

**Tuesday, 20 March 2012**

U.S. Air Force

Morning Report

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**BUDGET**

1. [**USAF: We Didn’t Inflate C-27J Costs**](#B1)

(*Defense News, 19 Mar 12*) … Marcus Weisgerber and Kate Brannen

The U.S. Air Force - stung by accusations that it’s inflating the cost of flying the C-27J cargo plane as an excuse to cancel the program - is playing damage control.

1. [**Casey touts Biden meeting to try to save Air Force Reserve base**](#B2)

(*AP, 19 Mar 12*) … Unattributed

PITTSBURGH - U.S. Sen. Bob Casey said he has met with Vice President Joe Biden to try to save a Pittsburgh-area Air Force Reserve base that military authorities have slated for closure, jeopardizing 1,451 jobs.

1. [**Scott Brown visits Westover Air Reserve Base, readies for Senate hearing Tuesday**](#B3)

(*The Republican, 19 Mar 12*) … Jim Kinney

CHICOPEE – U.S. Sen. Scott P. Brown toured Westover Air Reserve Base Monday, one day before he plans to question Air Force brass on proposed cuts to Westover and other Air Force installations around the state including Barnes Air National Guard Base in Westfield.

1. [**The Air Force numbers game**](#B4)

(*The Hill, 19 Mar 12*) … Philip Ewing

The active, Guard and Reserve branches of the Air Force are in a food fight over which units and aircraft would go away in the Austerity Force proposed by this year’s budget submission. Who’s right? They all are.

1. [**Pentagon Budget Secures Major Strategic Win For Lockheed**](#B5)

(*AOL Defense, 19 Mar 12*) … Loren Thompson

If you are one of those people who believes the various conspiracy theories making the rounds about Lockheed Martin's excessive influence over government decisions, the Pentagon's fiscal 2013 budget request probably won't make you feel any better.

**CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN THE NUCLEAR ENTERPRISE**

1. [**U.S. to Maintain Talks With Russia on Missile Shield Guarantees**](#N1)

(*Global Security Newswire, 19 Mar 12*) … Unattributed

A senior U.S. diplomat on Thursday said the Obama administration would maintain talks with Russia on the potential provision of a pledge regarding the use of U.S. missile interceptors planned for deployment around Europe, ITAR-Tass reported.

1. [**Scientific Report on Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Due This Month**](#N2)

(*Global Security Newswire, 19 Mar 12*) … Unattributed

A long-awaited scientific report on technical matters related to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is to be released at the end of the month, Bloomberg reported on Sunday.

**PARTNER WITH JOINT AND COALITION TEAM TO WIN TODAY’S FIGHT**

1. [**Coalition troops hope to improve Afghan pilots' literacy and, eventually, aviation skills**](#P1)

(*Stars and Stripes, 19 Mar 12*) … Heath Druzin

KABUL - After more than 30 years of war, the few qualified pilots in Afghanistan are largely graying veterans of the old Soviet-backed military who haven’t flown a MiG in decades.

1. [**Air Force confirms Metzger kidnapped in 2006**](#P2)

(*Air Force Times, 19 Mar 12*) … Jeff Schogol

The Air Force has confirmed that a major who went missing in Kyrgyzstan six years ago was kidnapped, debunking an online smear campaign that claimed she went AWOL.

1. [**Allen: U.S. to stay the course in Afghanistan**](#P3)

(*AP, 19 Mar 12*) … Lolita C. Baldor

WASHINGTON - The U.S. must stick to its strategy in Afghanistan, including the planned withdrawal calendar, over the next several months despite recent setbacks that have tested America’s relations with the Afghans, the top U.S. commander for the war is telling Congress.

**DEVELOP AND CARE FOR AIRMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES**

1. [**MRFF: AF Academy dean directing counterattack**](#D1)

(*Air Force Times, 19 Mar 12*) … Markeshia Ricks

The Air Force is giving “appropriate consideration” to allegations that the Air Force Academy’s dean of faculty ordered a campaign against a religious freedom watchdog group and then lied about it during a deposition, according to a letter obtained by Air Force Times.

1. [**Recruiting goals to remain steady this year**](#D2)

(*Air Force Times, 19 Mar 12*) … Markeshia Ricks

SAN ANTONIO - Despite expected significant reductions in budget and manpower for fiscal 2013, the Air Force’s recruiting mission remains on track - at least for now, according to the one-star who leads that mission.

1. [**Services exchange leadership culture**](#D3)

(*Marine Corps Times, 19 Mar 12*) … Markeshia Ricks

Squadron Officer School airmen at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., recently played host to 35 soldiers and Marines from the Army Captains Career Course about 81 miles down the road at Fort Benning, Ga., in what leaders from both courses hope will be a long-term relationship that will benefit both branches.

**Modernize our Air, Space and Cyberspace Inventories, Orgs and Training**

1. [**Pentagon invests heavily in new arsenal of cyberweapons**](#M1)

(*The Hill, 19 Mar 12*) … Carlo Munoz

The Pentagon is investing heavily in an arsenal of cyberweapons as a debate rages in Congress about how and when they should be used.

1. [**USAF's SBIR Satellite Better Than Best Report**](#M2)

(*SatNews, 19 Mar 12*) … Unattributed

The first Space Based Infrared Systems geosynchronous Earth orbit satellite, currently undergoing a rigorous operational certification process, is meeting or exceeding performance requirements, and on track to be delivered into operations.

1. [**Air Force to modify F-22 following fatal crash**](#M3)

(*Los Angeles Times, 19 Mar 12*) … W.J. Hennigan

LOS ANGELES -- The Air Force will modify the handle that engages the emergency oxygen system in its entire fleet of F-22 Raptor fighter jets after a report found that it played a role in a crash that killed one of its top aviators.

**RECAPTURE ACQUISITION EXCELLENCE**

1. [**USAF May Cut F-35 Sim Needs**](#A1)

(*Defense News, 13 Mar 12*) … Marcus Weisgerber

The Air Force is looking to slash the number of locations where it will base F-35 Joint Strike Fighter squadrons to bring down the jet’s estimated trillion-dollar sustainment costs.

**GLOBAL AIR, SPACE, and CYBERSPACE ENVIRONMENT**

1. [**Presentation of operating capabilities KC-767A airplane**](#G1)

(*World Aeronautical Press Agency, 19 Mar 12*) … Unattributed

A Boeing tanker KC-767A airplane, two Eurofighters of the 4th Wing, two AMX of the 32nd Wing and two Tornado of the 6th Wing have participated last Friday March 16, 2012 at the presentation of operating capacities of the new aircraft in service of the 14th Wing in Pratica di Mare with equipments for loads on airplane at ground and refuelling with an aircraft in flight into the "Operating area" above Ponza's island at an altitude of 18,000 ft.

1. [**Air Force blames split in radar dome on humidity**](#G2)

(*China Post, 20 Mar 12*) … Joseph Yeh

Humidity is to blame for causing splits in some protective radar domes (radomes) of U.S.-made missiles currently being used by Taiwan's F-16 fighter jets, the Air Force said yesterday.

1. [**Chinese Air Force Modernizes On Dual Tracks**](#G3)

(*Aviation Week, 19 Mar 12*) … Richard D. Fisher, Jr.

As China starts to put together a modern, integrated air force, which could reach 1,000 fighters by 2020, it is developing the components of a future force of stealthier combat aircraft, new bombers and unmanned, hypersonic and possibly space-based combat platforms. These could emerge as soon as the early 2020s.

1. [**N. Korea invites U.N. nuke monitors to return**](#G4)

(*AP, 19 Mar 12*) … Unattributed

VIENNA - North Korea has invited the International Atomic Energy Agency to return, three years after expelling its nuclear monitors, the agency said Monday. The U.S. said such a move would be welcome but remained critical of the North’s missile test plans.

**ITEMS OF INTEREST**

1. [**Dead Soldier's Effects Still Turn Up 2 Years Later**](#I1)

(*Fayetteville Observer, 19 Mar 12*) … Drew Brooks

One Army widow's nightmare just won't end.Brittany Frazier buried her husband in late 2009, only to learn two months later that not all of his remains were included.

1. [**Slighted Air Force General Loses Battle with Pentagon**](#I2)

(*Courthouse News Service, Ryan Abbott*

WASHINGTON - A retired brigadier general cannot retroactively take a promotion that suspended after Hezbollah bombed the Khobar Towers, an apartment complex occupied by U.S. Air Force personnel in Saudi Arabia, a federal judge ruled.

1. [**NASA Plans Flexible Wing Tests With X-56A**](#I3)

(*Aviation Week, 19 Mar 12*) … Graham Warwick

After Lockheed Martin completes flights of the flying-wing X-56A for the U.S. Air Force, NASA plans to use the experimental unmanned aircraft to develop active control systems for slender, flexible wings on future, highly efficient transport aircraft.

1. [**Lawyer: Bales recalls little of shooting spree**](#I4)

(*AP, 19 Mar 12*) … Gene Johnson and John Milburn

FORT LEAVENWORTH, Kan. - The lawyer for the Army staff sergeant accused of slaughtering 16 Afghan civilians in a nighttime shooting rampage met his client for the first time Monday and said the solider has a sketchy memory of the night of the massacre.

**HEADLINES**

CNN at 0530

Feds, FBI probe Florida’s teens death

Syrian forces renew attacks

For Romney, Illinois is another must win state

[**Feds, FBI probe Florida teen's death as 911 calls released**](http://www.cnn.com/2012/03/20/justice/florida-teen-shooting/index.html?hpt=hp_t1)

FOX News at 0530

Commander: Afghan missionon track

Obame raises eyebrows with new executive order

Feds, FBI to investigate death of teen

NPR at 0530

Do juvenile killers deserver life behind bars?

Candidates make final delegate dash in Illinois

Wyoming tribe wins right to hunt to bakd eagles

USA Today at 0530

Feds to investiage death of Trayvon Martin

Bombings across Iraq kill 44

Pakistani parliament demands end to U.S. drones

Washington Post at 0530

Bales was found liable in financial fraud

Federal agencies to open investigation into black teen’s death in Florida

House Republicans to propose major reshuffling of the tax code

FULL TEXT

**BUDGET**

**B1**

**USAF: We Didn’t Inflate C-27J Costs**

(*Defense News, 19 Mar 12*) … Marcus Weisgerber and Kate Brannen

<http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120319/DEFREG02/303190004/USAF-We-Didn-8217-t-Inflate-C-27J-Costs?odyssey=tab%7Ctopnews%7Ctext%7CFRONTPAGE>

The U.S. Air Force - stung by accusations that it’s inflating the cost of flying the C-27J cargo plane as an excuse to cancel the program - is playing damage control.

The service went on the offensive last week after a captain with the Ohio Air National Guard made the case that the actual cost to fly the Italian-built plane is significantly lower than the Air Force has been claiming.

Meanwhile, the Army and Air Force continue to debate exactly which service should be in charge of such aircraft during combat operations.

The briefing by Guard Capt. Dave Lohrer has gone viral within the defense community, so much so that Lohrer was summoned to Washington last week to brief congressional defense committee staffers on his analysis.

