, Aug. 27; and TSgt. David Romanowsky, Buckley, Aug. 26.

Roy Bowden, a civilian mechanic at Robins AFB, Ga., was presented with a Bronze Star Medal on Aug. 21 for his service in Iraq as a Georgia Army National Guard sergeant. And MSgt. Shawn Williams, a senior joint terminal attack controller assigned to Ft. Hood, Tex., received a Bronze Star Medal on Aug. 31 for his actions last year in Afghanistan.

Landing Damages AWACS

An E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft from the 552nd Air Control Wing at Tinker AFB, Okla., was damaged while landing Aug. 28 at Nellis AFB, Nev., while participating in the Red Flag 09-5 air combat training exercise.

The 32-person crew safely evacuated the aircraft, and a subsequent fire was quickly extinguished by emergency response forces, Nellis officials said. The AWACS was returning from a mission when the mishap occurred.

The Air Force said it would convene a board to investigate the incident.

Laser Zaps Ground Target

Boeing said its Advanced Tactical Laser aircraft on Aug. 30 "defeated" a ground vehicle from the air with its high-power chemical laser weapon during a test with the Air Force at White Sands Missile Range, N.M.

The company said this was ATL's first air-to-ground laser engagement of a tactically representative target. "This milestone demonstrates that directed energy weapon systems will transform the battlespace and save lives by giving warfighters a speed-of-light, ultra-precision engagement capability that will dramatically reduce collateral damage," said Greg Hyslop, Boeing Missile Defense Systems general manager.

ATL is a modified C-130H aircraft that fires a powerful laser beam out of a belly turret. Boeing and the Air Force are in the midst of an extended user evaluation of ATL.

Iraqi F-16 Options Weighed

The Air Force is mulling options to provide Iraq with F-16 fighters to protect its airspace by the time of the planned US pullout in 2011.

Reuters news wire service reported Sept. 2 that scenarios, including new-build aircraft and excess-inventory USAF assets, are being explored in an air sovereignty study led by Air Forces Central that

Senior Staff Changes

RETIREMENTS: Gen. John D. W. **Corley**, Lt. Gen. Loyd S. **Utterback**, Brig. Gen. Jimmie C. **Jackson Jr.**, Brig. Gen. Janet Anthea **Therianos**, Brig. Gen. Paula G. **Thornhill**. **AFRC:** Maj. Gen. Clay T. **McCutchan**, Brig. Gen. Michael C. **Dudzik**.

CHANGES: Maj. Gen. Eric E. **Fiel**, from Dir., Ctr. for Force Structure, Rqmts., Resources, & Strat. Assessments, SOCOM, MacDill AFB, Fla., to C/S, SOCOM, MacDill AFB, Fla. ... Brig. Gen. Morris E. **Haase**, from C/S, SOCOM, MacDill AFB, Fla., to Dir., Ctr. for Force Structure, Rqmts., Resources, & Strat. Assessments, SOCOM, MacDill AFB, Fla. ... Lt. Gen. (sel.) Ralph J. **Jodice II**, from Cmdr., AF District of Washington, Andrews AFB, Md., to Cmdr., Allied Air Component Command Headquarters Izmir, USAF, Izmir, Turkey ... Lt. Gen. (sel.) Christopher D. **Miller**, from Spec. Asst. to the Vice C/S, USAF, Pentagon, to the DCS, Strat. P&P, USAF, Pentagon ... Lt. Gen. (sel.) William J. **Rew**, from Dir., Operational Planning, Policy, & Strategy, DCS, Ops., P&R, USAF, Pentagon, to Vice Cmdr., ACC, Langley AFB, Va.

SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE CHANGES: Douglas M. **Bennett**, to Assoc. Dep. Asst. Secy., Financial Ops., Office of the Asst. SECAF, Financial Mgmt. & Comptroller, Pentagon ... William H. **Booth Sr.**, to Dep. Dir., Manpower, Orgn., & Resources, DCS, Manpower, Personnel, & Svcs., USAF, Pentagon ... Robert H. **Chase Jr.**, to Dep. Dir., Ops., Interagency Action Group, CENTCOM, MacDill AFB, Fla. ... Sheila M. **Earle**, to Principal Dep. Asst. SECAF for Manpower & Reserve Affairs, OSAF, Pentagon ... Todd A. **Fore**, to Exec. Dir., AFPC, Randolph AFB, Tex. ... Mark H. **Johnson**, to Dir., Jt. Info. Ops. Ctr., STRATCOM, Lackland AFB, Tex. ... Anthony P. **Reardon**, to Dir. of Staff, LL, OSAF, Washington, D.C. ... Randall G. **Walden**, to Dir., Info. Dominance Prgms., Office of the Asst. SECAF (Acq.), Pentagon ... John A. **Wilcox**, to Chief Info. Officer, SOCOM, MacDill AFB, Fla.

