

SnapShot



944th Fighter Wing, Luke Air Force Base, Arizona

February 2017 Newsletter



JASDF flies first solo mission

Luke Honor Guard shares TFI concept

White House nominates Academy grad Heather Wilson to become Air Force secretary

AF responds to hiring freeze

944 FW KEY LEADERS

Commander

Col. Kurt J. Gallegos

Vice Commander

Col. Bryan Cook

Command Chief

CMSgt. Rhonda L. Hutson

944th Fighter Wing Electronic Monthly SnapShot

Contents of the 944th Fighter Wing Electronic Monthly SnapShot are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, DoD or the Department of the Air Force. The editorial content is edited, prepared, and provided by the Public Affairs Office of the 944th Fighter Wing, Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, 85309. All photographs and graphics are property of the Air Force unless otherwise indicated. Articles can be submitted via 944fw.pa@luke.af.mil.

SnapShot Editorial Staff

Commander

Col. Kurt J. Gallegos

Chief, Public Affairs

Maj. Elizabeth Magnusson

Operations Chief, PA

Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.

Photojournalists, PA

Tech. Sgt. Courtney Richardson

Staff Sgt. Nestor Cruz

Staff Sgt. Lauren Snyder

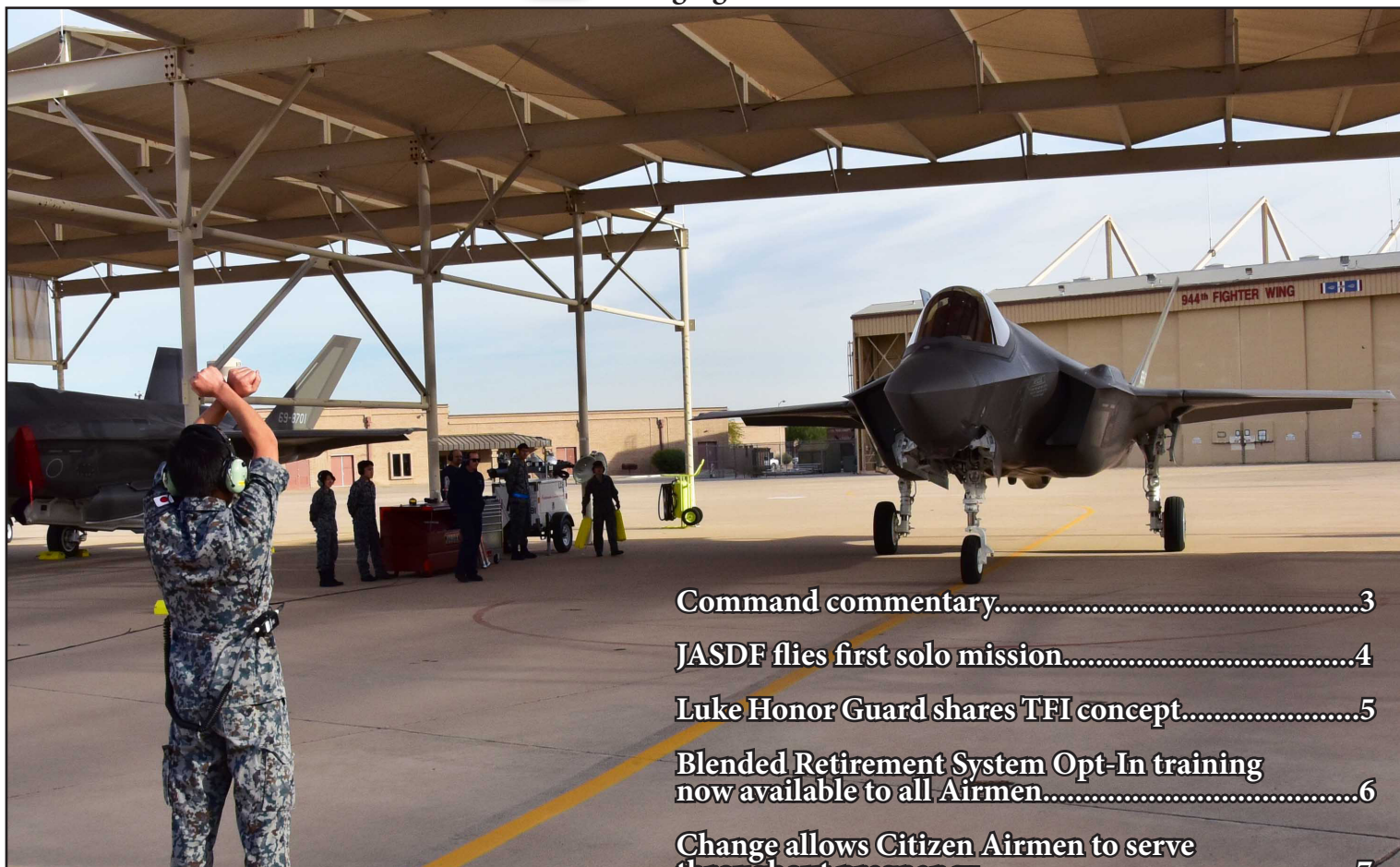


SnapShot

www.944fw.afrc.af.mil

Bringing the Heat

February 2017



Command commentary.....3

JASDF flies first solo mission.....4

Luke Honor Guard shares TFI concept.....5

Blended Retirement System Opt-In training
now available to all Airmen.....6

Change allows Citizen Airmen to serve
throughout pregnancy.....7

Wilson testifies on current state of the AF.....9



Cover Photo: The third Japan Air Self-Defense Force F-35A taxis into the 944th Fighter Wing ramp area Jan. 26 at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz.

Above: A member of the Japan Air Self-Defense Force maintenance team guides an F-35A into its new location on the 944th Fighter Wing ramp area Jan. 26 at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz.

Left: Japan Air Self-Defense Force and 944th Operations Group Detachment 2 members pose for a photo Feb. 8 after the second sortie mission with the second JASDF pilot at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. (U.S. Air Force photos by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.)

Revitalizing from the grass roots