The Air Force maintains the total life-cycle cost of the C-27J — built by Alenia Aermacchi — is $308 million per aircraft. Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz used the number as recently as Feb. 28 while addressing congressional lawmakers. Lohrer argues the number is closer to $100 million.

The Air Force has not been able to explain the numbers in Lohrer’s briefing, Kevin Williams, deputy director of the Air Force’s studies and analyses, assessments and lessons learned directorate, said at a March 16 briefing at the Pentagon.

Williams speculated that Lohrer might have been using outdated data that threw off his computations.

“That then becomes the basis for kind of like in a math problem where you have a wrong number on the first step of your process and that error ripples through everything else,” Williams said.

The Air Force argues the quad-engine C-130 can carry more troops and supplies longer distances than the smaller, twin-engine C-27J. The fiscal 2013 budget request, if enacted, would terminate the program. The service is still deciding what to do with its existing C-27s, which could be maintained, transferred to another service or sold to a foreign country.

The Air Force claim is not only counter to Lohrer’s briefing, but also to an analysis by the Pentagon’s Cost Analysis and Program Evaluation (CAPE) group, which shows that over 30 years it would cost the Air Force $270 million to fly one C-27J at 400 hours per year using a reserve component crew. This is compared to $163 million for the C-130H, using the same parameters.

But Lohrer contends that it would cost the Air Force about $105.9 million per C-27J, provided the planes were organized in squadrons of similar size to the C-130s. Under that arrangement, CAPE says it would cost $166 million per C-27J.

Asked how the Air Force and CAPE came up with different estimates, Williams said: “You take the $308 [million] and you can make some changes about life cycle so instead of 25-year, you could compute a 30-year. It’s going to drive it down because it lasts longer.”

Lohrer’s analysis questions the Air Force plan to use an additional 53 people to support the C-27J. But Williams said those additional people were included in Air National Guard documentation.

“There’s an assertion in the report that personnel was somehow inflated by the Air Force. Those personnel numbers were the Guard’s numbers,” Williams said. “We’ve got the source document where the Guard provided them.”

Williams also questioned the flying-hours cost referenced by Lohrer as well as depot cost estimates.

The Air Force “normalized operational cost per flying hour” for the C-27J at $9,000 per hour, Williams said. For the C-130H, the per-hour rate is $10,386; for the C-130J, it is $9,111.

Army, Air Force Negotiations

Meanwhile, the Army and the Air Force continue to negotiate how the Air Force will provide critical airlift support to the Army in a way that is agreeable to both services in the aftermath of the C-27J cancellation. The debate includes designating who’s actually in charge of that aircraft.

The Army says the best way to operate during combat is to give the ground commander tactical control of the Air Force aircraft so that he can quickly task them as needed. To do this most efficiently, the Air Force aircraft and crew would be co-located with the Army unit on the ground.

The Air Force’s preferred way of doing business is to keep tactical control with an Air Force commander, with the Army commander able to assign flying sorties from the general airlift pool.

The latest memorandum of understanding (MoU), signed by both service chiefs Jan. 27, leaves the door open to both options. While the document represents a compromise, many in the Army are questioning the Air Force’s commitment to doing the mission.

Responding to skeptics, Schwartz has repeatedly said the Air Force will perform this mission or “die trying.”

For many, the transfer of the C-27J program from the Army to the Air Force and the resulting angst it has caused among the services is just the latest round in a fight that is as old as the Air Force itself.

A retired Army aviation official compared it the Peanuts cartoon series, saying the Army is Charlie Brown and the Air Force is Lucy. Just when the Army — the kicker — thinks it’s going to get support, the Air Force pulls the football back, he said.

Following the Army’s 2009 withdrawal from the C-27J program and the transfer of the plane’s mission to the Air Force, the two services hashed out a plan for the Air Force to provide time-sensitive direct airlift support to the Army. At the time, the Air Force agreed to give the Army tactical control of the aircraft and decided to try out the concept of employment in Iraq.

There, the Air Force’s 164th Airlift Squadron performed airlift missions, using C-130s, at the direction of the commander of the Army’s 25th Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB).

The Army commander was able to directly task C-130 aircraft and airmen to the missions he deemed critical, relieving Army CH-47 Chinook helicopters, which are more expensive to operate, according to a briefing from the Army’s office for operations, plans and training (G-3/5/7). The CH-47s were then more efficiently used for missions that required vertical airlift.

When the first two C-27Js were deployed to Afghanistan last summer, they were under the tactical control of the commander of the Army’s 159th Combat Aviation Brigade in the southern part of the country. Members of the 179th Air Wing of the Ohio Air National Guard and Army Guard crews from Georgia and Oklahoma flew the planes. Army Guard pilots were trained on the aircraft when the program was still joint.

Because the Army CAB commander had tactical control of the aircraft, he was able to “dynamically re-task” missions, meaning change them at the last minute to address higher-priority needs. According to the Army briefing, 52 percent of planned C-27J sorties in Afghanistan changed within the 96-hour scheduling cycle.

In an early draft of the Jan. 27 MoU, the Army’s tactical control of the Air Force squadron and its aircraft was removed, causing the Army’s G-3/5/7 office to recommend the Army not sign it.

“G-3 non-concurs with the currently proposed MoU as it is written,” the G-3/5/7 briefing says. “Even though the current expeditionary airlift squadron is achieving a measurable level of success [tactical control] to the CAB commander, a change to this command relationship would drastically reduce the flexibility and the habitual relationship that underpins the current success.”

According to an Army aviation official, the first draft of the MoU was rejected by the Army and the Air Force and sent back for revision.

“There was a lot of negotiating to reach a final deal that the Army and Air Force felt comfortable with,” the Army aviation official said. In the end, an agreement was reached that the Army staff supported. So Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno signed it, the official said.

During a Jan. 27 budget briefing at the Pentagon, Odierno said, “We’ve been working this for a few months. It’s important to us that we have direct support to our units out in Afghanistan and wherever we might deploy. It’s a concept actually we tested while I was the commander in Iraq, and I thought it was a very successful test. So I’m comfortable with that. So we’ll mitigate the loss of the C-27. I’m not sure we’ll be able to completely mitigate it, but that will help at least, as we’re deployed, to mitigate that problem.”

The final MoU affirms the benefits of giving the senior Army aviation authority on the ground tactical control of the aircraft and having the Air Force’s expeditionary airlift squadrons co-locate with the Army combat aviation brigade.

However, the document adds that “the combatant commander/ Joint Force Commander may apportion sorties from the general support airlift with [the tactical control] retained by the [Commander of the Air Force] Forces.”

By leaving both options for providing direct support on the table, the services are giving the commander in the field the choice to decide what is best, the Army aviation official said.

For others in the Army, providing both options is cause for concern.

Several Army officials who reviewed the MoU said it provided the Air Force room not to perform the mission as the Army intended to support it.

One Army aviation official said the Air Force could now meet the terms of the MoU using a C-130 unit located at Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan to support an Army CAB flying daily missions in Kandahar, making it difficult to respond to emergencies.

By keeping the planes in the larger pool, the Air Force can task them more efficiently than if they were sitting on a runway waiting for a mission, an Air Force official said.

The debate will only continue as the Army and Air Force review the 2009 concept of employment, with the goal to “incorporate lessons learned from combat experience in providing direct support and [time-sensitive/mission-critical] intra-theater airlift into joint doctrine,” the Jan. 27 MoU says.

[**RETURN**](#Budget)

**B2**

**Casey touts Biden meeting to try to save Air Force Reserve base**

(*AP, 19 Mar 12*) … Unattributed

<http://www.wjactv.com/news/news/casey-touts-biden-meeting-try-save-air-force-reser/nLXbz/>

PITTSBURGH - U.S. Sen. Bob Casey said he has met with Vice President Joe Biden to try to save a Pittsburgh-area Air Force Reserve base that military authorities have slated for closure, jeopardizing 1,451 jobs.

Casey said in a statement that he met with Biden on Saturday at the 911th Air Wing, where the vice president had arrived to attend the St. Patrick's Day parade in Pittsburgh.

Other Pennsylvania lawmakers from both parties have also called on military authorities to preserve the base.

Casey said he argued that leasing the base doesn't cost much and losing the base would deprive the military of a skilled workforce.

The senator said he also wants the base considered for association with a C-130 unit that the Pentagon has requested.

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**B3**

**Scott Brown visits Westover Air Reserve Base, readies for Senate hearing Tuesday**

(*The Republican, 19 Mar 12*) … Jim Kinney

<http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2012/03/post_291.html>

CHICOPEE – U.S. Sen. Scott P. Brown toured Westover Air Reserve Base Monday, one day before he plans to question Air Force brass on proposed cuts to Westover and other Air Force installations around the state including Barnes Air National Guard Base in Westfield.

“How do the changes they are proposing save the government money and help the mission,” Brown said Monday.

Tuesday, Air Force Secretary Michael B. Donley and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton A. Schwartz will testify to the Senate Armed Services Committee. Brown is on the 26-Senator committee along with six other senators from neighboring states: Joseph I. Lieberman, I-Conn.; Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H.; Kirsten E. Gillibrand, D-N.Y; Richard Blumenthal , D-Conn.; Kelly Ayotte, D-N.H.; and Susan M. Collins, R-Maine.

That support is thought critical for Westover because reservists assigned there often live some distance away.

The committee’s powerful chairman, Sen. Carl Levin, D-Detroit, is poised, meanwhile, to raise questions about the Air Force’s plans to eliminate upwards of 600 jobs at Selfridge Air National Guard base in his state. The Guard unit at Selfridge flies the A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft which were once flown in Western Massachusetts and are now being phased out of service by the Air Force.

In Michigan, as in Massachusetts, members of the congressional delegation have sent letters to Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and military leaders to voice opposition to the cuts, citing the loss of jobs and other economic fallout on the regional economy, and they, like other states, are garnering grassroots support among communities directly affected by the proposed cuts.

Brown plans to renew his suggestion that if the Air Force must consolidate operations, why not return active-duty Air Force operations to Westover and take advantage of the facilities, the bases safety and efficiency records and its proximity to Europe and the Middle East.

“Why are disrupting something that is already working,” he said. “Is there a way to shift he mission. Is there a way to give us the active-duty component to help us fulfill that mission.”

Consumer advocate Elizabeth Warren, Brown’s expected Democratic opponent in the November election, has also voiced support for Westover and Barnes saying they both play significant roles in national security.

The Air Force has announced plans to cut 153 civilian and 180 military jobs in Massachusetts as early as Oct. 1. The reduction is part of the Defense Department’s plan to trim $500 billion in defense spending over the next 10 years.

Westover has a total of 2,333 Reserve members with 79 full-time Reserves and 838 civilian workers. The planned cut is four Reserve members and 13 civilians effective with the fiscal year 2013 budget. The 104th Fighter Wing stationed at Barnes airport has 801 part-time military, 149 full-time military and 273 civilian positions. The part-time manpower list will increase by seven, but full-time military will lose two positions and one civilian post will be eliminated if the Air Force reduction plan is implemented.

In a separate move not counted in those reductions, the Air Force has also announced plans to transfer eight of the 16 C-5 jumbo jet transports assigned to Westover’s 439th Airlift Wing to Lackland Air Force Base in Texas in 2016.