COMMAND CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT CHANGES: Brooke P. **McLean**, to Command Chief Master Sergeant, PACAF, Hickam AFB, Hawaii ... David E. **Spector**, to Command Chief Master Sergeant, AMC, Scott AFB, Ill.

is due for submittal to Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates before year's end. US and Iraqi officials reportedly discussed the fighter issue during Gates' visit to Baghdad in July.

In a related development, the *New York Times* reported Aug. 30 that Iraqi officials have discovered that Iraq owns 19 MiG-21 and MiG-23 fighters that are in storage in Serbia and in need of restoration. They could potentially serve as an interim solution until F-16s are available.

Cyber Building Expands

Air Force officials broke ground Sept. 1 at Hurlburt Field, Fla., on the building expansion project for the 39th Information Operations Squadron, currently USAF's only cyber and IO formal training unit.

The project will add 4,500 square feet to the unit's existing 17,000-square-foot structure. The new facilities will accommodate four additional classrooms, an observation room, and a simulation room.

The 39th IOS is a detached component of the 688th Information Operations Wing at Lackland AFB, Tex. The wing was recently integrated into 24th Air Force, also at Lackland. The new numbered air force under Air Force Space Command that will lead the service's cyber operations.

McGuire Cleanup Agreed

The Air Force and Environmental Protection Agency reached an agreement on the cleanup of the McGuire AFB, N.J., superfund site, EPA announced Sept. 18.

George Pavlou, acting EPA regional administrator, called the agreement "a significant milestone" since the base's inclusion in 1999 on the EPA's National Priorities List of most hazardous waste sites.

Although McGuire, as of Oct. 1, is now part of Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst under the terms of BRAC 2005, the EPA

said the agreement has established "a framework and detailed schedule for developing, implementing, and monitoring appropriate response actions" for McGuire proper. Public comment on the agreement was due to EPA by Nov. 2.

Retired Officer Spy Convicted

A jury on Sept. 25 convicted James W. Fondren Jr., a retired USAF lieutenant colonel and former Pentagon civilian employee, of passing classified information to the Chinese government. He faces up to 20 years in prison when he is sentenced in January.

Fondren, 62, provided the classified information from November 2004 to February 2008 to Tai Shen Kuo, a naturalized US citizen from Taiwan who was a Chinese spy, while Fondren was deputy director of the Washington, D.C., liaison office of US Pacific Command. The trial began Sept. 21 in US District Court in Alexandria, Va.

The Examiner of Washington, D.C., reported Sept. 21 that Kuo was convicted of espionage in 2008, and is serving a 15-year sentence. He was a chief witness against Fondren at the latter's trial, in the hopes of reducing his own prison term, according to the newspaper.

Squadron Deactivation Completed

After nearly two years and more than 29,000 man hours, members of the 341st Maintenance Group at Malmstrom AFB, Mont., on Aug. 23 completed the maintenance tasks associated with the deactivation of the 564th Missile Squadron.

With the US decision, courtesy of the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review, to re-

Final KC-135E Tanker Retired

The Air Force sent the last of its Eisenhower-era KC-135E tanker aircraft into retirement on Sept. 23 when a Maine Air National Guard team flew aircraft No. 56-3630 from the 101st Air Refueling Wing at Bangor to the "Boneyard" at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

There, the 50-plus-year-old aircraft will serve as a parts supplier for the hundreds of slightly younger KC-135R/T models still serving in the fleet. While No. 3630 will not fly again, it could serve "another 15 to 20 years as we harvest parts off it," explained Col. Tom Schneider, 309th AMARG commander.

Aircraft No. 56-3630 spent the past 20 years with the Maine Air Guard, and, in its heyday, it set a speed record, flying from New York to London and back in 12 hours.

"We are proud of the heritage of this aircraft," said Col. John Thomas, commander of ANG's 101st Maintenance Group. He added, "This aircraft was delivered to the active duty in 1958 and has served through the Cold War, went to Vietnam a couple of times, and served in the current contingencies."

The Air Force began retiring the E models, which were built from 1956 to 1961, in 2004. A total of 74 KC-135Es will be in storage. They could be restored to service, if necessary. Other KC-135Es will be stripped of parts, as needed; 10 will serve as static displays; and three will be ground instructional trainers.

The Air Force aims to field before the end of next decade the KC-X tanker, followed by two more increments, eventually replacing all the KC-135s by around 2050 at a rate of 15 to 18 aircraft per year.