By Col. Kurt Gallegos, 944th Fighter Wing commander

Welcome back! I hope everyone had a relaxing month off because this weekend will be action packed and filled with change of commands, retirements, award presentations, and a commander's call on top of normal operations.

I would like to be the first to officially bid my command chief farewell and congratulate Chief Master Sgt. Hutson on her retirement and 27 years of honorable service.

These last three years have been a pleasure and I thank you for your outstanding support to the Airmen of the 944th Fighter Wing and your dedication to our Air Force. I hate to see you go but I am happy for you and wish you good luck and best wishes in your future endeavors.

I recently returned from a commander's conference where we received guidance from Gen. David L. Goldfein, the 21st Chief of Staff of the Air Force, on his vision for the Air Force.

General Goldfein believes the key to success is to seamlessly integrate Airmen, in every component, with a goal to communicate with one consistent voice becoming ONE Air Force. In order to get there he has highlighted three items he wants the Air Force to focus on: revitalizing the Squadrons, strengthening joint leaders and teams, and multi-domain command and control.

Here at the 944th, I want us to begin focusing on the first goal which is to revitalize our squadrons from the grass roots by strengthening our already exceptional units. If you have ideas or thoughts on things we can do to make our squadrons an even stronger foundation for our



wing please send your ideas to your leadership and first sergeants. We want everyone to actively seek opportunities to support your squadron and help make it into a world class organization.

And on the topic of world class ... this year's 944 FW Annual Awards Banquet is sold out! I thank all of you for your hard work in organizing and supporting the event. I look forward to a fun and exciting evening and congratulate all the nominees and winners in advance.

On Saturday we will also have a commander's call. Then on Sunday morning we will kick-off the day with a change-of-command ceremony to welcome Lt. Col. Gavin Tade, the incoming commander of the 944th Mission Support Group. Later that afternoon we will have an opportunity to say goodbye to CMSgt. Hutson during her retirement ceremony. I hope to see you all there.