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**B4**

**The Air Force numbers game**

(*The Hill, 19 Mar 12*) … Philip Ewing

<http://www.dodbuzz.com/2012/03/19/the-air-force-numbers-game/>

The active, Guard and Reserve branches of the Air Force are in a food fight over which units and aircraft would go away in the Austerity Force proposed by this year’s budget submission. Who’s right? They all are.

Or maybe they’re all wrong.

The blue-suiters have found themselves in a numbers battle in which anything can be true or false depending on how you draw the graph. This is necessitated by political problems. The Air Force secretary or chief of staff can’t go to Congress and say: I hate the C-27J; I’ve always hated it; it’s antithetical to everything I believe in my blue heart. Lawmakers can say, ‘Well, thank you for your opinion, but we’re keeping them.’ Instead, Big Air Force has to say, “Oh, yikes, this little airlifter is only a ‘niche’ capability, and it’s too expensive, and we can just do what it does with other airplanes just fine.’”

Enter Ohio Air National Guard Capt. Dave Lohrer, who drew up a PowerPoint deck challenging the analysis upon which the Air Force based its decision to ice or sell all of its C-27J Spartans. As our distinguished colleague Mike Hoffman reported Friday, Lohrer’s objections were troubling enough that the Air Force convened a roundtable to answer his criticisms for reporters, think-tankists and Hill staffers.

Wrote Hoffman:

Lohrer’s briefing attacks some of the numbers the service has used in its comparison between the C-27 and C-130, such as the 25-year lifecycle costs. Schwartz cited the C-27J 25-year lifecycle cost at $308 million. He said the C-130J similarly cost the Air Force $213 million and the C-130H $185 million.

The Ohio Guardsman argues that the Air Force added 53 more airmen than the C-27J needs to its cost analysis to push the 25-year life-cycle price up an additional $112 million. Lohrer said he found early analysis the Air Force did that dropped the C-27J 25-year lifecycle costs all the way down to $111 million.

Kevin Williams, a retired Air Force colonel who is one of the service’s leading analysts, said Friday he has no idea where Lohrer came up with the $111 million figure.

“It doesn’t exist in any formal authorized signed document. That then becomes the basis of kind of like a math problem when you have the wrong number of the first step of your process and that error ripples through everything else,” said Williams, the deputy director of Air Force Headquarters’ Studies and Analyses, Assessments and Lessons Learned directorate, better known as A9.

Williams also questioned the figure Lohrer used for cost per flying hour. Williams said the service had tabulated each C-27 marginal flying hour to cost $2,700, not $2,100, as Lohrer had written in his briefing.

Everyone’s motives here are as plain as day — the Ohio Guardsmen who fly the C-27J want to keep doing so. The big-airplane blue types in the Building want these little airplanes to go away. The math battle ultimately could just boil down to a contest over whose kung-fu is better.

But Lohrer adds more to the story that the Air Force doesn’t like to talk about: The U.S. has spent hundreds of millions of dollars in Afghanistan on contract airlift support, hiring small aircraft for local resupply and other missions. Why, if the Air Force has enough airlift capacity, does it need to spend all the extra money to outsource transport? In fact, Lohrer argues, if DoD used that money to buy more C-27Js, it could accomplish the tasks and own new airplanes ready for a life of service, at a greater long-term value.

One of his last slides compares the Air Force to FedEx, going from “heavy lift/long-haul” capabilities on the left — the C-5 Galaxy and FedEx’s DC-10s — down to the “short-haul/high efficiency” delivery trucks and twin-engine propeller aircraft on the right. The Air Force’s version of that is the C-27J, Lohrer argues; he implicitly makes the case that taking it away would be like taking away FedEx’s delivery vans and forcing it to use only its tractor trailers.

Friday’s Air Force briefer rejected all this out of hand, as Hoffman wrote:

Williams told a group of reporters and defense analysts Friday that Lohrer and the Ohio Air Guard should have consulted the Air Force before publishing his briefing. “We can’t find anyone in A9 who ever heard from anyone in the Guard about wanting to validate or verify the numbers they were using,” Williams said.

What a surprise.

When all the dust settled, the Air Force was sticking to its guns, and the Guard and its allies continued to question this year’s budget decisions. This stalemate could continue for quite a while.

[**RETURN**](#Budget)

**B5**

**Pentagon Budget Secures Major Strategic Win For Lockheed**

(*AOL Defense, 19 Mar 12*) … Loren Thompson

<http://defense.aol.com/2012/03/19/pentagon-budget-secures-major-strategic-win-for-lockheed/>

If you are one of those people who believes the various conspiracy theories making the rounds about Lockheed Martin's excessive influence over government decisions, the Pentagon's fiscal 2013 budget request probably won't make you feel any better.

For more news and information on the swiftly-changing defense industry, please sign up for the AOL Defense newsletter. For the quickest updates, like us on Facebook.

Having served as an advisor to Lockheed and many of its competitors for a long time, I don't take the conspiracy-mongering very seriously because I frequently see up close how frustrated company executives get with their military customer. However, I have to admit I was surprised at how well the nation's biggest military supplier made out in the Obama Administration's reordering of Pentagon priorities.

It is no exaggeration to say the budget request sets the stage for Lockheed to dominate the domestic military marketplace for a generation to come.

The official version of events from policymakers is that the defense budget is being cut by a quarter trillion dollars over the next five years in a "balanced" fashion that will share pain across all mission areas, military services, and major suppliers. And sure enough, Lockheed did take a significant hit to its biggest franchise, the $400 billion F-35 Joint Strike Fighter. But look a little closer at the dozens of major adjustments in weapons accounts, and what you see is that the dominant military contractor is likely to become even more dominant as a result of the decisions made. For instance:

The administration confirmed a production goal of 2,443 fighters for the F-35 program, declining to scale back or cancel any of the versions being developed for three different military services. Lockheed Martin will soon be the only company producing fighters in the United States, and policymakers have made foreign sales of the F-35 a pillar of their plan for relying more on overseas partners.

Cuts to mobility aircraft justified by reduced warfighting requirements leave Lockheed's C-130J Super Hercules transport as the only fixed-wing airlifter still being produced in the decade ahead. No funding is requested for Boeing's C-17 airlifter even thought President Obama praised it on the campaign trail in 2008, and L3's smaller C-27 transport is being discarded even before it reaches the force, but the Pentagon plans to continue buying C-130s for the Air Force, Marines and Special Operations Forces indefinitely.

Every single military satellite that Lockheed Martin builds is strongly supported by the budget request, making it the dominant player in space-based missile warning, secure communications and global positioning through 2025. Meanwhile, the Pentagon's National Reconnaissance Office has conferred a multi-billion-dollar contract on the company that restores its traditional role as the leading developer of photo-reconnaissance satellites.

The other parts of Lockheed's military space business, launch vehicles and ground networks, will benefit greatly from the emphasis the new spending plan places on staying ahead in space. The budget stabilizes demand for launch vehicles manufactured by a Lockheed-Boeing joint venture at economical rates while funding numerous ground nodes and networks for better utilizing the capabilities of overhead assets.

The new budget also puts a premium on operating successfully in cyberspace, a goal which requires many billions of dollars in spending on computer network defense, exploitation and attack. Lockheed Martin has been rapidly expanding its role in all aspects of cyber security for the military and civil agencies, leveraging its status as the biggest supplier of information services to the federal government.

Lockheed's long-running Aegis naval combat system franchise is effectively made the centerpiece of administration missile defense plans, eclipsing other programs that are either too controversial or lack the flexibility of sea-basing. A senior Navy official inadvertently disclosed recently that his service wants to build toward a goal of 72 Aegis missile defense destroyers in the future while gradually enhancing the capabilities of each vessel, signaling that the Aegis program will live on for decades to come.

The Navy also confirmed support for the Littoral Combat Ship, a shallow-water warship in which Lockheed Martin has invested considerable resources over the last decade. Not only will the new warships be stationed in places like Singapore as part of the new Asia-Pacific posture, but they look likely to take on added roles in the Horn of Africa and Caribbean as bigger warships are shifted to the Pacific.

I could go on, but you get the point. Lockheed Martin is poised to be by far the biggest beneficiary of the new military spending priorities articulated by the Obama Administration. It has lost little in the trade-offs leading up to the budget release, and it is actually gaining ground from the setbacks dealt its rivals. Termination of Northrop Grumman's Global Hawk Block 30 unmanned aircraft will result in the Air Force relying on Lockheed Martin's U-2 spy plane for decades to come.

Cancellation of the same company's Defense Weather Satellite System means the military will continue to depend on Lockheed's legacy weather satellites. The demise of a Boeing program to upgrade electronics on the C-130 airlifter will probably lead the Air Force to turn to a lower-cost approach offered by Lockheed. Even the Navy's stretch-out of production for a next-generation maritime patrol aircraft dubbed the P-8 Poseidon that Boeing is building at its commercial transport plant in Renton, Wash. will probably result in extending operations of existing P-3 Orion patrol planes supported by -- you guessed it, Lockheed Martin.

Not that the companies losing ground are likely to complain about Lockheed Martin's good fortune. Northrop Grumman generates billions of dollars in revenue each year from its subcontractor role on programs where Lockheed leads such as the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter and the Space-Based Infrared System missile warning system. Even Raytheon, Lockheed's most persistent rival in naval electronics and missile defense, is locked into supplier relationships with the behemoth of Bethesda on dozens of programs. So although there is probably a fair amount of grousing behind the scenes about how well Lockheed Martin is doing, the unhappiness is muted in public.

What's ironic about all this, though, is that Lockheed Martin is faring so well after four years of continuing friction with Obama Administration officials over the F-35 fighter. The administration has understandably focused on the Pentagon's biggest weapons program as the place to begin implementing acquisition reforms, but company executives feel that the resulting delays and restructurings are undermining the business case for the program by increasing the cost of each plane. The most recent round of recriminations over what government program managers contend is excessive concurrency in the program -- meaning production in advance of flight testing -- has seriously damaged relations between the two sides. But there is little evidence of the tensions in Pentagon budget decisions beyond the F-35, some which make Lockheed Martin look like the government's favorite contractor.

The explanation for this outcome resides less in undue influence than it does in the company's performance. When Boeing failed to perform on a next-generation spy satellite program, Lockheed Martin was able to avert a prolonged shortfall in imagery collections by delivering a gap-filler satellite two years earlier than expected for two billion dollars less than planned. When plans for future missile defense systems came unraveled due to technical hurdles and cost growth, Lockheed Martin was able to evolve its Aegis system to meet the defensive needs of the joint force. Even the F-35 program, which has been subjected to a continuous drumbeat of negative coverage as schedules have slipped, is progressing steadily through flight testing without encountering any major design problems -- a key factor in why the administration has stuck with plans to build all 2,443 planes.

Besides being better at execution than many of its competitors, Lockheed Martin has also done a very good job of positioning itself in the military marketplace. Company executives didn't over commit their business mix to short-lived opportunities like military transformation and stability operations, preferring instead to concentrate in areas where Lockheed traditionally excelled such as military space and naval electronics. Thus, Lockheed Martin is less exposed as the military customer begins shifting back to the investment priorities that prevailed before 9-11. It has also been aggressive in cutting costs since the first signs of softness in military demand began to appear.