Aloha Means Goodbye: The last two F-15A aircraft (this is one of them) left Hickam AFB, Hawaii, on Sept. 22. The 199th Fighter Squadron has operated the F-15A from Hickam for 22 years. The 199th will operate F-15Cs until the transition to the F-22 Raptor is complete. The first F-22 is due to arrive in the summer of 2010.

duce the nation's Minuteman III ICBM force by 50 missiles to 450, the unit was picked for deactivation. Although Malmstrom officials held the squadron's official inactivation ceremony in August 2008, these maintainers actually began the deactivation process in October 2007, which involved pulling the squadron's 50 missiles and all major equipment from its 50 launch facilities and five missile alert facilities, which are entering caretaker status.

Fighter Wing Nears New Mission

New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson announced Sept. 17 that the New Mexico Air National Guard's 150th Fighter Wing would have a new mission after it sheds its F-16s next year by becoming an associate of the active duty 58th Special Operations Wing at Kirtland Air Force Base.

However, on the following day, KRQE-TV in Albuquerque, N.M., reported that the details of the agreement were "pre-decisional" and still had to be worked out. Richardson, too, per KRQE, acknowledged that the new mission rested on a

"handshake" understanding at that point, but that such handshake agreements are "usually honored."

State officials have been working to find a mission for the unit since the Air Force issued its 2010 fighter cut list in May that would strip the wing of its 18 F-16s.

Langley Wind Tunnel Closes

The full-scale wind tunnel at Langley AFB, Va., the nation's third largest, closed its doors on Sept. 4 after 78 years of operations. Built in 1930, the 30-by-60-foot tunnel served a vital role in aerodynamic testing and research, from biplanes to experimental aircraft. From 1931 to 1944, it was the largest wind tunnel in the world.

Nearly every fighter aircraft that came along after 1930 up to the Navy F/A-18 was tested there—as were NASA's Mercury re-entry capsule, NASCAR vehicles, and submarines. Most recently Boeing's X-48 experimental Blended Wing Body aircraft was analyzed in the tunnel.

"It's not possible to walk into this wind tunnel and not feel like you're walking amongst some of the pioneers in aviation," said Bob Ash, professor of aerospace engineering at Old Dominion University, which ran the facility. ■

First F-16s Deploy to Afghanistan

A combined force of active duty and Reserve airmen from Hill AFB, Utah, in July deployed with their F-16 fighters to Bagram Air Base to support operations in Afghanistan. According to a Bagram release from Sept. 20, this was the first F-16 complement to operate in that nation.

Members of the active duty 388th Fighter Wing and Air Force Reserve Command 419th Fighter Wing—as a newly formed associate unit—deployed together for the first time in 2007, but to Iraq.

The Utah F-16s can provide close air support among other missions. For example, they supported the Afghan Presidential election on Aug. 20.

News Notes

- The Air Force announced Aug. 29 that the F-15E fleet had eclipsed 8,000 combat flight hours during a mission of the 336th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron from Bagram AB, Afghanistan. The milestone was passed when an F-15E provided overhead security during a helicopter resupply mission.

- Air Force Reserve Command reached its 2009 annual enlisted accession goal on Aug. 3, bringing in 8,800 recruits nearly two full months ahead of the end of the fiscal year—the earliest on record. It was the ninth straight year that AFRC's recruiting force reached this goal.

- The Air Force announced Sept. 15 that it had ushered in the first five former enlisted tactical air control party airmen—fresh from Officer Training School—to the new air liaison officer career field, designated 13L.

- DOD's Space Test Program, administered by Space and Missile Systems Center's Space Development and Test Wing, Kirtland AFB, N.M., completed its 200th mission on Sept. 10, 2009 (US date), launching two payloads aboard a Japanese rocket.

- Air Mobility Command's 724th Air Mobility Squadron at Aviano AB, Italy, officially opened its new 34,000-plus-square-foot, \$10 million passenger and air freight terminal on Sept. 10. The new terminal replaced a 54-year-old facility.

- Air Combat Command said Sept. 22 its investigators could not determine the exact reason why an MQ-1 Predator unmanned aerial vehicle lost contact with its ground control station and crashed May 13 in Afghanistan. Factors such as weather and aircrew performance were ruled out.

- Officials at Langley AFB, Va., announced Sept. 2 that the base has joined with the city of Hampton to conduct a joint land use study. Hampton reportedly prompted the study as a means to avoid potential conflicts between the base and new development in the area.

- After a three-year hiatus, the hard-copy version of the Air Force's "Afterburner" retiree newsletter is returning, the service announced Sept. 1. Three annual hard-copy issues are envisioned since not every retiree has computer access to view the electronic version.

- SSgt. Chris Harlan, with the 965th Airborne Air Control Squadron at Tinker AFB, Okla., received the Airman's Medal in September for his part in helping save four college exchange students from drowning at Turner Falls in Oklahoma in 2007. ■