As a reminder, we have a couple of events in the horizon. On Saturday of the April UTA we will have Boss's Day which is already filled to capacity. It's an opportunity to show our appreciation to your civilian boss for their support in your military career. Later that same day we will have our first ever Operation Reserve Kids, where your kids will experience what it is like when mom or dad prepare for a deployment. Please make sure to register your kids before space runs out.

Brace yourself for a busy but fun and exciting weekend. Thank you and keep bringing the heat.

Command Chief says goodbye

By Chief Master Sgt. Rhonda Hutson, 944th Fighter Wing command chief

Well this is it, my final article for the Wing. Hopefully you have found some of what I have written informative, insightful, and maybe even just a little bit funny. As there are beginnings there must always be endings.

The beauty of our system is that there are always people ready, willing, and able to step up and take over. The long lineage of the 944th Fighter Wing in its many incarnations points to this fact. Over the long history of the Wing, people have come and people have gone. Some to greater positions of responsibility within Air Force Reserve Command and the Air Force and some move back into civilian life. Each has served and continue to serve in their own unique ways. In every case, the lineage continues. And it will again.

As my fellow Michigander W. Bruce Cameron said; "When we adopt a dog or any pet, we know it is going to end with us having to say goodbye, but we still do it. And we do it for a very good reason: They bring so much joy and optimism and happiness. They attack every moment of every day with that attitude."

Thank you for adopting me into the 944th Fighter Wing family. I have tried to emulate that role, bringing as much joy and optimism to being your Command Chief as possible. We have had successes and failures, but we served our country honorably.

As I say goodbye, for now, to my 944th family I do so knowing that you will embrace the next Command Chief with the same enthusiasm that you have shown me. Make sure you treat her or him like that beloved family pet; love them and give them treats periodically (insert smile here). Be understanding when they shred your drapes. It will all be good in the end.

I'm sure that we will meet again, someplace or sometime. Until then, enjoy the memories, be sure to embrace the present and enjoy your time here. I certainly have. Til' we meet again...Chief

JASDF flies first solo mission

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr., 944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs



LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz.—The first Japan Air Self Defense Force national representative to Luke took to the skies Feb. 7 during a mission five years in the making.

After several months of training, Lt. Col. Nakano, JASDF F-35A pilot, completed a solo sortie and hit a historical milestone for the JASDF and 944th Fighter Wing.

Nakano was sent off on his flight by a joint delegation from the 944 FW, Lockheed Martin, and Japanese staff.

“This is an historical event for JASDF and my career as a pilot,” said Nakano. “My first flight was perfect. The weather was fine, and the jet was great. I’ll never forget this day.”

With the mission accomplished and the day behind them, JASDF personnel look ahead for the next milestone and advance in their mission at Luke.

“My goal is to stand up the first F-35 squadron in Japan as soon as possible,” continued Nakano. “In order to enhance the aircrafts capabilities, I have to be a more efficient F-35 pilot.”

The first F-35 mission with a JASDF pilot is the culmination of years of planning and hard work.

“To watch a Japanese fighter pilot fly Japan’s F-35, launched by a Japanese crew chief, saluted by Japanese maintainers, while supported by an elite team of American men and women on American soil, was surreal,” said Lt. Col. Sean Holahan, 944th Operations Group Detachment 2 commander.

Holahan flew alongside Nakano and guided him through the sortie.

“It’s hard to describe the deep pride we all felt while sharing this moment with our friends and allies,” continued Holahan. “It’s been nine years since the 944th has had jets on our ramp so this was a sight for sore eyes.”

Next week JASDF’s fourth and final F-35 is scheduled to arrive at Luke and over the next year the 944 FW will train three classes of JASDF F-35 pilots and graduate several dozen JASDF maintainers.

In addition to the Foreign Military Sales mission led by the 944 OG/Det 2 Ninjas, Luke is scheduled to have six fighter squadrons and 144 F-35s. Over the next several years, Luke will be training FMS pilots from Japan, Israel and South Korea along with partner nations including Australia, Italy, Norway, Turkey, Netherlands, Denmark, and Canada.