So even though Lockheed's revenues are not expected to grow much in the years ahead unless it diversifies or buys other defense companies, its profit margins have strengthened across all major business units. Some observers will interpret this trend as further evidence that Lockheed Martin has a special relationship with its government customer. Investors are likely to conclude it is just better run than its competitors.

[**RETURN**](#Budget)

**CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN THE NUCLEAR ENTERPRISE**

**N1**

**U.S. to Maintain Talks With Russia on Missile Shield Guarantees**

(*Global Security Newswire, 19 Mar 12*) … Unattributed

<http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/us-maintain-talk-russia-missile-shield-gurantees/>

A senior U.S. diplomat on Thursday said the Obama administration would maintain talks with Russia on the potential provision of a pledge regarding the use of U.S. missile interceptors planned for deployment around Europe, ITAR-Tass reported (see GSN, March 15).

The two nations have attempted in more than a year of discussions to resolve Moscow's demand that it be provided with a legally binding assurance that U.S. interceptors to be placed in Poland, Romania and on warships home ported in Spain will not be aimed against Russian long-range nuclear missiles. The Obama administration at various times has offered verbal promises on the matter but has declined to put those assurances in writing.

The United States and NATO say their shared missile defense plan for the continent is aimed at countering threats from the Middle East, notably Iran. They have sought to draw a skeptical Russia into the effort.

The Kremlin has threatened to pursue an arms buildup in the Kaliningrad region, a Russian territory that borders NATO nations, if a deal fails to materialize. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on Wednesday told lawmakers that "if the United States does not want to change anything in the missile defense plans, it should provide guarantees that it is not directed against Russia."

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Philip Gordon told ITAR-Tass that Moscow and Washington are continuing talks on potential options for a security guarantee. He did not provide further specifics on the form of the talks.

"We continue the dialogue on missile defense," Gordon said.

U.S. special envoy for strategic stability and missile defense Ellen Tauscher traveled to the Russian capital last week for a meeting with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov, according to Gordon (ITAR-Tass, March 16).

[**RETURN**](#Nuclear)

**N2**

**Scientific Report on Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Due This Month**

(*Global Security Newswire, 19 Mar 12*) … Unattributed

<http://www.nti.org/gsn/article/long-awaited-nas-report-us-ratification-nuclear-test-ban-due-soon/>

A long-awaited scientific report on technical matters related to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is to be released at the end of the month, Bloomberg reported on Sunday (see GSN, Feb. 22).

A special panel of the National Research Council is scheduled to issue the results of a three-year study on March 30, according to the committee's website.

The report is a follow-up to a 2002 analysis from the National Academies. It will study "the ability of the United States to maintain the safety and reliability of the U.S. nuclear stockpile" without explosive testing, according to a released statement. Additionally, the report is to analyze such matters as "the capability to detect, locate and identify nuclear explosions."

The Obama administration has repeatedly signaled its determination to secure Senate approval of the pact, which supporters say promotes nonproliferation by barring member states from conducting nuclear tests needed to develop new or better weapons. The United States has observed a voluntary moratorium on nuclear trials since 1992.

Republican lawmakers, though, have also telegraphed their intent to oppose ratification. They have questioned the technical merits of the global of the global system for detecting nuclear blasts and say the country might one day need to carry out such tests.

"The report is likely to confirm that the Stockpile Stewardship Program has been very effective and that there are no technical reasons to resume testing," Arms Control Association Executive Director Daryl Kimball told Bloomberg.

The stewardship program employs sophisticated computer models and other systems to verify the safety, effectiveness and reliability of the U.S. nuclear arsenal.

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty has been ratified by 157 countries. A total of 44 "Annex 2" nations must ratify the nonproliferation pact for its entry into force; the holdouts from that group are China, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, North Korea, Pakistan and the United States (Viola Gienger, Bloomberg, March 16).

[**RETURN**](#Nuclear)

**PARTNER WITH JOINT AND COALITION TEAM TO WIN TODAY’S FIGHT**

**P1**

**Coalition troops hope to improve Afghan pilots' literacy and, eventually, aviation skills**

(*Stars and Stripes, 19 Mar 12*) … Heath Druzin

<http://www.stripes.com/news/coalition-troops-hope-to-improve-afghan-pilots-literacy-and-eventually-aviation-skills-1.172087>

KABUL - After more than 30 years of war, the few qualified pilots in Afghanistan are largely graying veterans of the old Soviet-backed military who haven’t flown a MiG in decades.

Now, the U.S. Air Force is playing catch-up, with programs to develop young Afghan pilots, as well as rank-and-file airmen, called soldiers by Afghans.

Long before pilots can get in the cockpit, mechanics under the hood or enlisted soldiers to checkpoints, there are two basic problems to address: literacy and, in the case of the pilots, the ability to speak English, which is the international language of aviation.

Thunder Lab

Several checkpoints past the bustling NATO side of Kabul International Airport, a handful of coalition troops are working to build an air force with a fleet that consists of a few Russian helicopters and a collection of transport planes and Cessnas.

At Thunder Lab, a select group of prospective Afghan pilots live, eat and train with their American and British counterparts in an immersion environment aimed at improving their English, as well as their aviation skills. The students are expected to speak almost entirely English, and push-ups are handed out at formation to those caught straying into their native language.

“I am very impressed with the young generation trying to improve [themselves], trying to improve their country,” said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Daryl Sassaman, a C-130 pilot who oversees Thunder Lab, run by the 438th Air Expeditionary Wing.

There is camaraderie among the Afghans and NATO mentors, rare in the country where distrust between forces is the norm — and more so since the deadly riots triggered by the burning of Qurans at Bagram Air Field and subsequent rash of U.S. deaths at the hands of Afghan troops. Thunder Lab students accompany their coalition counterparts to the dining hall, and mentors sit down to traditional Afghan meals regularly, getting to know each other intimately.

Still, trust extends only so far. Other than gate guards and a few intelligence officers, Afghan soldiers are not allowed to carry weapons on their own base, and their U.S. mentors travel in full body armor to go even the few hundred yards to the entrance of the NATO side of the base. Since the Quran-burning incident, they have taken even more precautions, though officials would not get into specifics.

During the day, Thunder Lab students spend most of the time in the classroom at the Kabul Education Language Training Center, where contract teachers oversee English courses of varying levels. Students must show steady improvement on regular tests and get an 80 percent on a final English exam to go on to pilot training. Many students emerge bleary-eyed in the mornings from all-night study sessions before tests.

One problem is that all but two of the teachers (plus one American mentor who fills in from time to time) at the center are Afghans for whom English is not a first language. In one classroom recently, the Afghan teacher continually stumbled, writing grammatically incorrect sentences as examples on a whiteboard, such as, “He goes to bus stop.”

In the afternoons and evenings, students head back to Thunder Lab’s small collection of two-story metal buildings, where they chat with their mentors and take classes in basic aviation. The classes include the use of flight simulators programmed to mimic the terrain at Shindand Air Base in western Afghanistan, where qualifying students will go to take hands-on flight training. Thunder Lab itself is in the process of moving to Shindand.

Despite the problems, students such as air force Lt. Nilofor Rhamani, one of two women at Thunder Lab, say they are determined to improve their English and make it to the cockpit.

“It’s my ambition, and I want to serve my country,” she said of her goal to fly helicopters for the Afghan air force.

Starting with the basics

Below the pilot level, the air force is struggling, like all the other branches of the Afghan security forces, to recruit literate troops. In a country where only an estimated 28 percent of the population can read, almost all of the recruits who come to Pohantoon-e-Hawayee, or PeH, the Afghan air force training college, are illiterate.

Without the ability to read identification cards and mechanical manuals, the nascent air force won’t get off the ground, said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Michael Needham, of the 738th Air Expeditionary Advisory Squadron, who oversees the coalition mentoring program. Students must achieve a third-grade reading level in the Dari language (they don’t offer Pashto classes, although 35 percent of the population speaks it, and identification cards are in Dari and Pashto).

“If they’re illiterate and you’re going to train them to work on an airplane, well, that doesn’t make any sense,” he said.

Needham praised his Afghan counterparts, but acknowledged some basic problems. Literacy is required of officers and noncommissioned officers, but it’s considered rude to test them; just getting students to show up can be a challenge.

“A 20 percent AWOL rate is acceptable for them,” Needham said.

According to the head of the college, Col. Mahmood Ur Rahman, crumbling infrastructure is a major obstacle to recruiting.

“The biggest challenge right now is the lack of facilities,” he said.

As the lights flickered off on a recent day at the PeH headquarters, U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Joe Fleming sighed.

“And we just lost some translations,” he said.

Fleming oversees a team that translates documents, including mechanical manuals, from English to Dari. The power goes out four or five times per day, and there’s never enough fuel for the generator. The frequent outages mean lots of do-overs for translators.

Despite the problems, Needham sees progress in his program, which has expanded in terms of both number of students and resources. Prospective mechanics even have a hangar with a Russian Mi-8 helicopter and an airplane engine to practice their skills.

In the midst of hundreds of Afghan students in the middle of an Afghan-run base, trust is everything for Needham and his team of mentors. Needham said there was never talk of shutting down or scaling back the program in the Quran-burning aftermath and subsequent violence, noting his personal relationship with Rahman.

“We can’t let them win,” he said.

A murky future

The work will take years, and with President Barack Obama setting 2014 as the deadline for a drawdown of combat forces, Afghan military officials are nervous about the future.

“I don’t want to talk about 2014 because it’s just an idea,” Rahman said.

While mentors work hard to improve Afghan skills, some of the security force’s most persistent problems — corruption, nepotism and low pay — may be beyond the coalition’s control. This came into stark relief with the investigation, reported last week by The Wall Street Journal, into possible drug-running by senior Afghan air force officers. They included an Afghan colonel who gunned down eight U.S. Air Force officers last year, allegedly after he was implicated.

During an English speech at Thunder Lab on the history of Afghanistan, one student joked about corruption in his country.

“Yama was the first king of Afghanistan; maybe Karzai is the next one,” he said.

Another Thunder Lab student, 2nd Lt. Obaid Ullah Ibrahimkhil, while praising his mentors, put it more bluntly. “The government spends a lot of money, but don’t take care of us,” he said.

[**RETURN**](#PARTNER)

**P2**

**Air Force confirms Metzger kidnapped in 2006**

(*Air Force Times, 19 Mar 12*) … Jeff Schogol

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/news/2012/03/air-force-confirms-metzger-kidnapped-2006-031912/>

The Air Force has confirmed that a major who went missing in Kyrgyzstan six years ago was kidnapped, debunking an online smear campaign that claimed she went AWOL.

On Feb. 3, investigators officially closed the case of Maj. Jill Metzger, who disappeared for several days in September 2006. She later said she had been kidnapped and had managed to escape.

“The Air Force Office of Special Investigations and several outside agencies then conducted a comprehensive and detailed examination of all the facts in this case and continued the investigation as long as was necessary in order to get to the truth,” Air Force spokeswoman Maj. Tracy A. Bunko said.

After talking to hundreds of people, canvassing areas of Kyrgyzstan and conducting a forensic analysis of the evidence, investigators determined that all of the evidence supported Metzger’s account of what had happened, Bunko said in an email.