Welcome Home!!

Master Sgt. Alfred Medrano, 924th Maintenance Squadron, returned home from Incirlik Air Base, Turkey

OPERATION RESERVE KIDS

Saturday, April 1, 2017
12:30-4:00pm

A simulated deployment experience for children 6-15 years old.

Register at
<https://944fwoperation-reserve-kids.eventbrite.com> by March 1, 2017, space is limited, first come, first serve

For more information call 944th Airman & Family Readiness at (623) 856-8324



**944TH FIGHTER WING
COMMANDER'S CALL
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2017
1400 HRS**

BRINGING THE HEAT

**944 HANGAR 999
PLEASE BE IN PLACE 15 MINUTES PRIOR
TO START TIME**

Luke Honor Guard shares TFI concept

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr., 944th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, Ariz.- Citizen Airmen from the 944th Fighter Wing Honor Guard program completed the Basic Protocol, Honors, and Ceremonies course. The Total Force Integration event took place here January 23 – February 1.

Master Sgt. Kenneth Heng, 944 Medical Squadron medical technician and Tech. Sgt. Eric Jackson, 944 MDS optometry technician, were the only Air Force Reserve Command graduates in a class of 26 that received a certificate for completing the course.

U.S. Air Force ceremonial guardsmen instructors from Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling facilitated the eight day formal training. The training taught members of the Luke AFB Honor Guard how to correctly perform various movements and formations for military ceremonies.

“We saw a weak point in the quality of training of Reservists and arranged for them to train more regularly with active duty to become more proficient and help out when needed,” said Staff Sgt. Steven Wojichowski, NCO-in-charge of the Ceremonial Training Unit. “We talked with Luke leadership to make this happen to encourage TFI for the honor guard programs.

The graduation ceremony consisted of the graduates performing a detailed military funeral service.

“Our goal is to give everyone the tools needed to be able to be more proficient at the tasks they are given while performing honor guard duties,” said Wojichowski. “When you have face to

face contact the quality of training goes up drastically, compared to just reading regulations in a manual.”

Heng was named class leader and as such presented a plaque to Wojichowski signifying appreciation for their efforts during the course.

“This training will benefit our wing’s honor guard by giving us the confidence in knowing what and how the various movements are supposed to be performed and the knowledge of how to apply different movements,” said Jackson. “Doing this training along with active duty also bolsters TFI and allows us to start building bridges and possibly perform joint ceremonies with them.”

Jackson is the acting NCO-in-charge of the recently reconstructed 944 FW Honor Guard program. Currently there are seven members, with a goal of obtaining 12 active members.

“We are actively looking to grow our ranks,” continued Jackson. “If you are a former honor guard and would like to participate or still have your uniform and would like to donate it please give us a call. Or if you have no experience but would like to get involved we’re actively looking for folks.”

The training is conducted about 10 times a year depending on the demand of the base honor guard program Air Force wide.

For more information please contact your squadron First Sergeant or Tech. Sgt. Eric Jackson at 856-7613.



BRINGING THE HEAT
944 FIGHTER WING

February 2017 promotions: Congratulations to the following

944th Fighter Wing promotees

From Airman Basic:

Airman James Kaznowski, 414 MXS

Airman Thomas Kolberg, 944 MDS

From Airman First Class:

Senior Airman Martin Escalantedelatorre, 924 MXS

Senior Airman Christiana Loewe, 924 MXS

Senior Airman Megan McCall, 944 CES

Senior Airman Angelica Santamaria, 924 MXS

From Senior Airman:

Staff Sgt. Ralph Armijo, 924 MXS

Staff Sgt. Crystal Au, 944 MDS

Staff Sgt. Brayan Flores Mejia, 944 CES

Staff Sgt. Jordann Humphrey, 924 MXS

Staff Sgt. Joshua Magnus, 414 MXS

Staff Sgt. Daniel McCarthy, 944 CES

Staff Sgt. Zackary Parrish, 944 ASTS

Staff Sgt. Brandon Vasquez, 944 FW Det. 1

From Staff Sergeant:

Tech. Sgt. Garrett Helgesson, 924 MXS

Tech. Sgt. Jeffrey Knerr, 924 MXS

Tech. Sgt. Mary Miles, 414 MXS

Tech. Sgt. Kathryn Peterson, 414 MXS

Tech. Sgt. Katelyn Thatcher, 944 ASTS

Tech. Sgt. Kristopher Voak, 944 FW Det. 1

From Technical Sergeant:

Master Sgt. Lori Doherty, 924 MXS

Master Sgt. Isaac Lambuth, 414 MXS

Master Sgt. Shaun Wahlstrom, 944 CES

From Master Sergeant:

Senior Master Sgt. James Archuleta, 924 MXS

From Master Sergeant:

Chief Master Sgt. Brian Jensenius, 414 MXS

Blended Retirement System Opt-In training now available to all Airmen

By Kat Bailey, Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas (AFNS)- The Defense Department will implement the new Blended Retirement System in less than a year. While no one needs to make a decision until Jan. 1, 2018, all Airmen should take advantage of training and informational resources to research their options during 2017.

Airmen eligible for the new BRS will begin receiving email notifications in February from myPers to ensure they receive correct information regarding their benefits to make the decision best suited for their individual needs.

The Opt-In course is designed to provide sufficient information for eligible Airmen to make an educated decision about their retirement system. However, Airmen are highly encouraged to discuss their personal situations with a personal financial counselor at the Airman and Family Readiness Center. The training (course number J3OP-US1332) is now available via Joint Knowledge Online and takes approximately two hours to complete.

Only those active Airmen who, as of Dec. 31, 2017, have served fewer than 12 years, or Reserve Airmen who have accrued fewer than 4,320 retirement points, will have the option of electing BRS or remaining in the legacy retirement system. These Airmen will be required to take the Opt-In training and should provide a copy of the JKO training certificate to their unit training manager upon completion.

The Air Force recommends BRS training for all Airmen and encourages them to take either the Opt-In course or the BRS Leader Training on JKO (course number J3OP-US1330). Many leaders may not be eligible to opt-in to BRS themselves, but still need to be knowledgeable about the new system to understand what their junior Airmen should know as they prepare to make their decisions in 2018. The leader training course is also available to those without a Common Access Card -- to include family members -- via an alternate website.

BRS information is continuously updated on myPers. Click "Retirement" from any military landing page. In addition, a live chat feature on BRS is available for Airmen. To chat live with a Total Force Service Center representative, go to the page and allow about 30 to 60 seconds to



AVAILABLE NOW!

THE BLENDED RETIREMENT SYSTEM OPT-IN COURSE

#BlendedRetirement

Available at: <https://jkodirect.jten.mil>

**Mandatory for Opt-In eligible Service members*

Courtesy photo

enable a representative to come online.

For more information about Air Force personnel programs, go to myPers. Individuals who do not have a myPers account can request one by following the instructions on the Air Force Retiree Service website.

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH

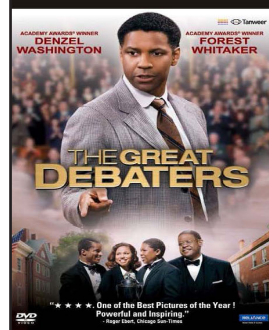
Remembrance March and Ceremony

February 24th at 1330

Where: In front of FW Headquarters Bldg.
(March to Club 5/6 followed by ceremony)

Price: \$10 for club members/ \$12 for non-members

African American History Month 2017



Come join us for a lunch time movie in honor of African American History Month!

February 10th - The Great Debaters
February 17th - Red Tails

Where: Base Theater
When: 1100

Bring your lunch and help us celebrate these inspiring Americans!



Change allows Citizen Airmen to serve throughout pregnancy



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.

WASHINGTON- A recent change to Air Force policy now allows pregnant members of the Air Force Reserve on active duty support orders to serve throughout their pregnancy.

Prior to the change, AF Reserve members were taken off active duty support orders at their 34th week of pregnancy, regardless of whether or not they were medically able to continue to serve. Mr. Gabriel O. Camarillo, Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, signed the new policy Dec. 20, 2016. It now allows Reservists to serve through the end of their orders, or the birth of the child, whichever comes first. The policy also changes some of the rules regarding maternity leave eligibility.

“The new policy allows for maximum flexibility and utilization of member capabilities, while providing for the health and safety of the member and their baby,” said Col. Pamela Powers, reserve deputy to the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. “This new

policy is just another step in our onward journey toward being a more diverse and inclusive culture. An inclusive culture enables all Airmen to make their greatest contributions to mission success.”

According to the new guidance in “Air Force Policy on Curtailing/Limiting Active Duty Operational Support Orders,” eligible members of the Reserve Components serving on active duty operations support (ADOS) orders or multiple orders for a continuous period of at least 12 months will be entitled to 12 weeks of non-chargeable maternity leave. This eligibility falls in line with DoD guidance released in early February 2016, as well as the recent change in law that was passed in the Fiscal Year 2017 NDAA.

“The key is eligibility,” explained Powers. “A critical factor in obtaining non-chargeable maternity leave is a continuous ADOS order or multiple set of orders. If a Reservist goes off ADOS orders to participate or attend Inactive Duty Training or Unit Training Assembly peri-

ods, it constitutes a break in orders and negates the 12-month continuous period, which in turn, makes them ineligible for the 12 weeks of non-chargeable maternity leave.”

Pregnant Citizen Airmen on shorter tours can serve until the original order termination date, or the date of birth plus any accrued ordinary leave, whichever is earlier. In some instances, Air Force Reservists can have their ADOS orders extended past the 12-month pregnancy threshold if there is a valid requirement, funding is available and both their permanent unit and supported unit commanders approve.

“However, there are limitations and exceptions to serving throughout a pregnancy,” Powers explained. “The supported commander will determine whether duty limitations would prevent the Airman from performing her duties, whether she can be transferred to other duties or if necessary, a curtailment of the orders,” Powers said.

White House nominates Academy grad Heather Wilson to become Air Force secretary

From Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (AFNS)- The White House announced last month that President Donald Trump intends to nominate former New Mexico Congresswoman and Air Force Academy grad Heather Wilson to be the next Air Force secretary. If confirmed, Wilson will replace former Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James to become the first Academy graduate to serve as secretary.

“Her distinguished military service, high level of knowledge, and success in so many different fields gives me great confidence that she will lead our nation’s Air Force with the greatest competence and integrity,” Trump said in a Jan. 23 news release.

Wilson is from Keene, New Hampshire. She graduated from the Academy in 1982 magna cum laude and became a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University, England.

During her Air Force career, Wilson was a political adviser to the U.S. Air Force in England, and a NATO defense planning officer. After leaving the Air Force in 1987, she became a member of the National Security Council Staff at the White House under President George H.W. Bush.

“America and our vital national interests continue to be threatened,” Wilson said in the White House release. “I will do my best, working with our men and women in the military, to strengthen American air and space power to keep the country safe.”

Since 2013, Wilson has been the president of the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology in Rapid City, South Dakota.

Acting Secretary of the Air Force Lisa Disbrow will to head the service until the Senate confirmation process for a new secretary of the Air Force is complete.



Courtesy photo

Wilson testifies on current state of the AF

By Tech. Sgt. Robert Barnett, Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

WASHINGTON (AFNS)- Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Stephen Wilson testified on the need for increased force structure and modernization before the House and Senate Armed Services committees Feb. 7 and 8 on Capitol Hill.

Wilson discussed the current state of the Air Force, how it's ensuring capability within current constraints, and requirements needed to bring the service back to full strength in global vigilance, reach and power.

"During the allotted time of this hearing an average of 65 mobility aircraft will take off, 430,000 malicious connections will be blocked, five homeland defense missions will fly, and three strikes against ISIS will occur," Wilson said.