“By analysis of all of the available information, the OSI eliminated multiple alternate scenarios and concluded the information uncovered is consistent with Maj. Metzger’s account of the events,” Bunko said.

Metzger went missing on Sept. 5, 2006, after visiting a department store in the Kyrgyz capital Bishkek.

“A detailed review of surveillance tapes of the shopping center from which Maj. Metzger was abducted depicts an apparent organized surveillance effort against her on 5 September by at least two unidentified persons,” Bunko said. “As Maj. Metzger departed the mall, one of the individuals conducting the surveillance closely followed her.”

A redacted report of the investigation suggests criminals may have confused Metzger with someone else, kidnapping her by mistake. The intended target of the kidnapping, who is not named, “fit the same general physical description as VICTIM [Metzger] and carried the same type of large shoulder bag.”

Metzger was able to escape by stabbing one of her captors with a stick she had sharpened into a shank and then locking him in the room where she was held. She eventually knocked on the door of a local couple, who took her to police.

[**RETURN**](#PARTNER)

**P3**

**Allen: U.S. to stay the course in Afghanistan**

(*AP, 19 Mar 12*) … Lolita C. Baldor

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/news/2012/03/ap-allen-us-to-stay-course-afghanistan-031912/>

WASHINGTON - The U.S. must stick to its strategy in Afghanistan, including the planned withdrawal calendar, over the next several months despite recent setbacks that have tested America’s relations with the Afghans, the top U.S. commander for the war is telling Congress.

Gen. John Allen is heading to Capitol Hill Tuesday for the first time since the Koran burnings and last week’s shooting spree by a U.S. soldier inflamed anti-American sentiment in Afghanistan. The incidents spawned attacks against U.S. forces and prompted Afghan leaders to demand that American troops pull out of local villages and rural areas.

The upheaval has fueled Congressional opposition to the war, insuring that Allen will face lawmakers who are bitterly divided and increasingly skeptical of the administration’s strategy.

In frank testimony prepared for delivery to the House Armed Services Committee Tuesday, Allen argues that while the last few months “have been trying,” the coalition and its Afghan allies have made progress and degraded the insurgency.

“This campaign has been long. It has been difficult, and it has been costly. There have been setbacks, to be sure, we’re experiencing them now, and there will be more setbacks ahead,” Allen says. “I wish I could tell you that this war was simple, and that progress could be easily measured. But that’s not the way of counterinsurgencies.”

Allen’s testimony, which was obtained by The Associated Press, comes at one of the most troubled points in the decade-long conflict, as election politics in America and Afghanistan, coupled with the unpopularity of the war, put unprecedented pressure on U.S. commanders to get troops home.

In recent weeks, U.S.-Afghan relations have been strained by the burning by Korans and other religious materials at a U.S. military base, followed by the massacre just over a week ago of 16 Afghans, including women and children, allegedly by an American Army soldier. Afghans were further angered when the soldier, Staff Sgt. Robert Bales, was flown out of Afghanistan and taken to Fort Leavenworth’s military prison in Kansas.

The Koran burnings sparked a week of riots and retaliatory attacks that left more than 30 people dead, including six U.S. soldiers.

Against that backdrop, Allen will tell Congress that while there is much hard and deadly work ahead, “the progress is real, and, importantly, it’s sustainable.”

The chairman of the House panel, Rep. Howard “Buck” McKeon, R-Calif., has pushed for the U.S. to be cautious pulling troops out, so the move won’t risk the gains that have been won.

“An insurgent is the toughest kind of opponent a democracy can fight. Rooting them out takes patience,” he said last week.

But Rep. Adam Smith, D-Wash., a top Democrat on the committee, is among those calling for a faster withdrawal.

“It is time to bring our troops home, and, while the president has laid out a responsible path to do so, we should continue to look for every opportunity to accelerate our timeline,” Smith wrote in an opinion piece in USA Today.

One senior military official said Monday that while Allen will face tough questioning about the direction of the war, he will urge perseverance in the strategy. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta delivered a similar message last week as he traveled to Afghanistan, insisting that the U.S. must not lose sight of its mission.

The U.S. currently has about 90,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan and plans to withdraw another 22,000 by fall. Panetta has said he does not expect to get the schedule for the withdrawal from Allen until later this spring, and that there are no firm plans yet for additional troop withdrawals through the end of the year.

[**RETURN**](#PARTNER)

**DEVELOP AND CARE FOR AIRMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES**

**D1**

**MRFF: AF Academy dean directing counterattack**

(*Air Force Times, 19 Mar 12*) … Markeshia Ricks

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/news/2012/03/air-force-mrff-academy-dean-directing-counterattack-031912w/>

The Air Force is giving “appropriate consideration” to allegations that the Air Force Academy’s dean of faculty ordered a campaign against a religious freedom watchdog group and then lied about it during a deposition, according to a letter obtained by Air Force Times.

The Military Religious Freedom Foundation has pressed the Air Force to investigate allegations that Brig. Gen. Dana Born directed a subordinate, in writing, to launch a campaign against the watchdog group and then denied it during a deposition taken in December.

The deposition was part of an ongoing Equal Employment Opportunity case filed by former Air Force Academy economics professor David Mullin, who is a client of the watchdog group. Mullin, who now works at the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs, alleges that his contract with the Academy was not renewed because of disability discrimination by Born and Vice Dean of Faculty Col. Robert Fullerton.

Mullin also is the complainant in an Inspector General investigation launched last year that accused Born and Fullerton of “inaccurately portraying” and making a “false statement” about faculty credentials. In February, the IG found Born and Fullerton negligent for incorrectly telling the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association and a Colorado Springs newspaper that all academy instructors had degrees in the fields in which they were teaching. Whether or not Born or Fullerton received any punishment because of the findings is unknown.

An attorney for the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, Robert Eye, requested an investigation Feb. 1 into statements made by Born during the December deposition, and demanded a response in a follow-up letter Feb. 29.

A March 15 response, from Air Force Deputy General Counsel W. Kipling At Lee Jr., said it would not be appropriate to comment about the status of any investigation, but “I can advise you that the allegations … are being given appropriate consideration.”

Born is being accused by MRFF of writing a note about conducting a “COIN” against clients of the religious freedom watchdog group.

“In this context ‘COIN’ is a shorthand reference to counterinsurgency,” Eye wrote.

MRFF founder Mikey Weinstein participated in Born’s deposition, and said he believes that she did not tell the truth when directly asked if she had ever used the term “counter-insurgency” to describe any conduct of students or faculty at the Academy.

Weinstein said any such directive would have a chilling affect on the 363 clients his organization represents at the Academy.

[**RETURN**](#Develop)

**D2**

**Recruiting goals to remain steady this year**

(*Air Force Times, 19 Mar 12*) … Markeshia Ricks

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/news/2012/03/air-force-recruiting-goals-steady-in-2012-031912w/>

SAN ANTONIO - Despite expected significant reductions in budget and manpower for fiscal 2013, the Air Force’s recruiting mission remains on track - at least for now, according to the one-star who leads that mission.

Brig. Gen. Balan R. Ayyar, commander of the Air Force Recruiting Service, said March 6 that the service does not expect to reduce the number of new airmen it will recruit in fiscal 2013.

“From my perspective, I have not seen any significant diminishment,” he said of accessions. “We are well within the parameter of normal adjustment of how many airmen are leaving and how many are coming in. We’re largely at the same level of requirements as we were last year, for the most part.”

The Air Force brings in about 28,815 new enlisted accessions a year. Ayyar said the service is attracting some of the best qualified recruits in the service’s history. Many airmen come in with a high school diploma and score high on military aptitude tests.

“Our attrition rates have dropped in almost every [Air Force Specialty Code],” he said.

Col. T.J. Kenney, chief of recruiting operations, echoed that assessment, saying Air Force recruiters have been able to attract a higher performing recruit, oftentimes one with a high school diploma, and recruits tend to perform better, complete their basic military training and do well once they hit the technical training schoolhouse door.

But Ayyar said recruiting does face future challenges. As the number of airmen currently serving diminishes, he said it is possible that the Air Force could reduce the number of new recruits it accepts to help offset reduced end-strength numbers.

The Air Force’s current end strength stands at just over 332,800, but the fiscal 2013 budget calls for the elimination of more than 3,900 active-duty airmen. With the looming threat of cutting another overall $500 billion from the Defense Department budget if sequestration kicks in, Ayyar said the Air Force might have to make reductions on the front end at some point.

“The Air Force Recruiting Service is a pretty unique mission in that no matter what the requirements overall are for the Air Force, we will still have a strong demand because of the nature of service,” he said. “There’s a model that shows how many young airmen we need to bring in just to meet our end-strength requirements with the average attrition.

“[But] one could imagine that, if you have a steady state that is a lower number for the Air Force, then you would eventually see that matriculate to the accessions process,” he said.

In addition to the immediate challenges, which Ayyar has said are forcing every Air Force organization to develop a “more cost-conscious culture,” he also said the improving economy will present a challenge for the Air Force. Historically, low unemployment has meant that young people like the ones the service tries to recruit have more opportunities in the private sector. Patriotism and love of country may fall short in that environment, Ayvar said.

“Historically, we’ve been able to win that fight, and it’s something we’re working very hard on, and it requires us to be very, very aggressive and proactive with our target audience,” he said. That includes leveraging technology to reach recruits.

Ayyar said a huge challenge — and a growing one — is the fact that 75 percent of eligible recruits either have health issues that would disqualify them from military service, or have made a life choice, such as committing a crime, that eliminates them from military service.

“To find the young men and young women who have the right stuff … [recruiters] have to go through 100 people to get to the one,” he said. “To know that 75 percent have somehow, because of their decisions, taken themselves out of the running to serve their country — it breaks my heart.”

[**RETURN**](#Develop)

**D3**

**Services exchange leadership culture**

(*Marine Corps Times, 19 Mar 12*) … Markeshia Ricks

<http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/2012/03/air-force-leadership-culture-shared-031912w/>

Squadron Officer School airmen at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala., recently played host to 35 soldiers and Marines from the Army Captains Career Course about 81 miles down the road at Fort Benning, Ga., in what leaders from both courses hope will be a long-term relationship that will benefit both branches.

The Army officers spent a day at Maxwell learning about leadership — Air Force style — and the members of both branches say they’re a little bit better for it. Air Force company-grade officers will get the opportunity to head to Fort Benning sometime in the future.

Air Force Capt. Shane Trego, curriculum development officer at Squadron Officer College, which includes the school, said he believes the exchange will help foster better communication and greater understanding of what each branch brings to the joint fight.

“This is the first of what we hope will be many engagements down the road — going in both directions,” Trego said.

In addition to a leadership briefing by a faculty member and discussions about leadership styles and careers, the Army and Marine officers were able to join airmen for a problem-solving task called Project X. It presents a problem that the group has to solve in a limited time and imposes rules that the group doesn’t learn until right before they start the exercise.

Army Capt. William McMurray, an infantry officer, said bringing soldiers, Marines and airmen together allows them to learn each other’s lingo and what those distinctions mean to each service, which is clearly beneficial in a joint environment.

“The biggest takeaway is getting a different perspective,” he said. “It’s having an appreciation and understanding how the Air Force interacts on a daily basis. … Leadership isn’t just specific to one small sub-discipline or one small job focus. It’s all-encompassing.”

Army Maj. J.M. Phillips, an instructor at the Maneuver Captains Career Course at Fort Benning, said Army officers, who are given leadership roles as second lieutenants, were able to share some of their practical wisdom about commanding troops and moving up the ranks. He said many of the Air Force officers took a keen interest in this because they had yet to experience it.

“An Air Force officer may not be directly in charge of troops until he’s a lieutenant colonel, depending on what his [job] is in the Air Force,” Phillips said.

In return, Phillips said Army officers received an opportunity to understand more about the inner workings of the Air Force, and even more technical things such as why certain assets might not be available when everyone is downrange.

Marine Capt. Kyle Wolfe said he had little experience with the Air Force officer corps and the daylong exchange gave him a peek into the Air Force mindset and ideas of leadership. Learning more about the Air Force philosophy has further broadened his idea of leadership, he said, and gave him tools that he believes will help him as he works with junior leadership in the Marine Corps.

Trego said no date has been set for airmen to go to Fort Benning, but the goal is to establish an ongoing exchange that allows members of both courses to take advantage of the bases’ proximity and resources.

Phillips said the exchange experience was excellent and he looks forward to hosting the airmen in Georgia.

“I’d like to have them come up to Benning sometimes and maybe we could further develop the program and let the Air Force guys crawl around in the mud a bit,” he said.

[**RETURN**](#Develop)

**Modernize our Air, Space and Cyberspace Inventories, Orgs and Training**

**M1**

**Pentagon invests heavily in new arsenal of cyberweapons**

(*The Hill, 19 Mar 12*) … Carlo Munoz

<http://thehill.com/blogs/defcon-hill/army/216711-pentagon-goes-on-offense-with-new-cyber-weapons->

The Pentagon is investing heavily in an arsenal of cyberweapons as a debate rages in Congress about how and when they should be used.

The Defense Department is pouring roughly $3.4 billion into cyberwarfare accounts across the services and various combat commands, according to The Washington Post.

Military leaders have set aside $154 million for the department's new Cyber Command, which is the first ever combat command focused on network warfare, according to the report. The 24th Air Force and the Navy's Tenth Fleet are already conducting cyberoperations at the service level.

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) — the Pentagon's premiere research and development office — is setting its sights on cyberweapons that could cripple the computer networks of an enemy force.

DARPA is focusing "an increasing portion of its cyber research on 'offensive capabilities to address military-specific needs,' " Ken Gabriel, the agency's deputy director, told House lawmakers in February.

Gabriel’s comments represented a shift in DOD's approach to cyberwar, which until recently was focused on defending U.S. military networks from attacks.

Cyberattacks have been growing in frequency and intensity over the past few months, and have been directed at new areas in the U.S. military. Attempted network breaches at Transportation Command have gone up by 30 percent compared to last year, according to command chief Gen. William Fraser.

Transportation command has become of particular interest as the Pentagon presses ahead with plans to shift its forces from Afghanistan and Iraq into the Western Pacific. Since the command will be responsible for moving that mountain of metal across the globe, finding out when and where those troops are going would be invaluable information to U.S. adversaries.

Lawmakers on Capitol Hill, meanwhile, are debating if and when the military should engage in cyberwar.

"The most difficult strategic challenge" facing the United States in the realm of cyberwarfare is "distinguishing between cyberespionage, intrusions and potentially disruptive attacks and providing timely warning of cyberthreats and incidents," Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin said during a March 13 hearing. "We would [need] some way of bringing to a resolution that issue so we can have some criteria to determine when the nation is under … military attack that needs a response, or a military-like attack that requires a response."

To that end, Northern Command chief Gen. Charles Jacoby said there was "momentum across the [Defense] Department and across the government" to get some kind of policy in place to make those determinations.

"I don't think that's an unreasonable expectation," Jacoby added.

DOD is having trouble turning that momentum into tangible results, however.

Cyberwar is still an area "we have undervalued and under stressed and in some cases, have fallen behind," Deputy Defense Secretary Ash Carter said during a March 8 speech in Arlington, Va. "We need to do something [more] to get us in the game."

[**RETURN**](#Mod)

**M2**

**USAF's SBIR Satellite Better Than Best Report**

(*SatNews, 19 Mar 12*) … Unattributed

<http://www.satnews.com/cgi-bin/story.cgi?number=2076540567>

The first Space Based Infrared Systems geosynchronous Earth orbit satellite, currently undergoing a rigorous operational certification process, is meeting or exceeding performance requirements, and on track to be delivered into operations.

Within two months after launch, SBIRS began sharing initial GEO-1 satellite data with technical intelligence mission partners in order to enable early assessments of sensor performance.

On-orbit performance of the first GEO-1 satellite has proven superb. At the payload level, the GEO sensors are detecting targets 25 percent dimmer than requirements with an intensity measurement that is 60 percent more accurate than specifications. The payload pointing is nine times more precise than required, which is a key confidence measure for achieving a system level line-of-sight accuracy well within specification.

The SBIRS GEO-1 satellite includes sophisticated scanning and staring sensors that deliver improved infrared sensitivity and target area scan rates over the current constellation. The scanning sensor provides wide area surveillance of missile launches and infrared phenomena across the earth, while the staring sensor can be used to observe smaller areas of interest with superior sensitivity and revisit time.

While the satellite and its respective ground systems continue final system tuning through May of this year, interim mission performance results indicate that the system already demonstrates the ability to meet more than 90 percent of Air Force Space Command's performance requirements for operational use. The remaining performance refinements are on track to be completed prior to the formal testing campaign slated to begin in June.

"We've been extremely pleased with the performance of this first-of-its-kind spacecraft," said Col. James Planeaux, director of the Infrared Space Systems Directorate. "We fully expect GEO-1 to enter services as an invaluable military asset that will help protect our nation and its allies for many years to come."

Live GEO-1 data will be included in the nation's missile warning and theater event networks during a trial period and operation utility evaluation this fall. This first GEO satellite is expected to be certified for operations by U.S. Strategic Command by the end of 2012.

As one of the nation's highest priority space programs, SBIRS delivers global, persistent, taskable infrared surveillance capabilities to meet 21st-century demands for early warning of missile launches and simultaneous support to other critical missions including missile defense, technical intelligence, and battlespace awareness.

The SBIRS architecture features a mix of GEO satellites, payloads in highly elliptical Earth orbit, and associated ground hardware and software that provides a timely, accurate and clear infrared view of any region of interest around the globe during peacetime and all levels of conflict. The GEO satellites replace and improve upon the legacy Defense Support Program satellites, offering enhanced sensor flexibility and sensitivity to provide global, taskable, 24/7 infrared surveillance capabilities to support the warfighter.

The SBIRS development team is led by the Infrared Space Systems Directorate at the U.S. Air Force Space and Missile Systems Center, Los Angeles Air Force Base, California. Lockheed Martin Space Systems Company, Sunnyvale, California, is the SBIRS prime contractor, with Northrop Grumman Electronic Systems, Azusa, California, as the payload integrator. The 14th Air Force operates the SBIRS system.

[**RETURN**](#Mod)

**M3**

**Air Force to modify F-22 following fatal crash**

(*Los Angeles Times, 19 Mar 12*) … W.J. Hennigan

<http://www.newsobserver.com/2012/03/19/1945154/air-force-to-modify-f-22-following.html>

LOS ANGELES -- The Air Force will modify the handle that engages the emergency oxygen system in its entire fleet of F-22 Raptor fighter jets after a report found that it played a role in a crash that killed one of its top aviators.

The changes come as Anna Haney, the pilot's widow, filed a wrongful-death lawsuit against Lockheed Martin Corp. and subcontractors that designed and built the nation's most expensive fighter jet.

Capt. Jeff Haney, 31, died when his F-22 crashed in the Alaskan wilderness in November 2010.

In her suit, Anna Haney contends that the F-22 is "unreasonably defective" and that the oxygen-generation system, environmental-control system and other life-support systems were responsible for her husband's death.

The lawsuit is just the latest blemish for the controversial F-22, which the Air Force asserts is its most advanced fighter jet. The plane has been in service since 2005 yet has never been used in combat in Iraq, Afghanistan or Libya.

"One of the problems that was found with the emergency oxygen handle is that it's in a difficult place to get to in the dark," said John Noonan, aide to Rep. Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, R-Calif., chairman of the House Armed Services Committee. "So the Air Force is doing some research on making adjustments to its location."

The Air Force confirmed in a statement that about 200 handles, costing $47 each, have been delivered, including spares. The new handles have already been installed in the jets at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson in Alaska, where Haney was based, the Air Force said.

Haney's inability to pull the handle during his fatal accident was one of the issues cited in an accident investigation report released by the Air Force in December.

In a detailed, minute-by-minute account, investigators found that Haney's oxygen supply was stopped automatically after the onboard computers detected an air leak in the engine bay. The aircraft system shut down the oxygen system to protect itself from further damage, as designed.

To save himself and the plane, Haney, wearing bulky cold-weather gear, should have leaned over and, with a gloved hand, pulled a green ring that was under his seat beside his left leg to engage the emergency system, the report said.

In the end, the Air Force blamed the accident on Haney's "channelized attention" to get oxygen through his mask instead of engaging the emergency system, which led to factors that contributed to the crash, the report said.

In her lawsuit, Haney's widow contends that the plane was "designed, manufactured, distributed and sold with a dangerous and defective backup oxygen system, which could only be activated manually, and whose manual activation mechanism was located underneath and behind the pilot."

The suit said the handle's location was "in an area impossible for a pilot to reach while he or she maneuvered the sophisticated aircraft at speeds exceeding the speed of sound and while he or she experienced forces many times the force of gravity."

Lockheed declined to answer questions about the suit, which was filed in Illinois state court in Chicago. Instead, the company issued a statement denying the allegations and announcing it planned to fight the accusations.

"The loss of the pilot and aircraft in November 2010 was a tragic event, and we sympathize with the family for their loss," the statement said. "We are aware that a complaint that makes a variety of claims associated with the accident has been filed with the court in Cook County, Ill. We do not agree with those allegations."

Other contractors that work on the F-22 - such as Boeing Co., Honeywell International Inc. and Pratt & Whitney - wouldn't answer questions involving the pending litigation.

Over the years, F-22 pilots have reported dozens of incidents in which the jet's oxygen systems weren't feeding them enough air, causing wooziness. This issue led to the grounding of the entire fleet last year for nearly five months.

An independent scientific advisory board working under the direction of the Air Force studied safety issues on the plane. Although the report has not become public, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton A. Schwartz said last month that the advisory board did not find a cause of the oxygen problems. Still, the Air Force decided the planes were safe to return to the sky.

"We have not identified a specific engineering fault," Schwartz said in a speech sponsored by the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, "but a number of ways that we can assure that adequate oxygen, in a very high-performance airplane that operates over a very extensive altitude band, protects the operators and maintains their physiological capacity to rock and roll."