He provided examples of recent air operations, including various combat and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions, and the Raqqa and Mosul offensives, "where our RPA, fighter and bomber Airmen also conducted 92 percent of the U.S. strikes against ISIS."

The Air Force has shrunk from more than 500,000 active-duty Airmen during Desert Storm to approximately 317,000 today – a 38 percent decrease, all while the capabilities Airmen provide for the nation and allies have never been more vital, and the global demand for American airpower will only grow in the future, he said.

"We are out of balance, and the demand for our mission and people exceeds the supply," Wilson said. "Twenty-six years of continuous combat has limited our ability to prepare for

future advanced threat environments – scenarios with the lowest margins of error and highest risk to national security. This non-stop combat, paired with budget instability and lower-than-planned top lines made the United States Air Force one of the smallest, oldest-equipped, and least-ready in our history."

Wilson also discussed the current pilot retention issue – pilots are unable to do what

they signed up for and are choosing to leave the Air Force after about 11 years of service, he said. In 1991, there were 134 fighter squadrons; today, there are 55.

Air Force leaders, according to Wilson, have been forced to make unacceptable tradeoffs between readiness, force structure and modernization. Today's global challenges require an Air Force ready to defeat violent extremism and any other threat the nation may face.

Quoting Gen. Douglas MacArthur, Wilson said, "The history of failure in war can be summed up in two words: too late. Too late in comprehending the deadly purpose of a potential enemy. Too late in realizing the mortal danger. Too late in preparedness."

Wilson said the biggest priorities for modernization are nuclear deterrence operations, the KC-46 Pegasus, F-35 Lightning II, and the B-21 Raider.

Wilson said readiness cannot be overlooked.

"Your Air Force needs Congressional support to repeal the Budget Control Act and provide predictable funding. It is critical to rebuilding military full-spectrum readiness, which is the number one priority of our Secretary of Defense.

"We need to act now," he continued. "Before it's too late."



Courtesy photo

AF responds to hiring freeze

By Richard Salomon, Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas (AFNS)- The Air Force has released additional guidance in regard to the federal civilian hiring freeze implemented Jan. 23.

According to the official memorandum, the hiring freeze applies to all executive departments and agencies regardless of their operation and program funding. Military personnel are excluded. Some exemptions are permitted to meet national security mission and public safety responsibilities or to prevent essential services from interruption.

The Air Force recently released additional implementation procedures in support of a follow-on Feb. 1 memorandum outlining the implementation of the freeze. According to the guidance, all requests for personnel action received by the Air Force Personnel Center by Feb 7, 2017, will continue to be announced, and referral certificates will continue to be issued.

If tentative job offers were given to selectees before Jan. 22, but with entry dates after Feb. 22, they will be notified of their pending status. Also, as of Feb. 7, AFPC will not be accepting recruit/fill actions without an approved hiring freeze exemption signed by the Secretary of the Air Force.

Official guidance also calls for the implementation of a long-term plan to reduce the size of the federal workforce through attrition. The Office of Management and Budget, in coordination with the Office of Personnel Management, has been tasked to submit a plan by early May.

"The Air Force is dependent on a strong civilian workforce to carry out its global mission," said Christine Armstrong, the Civilian Sustainment and Transition Programs Division chief. "We will continue to work closely with Air Staff to ensure the entire Air Force team receives up-to-date guidance as it becomes available."

For information concerning non-appropriated fund positions, contact: afpc.svirf.humanresources@us.af.mil

Local civilian personnel offices can also provide additional information. Search "Hiring Freeze" on myPers for more information about the freeze and how organizations can submit exemption requests. Individuals who do not have a myPers account can request one by following the instructions on the Air Force Retiree Services website.





Japan Air Self-Defense Force members observe as one of their F-35s depart Feb. 8 at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. The sortie mission was flown by one of their own and the event was marked a milestone at Luke. (U.S. Air Force photo taken by Tech. Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.)