Since the jets returned to service in mid-September, the Air Force said, there have been nine incidents in which F-22 pilots during flight reported symptoms of hypoxia - a condition that can bring on nausea, headaches, fatigue or blackouts when the body is deprived of oxygen. Four occurred last month.

According to the Air Force, each of the sleek, diamond-winged aircraft cost $143 million. Counting upgrades, research and development costs, the U.S. Government Accountability Office estimates that each F-22 cost U.S. taxpayers $412 million.

[**RETURN**](#Mod)

**RECAPTURE ACQUISITION EXCELLENCE**

**A1**

**USAF May Cut F-35 Sim Needs**

(*Defense News, 13 Mar 12*) … Marcus Weisgerber

<http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120313/TSJ01/303130009/USAF-May-Cut-F-35-Sim-Needs?odyssey=nav%7Chead>

The Air Force is looking to slash the number of locations where it will base F-35 Joint Strike Fighter squadrons to bring down the jet’s estimated trillion-dollar sustainment costs.

The effort, led by Gen. Norton Schwartz, the Air Force chief of staff, and Lt. Gen. Herbert “Hawk” Carlisle, the deputy chief of staff for operations, plans and requirements, looks at reducing the F-35 bases from the 40s to the “low 30s,” senior service officials say.

“When you reduce the number of bases from 40 to the low 30s, you end up reducing your footprint, making more efficient the long-term sustainment,” David Van Buren, the service’s acquisition executive, said in a March 2 exit interview at the Pentagon.

A 2010 Pentagon estimate pegged the 50-year sustainment cost of 2,443 Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps F-35s at more than $1 trillion. Reducing the number of F-35 bases and increasing squadron sizes at other locations could yield cost savings, according to Schwartz.

“You can base the F-35 or any weapon system at multiple locations and that requires additional support equipment, it requires additional infrastructure and so on and so forth,” Schwartz said at a Feb. 29 Defense Writers Group breakfast in Washington. “If, on the other hand, you choose to base at fewer locations and have larger squadrons — 24, 30, perhaps 36 aircraft per squadron — there are considerable savings and efficiencies associated with that.”

The number of bases could go down even further, Schwartz said, noting that could mean fewer training simulators and less support equipment.

There are many ways to reduce sustainment costs, according to Richard Aboulafia, an analyst with the Teal Group. This could include diagnostic systems that help with spare-parts management and taking a lean approach to field repairs.

“The problem is that very often, cutting your sustainment costs is at odds with actual war-fighting needs, a classic battle of accountants versus logisticians,” he said.

The Air Force operates F-35s at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif., and Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., is expected to receive operational test jets later this year.

“The chief has taken the initiative to go look at this and do what he can do to try to reduce that footprint over time,” Van Buren said.

Asked how much the Air Force could save over the long term by truncating the number of bases, Van Buren did not provide an estimate, saying only that it would, “come out in further calculations of the sustainment cost of the program.”

The hefty sustainment estimate is a “big area of concern” for allies who plan to purchase the F-35 because “they have much smaller defense budgets” compared to the U.S., Van Buren said.

“In many of the cases, they have one or maybe two main operating bases where they’ll have their entire fleet,” he said, noting that each nation will have its own sustainment estimate.

“Whether it provides possible cost saving or the illusion of cost saving, or merely something that drums up political support, it doesn’t sound like a bad message to send,” Aboulafia said of the Air Force’s plan to reduce the number of F-35 bases to save money.

Beyond the basing reductions, F-35 prime contractor Lockheed Martin is looking at areas to improve sustainment, including improving the jet’s reliability, Van Buren said.

The Pentagon’s 2013 budget proposal includes $9.1 billion for 29 jets, down 13 jets from prior plans. In all, the Pentagon has chosen to cut 179 F-35 aircraft buys between 2013 and 2017, which it says will save $15.1 billion.

The Air Force still plans to purchase 1,763 F-35 aircraft over the program’s lifetime.

By slowing production, the Pentagon will be able to focus more on development of the jet, which is happening simultaneously with production.

“As one changes a profile and reduces base, you have a different calculation with overhead absorption,” Van Buren said.

At the same time, the Pentagon has completed an independent assessment of what it believes the F-35 should cost.

“That should-cost evaluation that was led by [Shay] Assad, [director of defense pricing], was very well done — I would say it was excellently done — [and] is a part of the discussion of what we want that program to be on a part of [low-rate, initial production] 5 and on forward,” Van Buren said.

Van Buren, who is stepping down as the Air Force’s top acquisition official at the end of March, declined to provide that “should-cost” figure. In addition, the Pentagon is negotiating the fifth LRIP contract with Lockheed.

“We were able to work with [Lockheed Martin] to get a fixed-price, incentive fee contract for LRIP 4, two years [earlier] than had been contemplated by the [program executive office] at that time,” Van Buren noted.

[**RETURN**](#Acq)

**GLOBAL AIR, SPACE, and CYBERSPACE ENVIRONMENT**

**G1**

**Presentation of operating capabilities KC-767A airplane**

(*World Aeronautical Press Agency, 19 Mar 12*) … Unattributed

<http://www.avionews.com/index.php?corpo=see_news_home.php&news_id=1138750&pagina_chiamante=index.php>

A Boeing tanker KC-767A airplane, two Eurofighters of the 4th Wing, two AMX of the 32nd Wing and two Tornado of the 6th Wing have participated last Friday March 16, 2012 at the presentation of operating capacities of the new aircraft in service of the 14th Wing in Pratica di Mare with equipments for loads on airplane at ground and refuelling with an aircraft in flight into the "Operating area" above Ponza's island at an altitude of 18,000 ft.

The KC-767A comes from the B-767/200ER commercial aircraft that ensures a high flight and load range united to the in-flight refuelling capacity as receiver or tanker, and can refuels using a boom system with rigid bar with capacity of flushing until 4091 l per minute, or wing pods with capacity until 1818 l per minute. This kind of refuelling is compatible with the aircraft of the Italian Air Force and allied aviations and can be in its turn refuelled expanding its own range.

For transport missions the "KC" can be equipped in different configurations: Combi constituted from 100 passengers and 10 standard NATO military pallets, cargo with load of 19 military pallets Nato standard, Full Passengers with embarking of 200 people with baggages with a load factor until 25,000 kg.

The fleet of 14th Wing with at disposal of 4 KC-767A that have entirely replaced the obsolete B-707TT (Transport/Tanker) engaged into the in flight refuelling and strategic transport, operates in every weather conditions both in operating ambit and for humanitarian exigencies and Medevac and supporting the multinational and international NATO operations/UN in which the Italian contingents are deployed. The first unit delivered has arrived last January 26, 2011 in Pratica di Mare (near Rome) with on the nose the famous phrase "We have a dream" while on the nose of the last unit delivered the other expression "Yes, we can" to signify that after dream to operate with a modern machine, the 14th Wing can fully perform the tasks and operations requested always everywhere in the world and with the colours of the Italian Air Force (AMI) and the Nation.

In an interview released to the journalists present at the event, the Gen. Air Squadron Tiziano Tosi has declared as the human component has been essential to reach the international operating standard. This component has allowed, despite of the reduced economic resources assigned to the Defense area, to operate near at the other allied air forces.

Then the Col. Andrea Viperini, Capt. of the 14th Wing, has explained the tasks of his Division equipped, not only with KC-767A, but also of G-222VS and P-180; these last ones used both for staff transport for short range and for flight inspection for the calibration of the radio assistance deployed on the national territory.

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**G2**

**Air Force blames split in radar dome on humidity**

(*China Post, 20 Mar 12*) … Joseph Yeh

<http://www.chinapost.com.tw/taiwan/national/national-news/2012/03/20/335183/Air-Force.htm>

Humidity is to blame for causing splits in some protective radar domes (radomes) of U.S.-made missiles currently being used by Taiwan's F-16 fighter jets, the Air Force said yesterday.

The U.S. authorities have determined the influence of moisture was the main cause for the split radomes, which were found in a number of AIM-120 missiles after a thorough probe, the Air Force said in a statement.

Following the findings, the Air Force has taken U.S. advice to launch measures to better store their medium-range air-to-air missiles to reduce the influence of moisture in the air on the radomes.

The radomes are used to offer protection to the electronic components inside the missiles.

The Air Force statement came after a local report yesterday claimed that automatic breakdowns have occurred in some radomes equipped with AIM-120 missiles, a situation that had been reported for three consecutive years.

Taiwan's military has been asking for U.S. assistance to replace them, but the American authorities refused to do so for free, promising only to “upgrade” them at relatively lower prices, according to the United Daily News report.

Both sides are still in talks to solve the problem, but no consensus has been reached, according to the report.

The Air Force yesterday said it has asked the U.S. to help deal with the split radomes, adding that the situation did not undermine Taiwan's defense capabilities.

The AIM-120 is an air-to-air missile capable of all-weather, night and day performance. It is currently in service in the U.S. and 34 other countries, including Taiwan, which bought them from the U.S. a decade ago.

Military Dismisses Claims Armored Vehicles Not Bulletproof

Meanwhile, the Ministry of National Defense (MND) yesterday said the locally developed Cloud Leopard armored vehicles have all been tested and found capable of withstanding armor-piercing shells, dismissing allegations that these “Made in Taiwan” military vehicles are not bulletproof.

The allegations were raised in a Chinese-language newspaper report yesterday.

Unidentified military sources were quoted in the report questioning the quality of the steel plates covering the eight-wheel vehicle's body, claiming the armor was unable to stop bullets from penetrating.

In response, the MND yesterday reassured the public that the armored vehicles' bodies have all been repeatedly tested and proven capable of withstanding 12.7-mm armor-piercing shells.

The MND-designed and developed Cloud Leopard has already entered mass production. Its outer plates are made of steel produced by local armor maker, China Steel.

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**G3**

**Chinese Air Force Modernizes On Dual Tracks**

(*Aviation Week, 19 Mar 12*) … Richard D. Fisher, Jr.

<http://www.aviationweek.com/aw/generic/story_generic.jsp?channel=awst&id=news/awst/2012/03/19/AW_03_19_2012_p61-431709.xml&headline=Chinese%20Air%20Force%20Modernizes%20On%20Dual%20Tracks>

As China starts to put together a modern, integrated air force, which could reach 1,000 fighters by 2020, it is developing the components of a future force of stealthier combat aircraft, new bombers and unmanned, hypersonic and possibly space-based combat platforms. These could emerge as soon as the early 2020s.

This dual track was illustrated in late 2010 by two events. One was the People’s Liberation Army Air Force’s (Plaaf) first foreign demonstration of its modern capabilities: a combined-force mission of Xian Aircraft Co. H-6 bombers supported by Chengdu Aircraft Co. J-10 multi-role fighters, KJ-2000 airborne early warning and control aircraft. and H-6U tankers for an exercise in Kazakhstan. The other was the unveiling four months later of the Chengdu stealth fighter prototype, widely known as the J-20, followed in early 2011 by its first official flight.

The modernization drive relies on a comprehensive aerospace technology development program that started in the early 1990s. The first underlying doctrine was guided by “access denial” strategies that gelled in the late 1990s and focused on conflict over Taiwan. They were followed after 2005 by “New Historic Mission” strategies, propelling the PLA to dominate at greater distances and to build new, farther-reaching expeditionary capabilities.

To speed development of new weapons, the PLA has encouraged defense- sector competition since major logistics reforms in 1998, at the price of subsidizing greater redundancy. Though less prevalent in aerospace than in other defense fields, there is significant redundancy in combat aircraft, unmanned aircraft, electronics and weapons development and production.

Chengdu and the Shenyang Aircraft Co., China’s main fighter concerns, manage both stealthy and conventional fighter programs. China purchased 176 Sukhoi Su-27SK/UBK/Su-30MKK/MK2 twin-engine fighters, and co-produced over 100 more as the J-11 under license from Russia. In 2008, Shenyang started delivering the unlicensed J-11B with indigenous engines, radar and weapons, and today it is China’s most capable domestic production fighter. More than 120 J-11B and twin-seat J-11BSs serve in the air force, and are expected to be upgraded with better engines and an active, electronically scanned array (AESA) radar as they become available. A dedicated attack version of the J-11BS dubbed the “J-16” may also include these upgrades. Though it lost to Chengdu for the heavy stealth-fighter program, there is a persistent buzz that Shenyang is self-funding a medium-weight stealth warplane, perhaps called “J-60.”

Shenyang’s J-15, a near-facsimile of the Sukhoi Su-33 carrier-based fighter, is leading a new era of growth for the PLA navy’s air force. Having undergone land-based testing over the last year with the short-takeoff but arrested-recovery (Stobar) system to be used by China’s first aircraft carrier, the refurbished Russian Varyag, the J-15 could begin carrier-based testing later this year and when fully developed could prove as potent as the Boeing F/A-18E/F. An initial carrier air wing will include Changhe Z-8 airborne early warning and control helicopters with airborne early warning radar, and perhaps Russian Kamov Ka-32 anti-submarine and Ka-31 AEW helicopters.

A twin-turboprop E-2 class airborne early warning/antisubmarine warfare (AEW/ASW) aircraft is under development, perhaps for conventional-takeoff-and-landing (CTOL) on two nuclear carriers that may follow two more non-nuclear Stobar carriers. In November 2011, images emerged of a long-awaited ASW version of the Shaanxi Y-8 “New High” medium transport, which will finally give the navy an oceanic ASW and maritime surveillance platform.

Since 2003, more than 200 of Chengdu’s “low end” canard-configuration single-engine J-10A and twin-seat J-10S fighters have entered service—forming the low end of a high-low mix with the larger J-11B. Production may soon switch to the upgraded J-10B equipped with an AESA radar, infrared search and track sensor, radar cross-section reduction measures and improved electronic warfare system. One J-10B prototype has been tested with a version of the Shenyang-Liming WS-10A turbofan. This fighter may be the basis for the “FC-20” version expected to be purchased by Pakistan.

Just before the service’s 60th anniversary in October 2009, a Chinese air force general stated that their next-generation fighter would enter service between 2017 and 2019, though a late- 2010 report of PLA interest in purchasing the Russian AL-41 turbofan for this fighter might accelerate that timeline. Since its emergence on the Internet in late 2010, Chengdu’s stealthy twin-engine canard J-20 has been photographed and videoed extensively undergoing testing at Chengdu. Expected to be fitted with 15-ton-class thrust-vectored turbofans in its production form, this aircraft is expected to be capable of supercruise and extreme post-stall maneuvering, and will be equipped with an AESA radar and distributed infrared warning sensors.

In 2005 a Chinese official said that an “F-35”-class program was being considered by Chengdu. China also has long been interested in short-takeoff-and-vertical-landing (Stovl) fighters, and long-standing Russian and Chinese reports point to a possible Chengdu program based on technology from the Yakovlev Yak-141, a supersonic Stovl prototype tested in the late 1980s.

A potential development of medium-weight stealth fighters by 2020 would cap an expected decade of more intensive export offerings. While the export effort is led by Chengdu’s FC-1/JF‑17 cooperative program with Pakistan (which could acquire up to 300 fighters) and the fighter could yet be purchased by the air force, greater international appeal may follow its being equipped with a Chinese engine—a likely near-term prospect.

But China is already laying the foundation for sales of the FC-1, and perhaps the J-10B and J-11B, by aggressively marketing low-cost trainers like the Hongdu K-8 and the supersonic L-15, with generous financing credits and production technology transfers. This “food chain” strategy has worked in Pakistan, and could be repeated in Egypt and as far away as Latin America. Venezuela and Bolivia are customers for light attack versions of the K-8 and Venezuelan officials reportedly visited the Chengdu factory in late 2011.

The Chinese air force and navy have taken delivery of about 170 of the twin-engine Xian JH-7/JH-7A strike fighters, with indications that Xian may be developing a reduced-signature variant. Approaching the longevity and mission evolution of the Boeing B-52, Xian’s latest version H-6K bomber entered low-rate production in 2010, equipped with more powerful and efficient Progress D-30KP turbofans and a redesigned nose with modern radar and optics. The bomber is armed with more than six land-attack cruise missiles. Little is known about Xian’s follow-on bomber program, except that it could emerge this decade. In late 2009 an “official” model of a large, stealthy delta-wing bomber was revealed, though its provenance is unknown. In early 2010 Chinese academics from the prestigious Institute of Mechanics, a leading hypersonics research center, produced a paper on an apparent large aircraft with a Mach 3 cruise speed, with illustrations and wind tunnel models indicating it could be an optionally manned platform.

This year or next, Xian is expected to unveil a new 50-60-ton payload Y-20 four-engine strategic transport. While the Comac C919 twin-turbofan regional airliner is an established, well-known program, Chinese officials are far more reticent about a Boeing 767-sized widebody four-turbofan airliner program at Xian. Though its business case may be unclear, this platform could serve multiple military missions.

To power its aerospace transformation, China has purchased about 1,000 Russian Saturn AL-31 turbofans for its Su-27/J-11 and J-10A fleets, which are receiving Chinese-developed service-life extensions. But after 25 years of intensive investments, new Chinese fighter and large high-bypass turbofan engines are emerging. In 2008 the Shenyang-Liming WS-10A was good enough to enter service with the J-11B, perhaps slightly below thrust goals at 12.7 tons, but it now powers the J-11BS and prototypes of the J-15 and J-10B. Shenyang-Liming may also be working toward a 15-ton variant of this engine. The Gas Turbine Research Institute has put a new 8-9.5-ton-thrust turbofan on one FC-1 and has advanced the development of a 15-ton engine for J-20. Shenyang-Liming, Xian and the Avic Commercial Aircraft Engine Co. have 13+-ton-thrust high-bypass turbofan engine programs to power military and commercial transports, and perhaps a new bomber.

Prototypes of the J-10B use China’s first fighter-sized AESA radar by the Nanjing Research Institute of Engineering Technology (NRIET) and future versions of the J-11 and J-15 fighters are expected to have AESA. NRIET’s mechanically scanned array radar on the J-10A and FC-1 can manage two simultaneous air-to-air missile (AAM) engagements at over 100 km (62 mi.). The Luoyang PL-12 actively guided AAM may have a range of 100 km, while the helmet-sighted PL-8 and PL-9 short-range AAMs may be replaced with a helmet-display sighted PL-10. Two companies produce families of satellite and laser-guided munitions, down to 50-kg (110-lb.) weapons for unmanned combat air vehicles.

China has developed a plethora of AEW platforms. The Plaaf itself uses the “high end” KJ-2000, based on the Beriev A-50, and the smaller KJ-2000 based on the Xian Y-8 turboprop transport, with a “balance beam” AESA antenna like that of the Saab Erieye. China has also exported the Y-8-based ZDK-03 with a “saucer” radar array to Pakistan. These will be joined soon by the Chengdu/Guizhou Soar Dragon box-wing strategic UAV.

Leadership for space warfare is being sought by the air force, and its leaders clearly enunciated new strategies calling for space warfare capabilities in late 2009. But today China’s manned and unmanned space program is controlled by the General Armaments Department of the Central Military Commission. The air force’s case, however, could be advanced by Chengdu’s small Shenlong spaceplane—which may have undertaken initial sub-orbital tests by late 2010—and could be developed into an X-37B-like craft. In 2006, engineers from the China Academy of Space Launch Technology outlined plans to build a 100-ton+ space shuttle-like spaceplane, perhaps by 2020, or a more efficient sub-orbital hypersonic vehicle that would launch attached payloads. “Flying” platforms could fall under air force control, while “dual use” missions of PLA-controlled satellites and manned space platforms could remain under GAD control.

But a clash could also occur over the future ballistic missile defense mission, which Asian military sources suggest could be realized by the mid-2020s. The successful warhead interception of January 2010 was likely a GAD program, but the air force’s expected development of very-long-range anti-aircraft missiles with anti-ballistic missile capabilities might also justify its potential claim on mission leadership.

[**RETURN**](#Global)

**G4**

**N. Korea invites U.N. nuke monitors to return**

(*AP, 19 Mar 12*) … Unattributed

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/news/2012/03/ap-north-korea-defends-rocket-launch-despite-concerns-031912/>

VIENNA - North Korea has invited the International Atomic Energy Agency to return, three years after expelling its nuclear monitors, the agency said Monday. The U.S. said such a move would be welcome but remained critical of the North’s missile test plans.

Without disclosing the North’s terms, IAEA spokeswoman Gill Tudor said it received the invitation on Friday. That was the same day that Pyongyang announced it plans to test a missile by launching a satellite, a move that Washington has suggested could jeopardize a nuclear moratorium deal reached with the United States last month.

IAEA’s announcement of the overture from the North came just hours after Ri Yong Ho, a senior North Korean nuclear negotiator, said Pyongyang was sending invitations to agency inspectors as part of implementing the moratorium agreement.

U.S. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said Washington had not been told of a formal invitation to the IAEA from the North — but said such a move would be positive, while repeating America’s reservations about the planned satellite launch.

“Obviously there’s benefit for any access that the IAEA can get,” Nuland told reporters. “But it doesn’t change the fact that we would consider a satellite launch a violation not only of their U.N. obligations but of the commitments they made to us.”

Now in doubt, the deal foresaw hundreds of tons of U.S. food aid to the impoverished North in exchange for a moratorium on missile and nuclear tests, as well as suspending nuclear work at its Yongbyon reactor.

The deal also opened the way for IAEA inspections of the North’s nuclear program, which has gone unmonitored since the country asked agency experts at the reactor to leave and restarted its atomic activities three years ago.

The agency did not details the terms of the invitation to visit North Korea, including whether they would involve an in-country discussion of what IAEA experts could do at nuclear sites, or whether they outlined what the U.N. nuclear monitors would do at the sites.

“Nothing has been decided yet,’ said Tudor, the IAEA spokeswoman, in an email to news organizations. “We will discuss with the DPRK and other parties concerned for the details of the visit,” she said, using the acronym for the North’s formal name, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

North Korea is under tough U.N. sanctions that were tightened in 2009 when it conducted its second nuclear test and launched a long-range rocket. In late 2010, Pyongyang unveiled a uranium enrichment facility that could give North Korea a second route to manufacture nuclear weapons in addition to a plutonium-based program at its reactor.

Despite concerns from China, its chief ally, Ri, the senior North Korean nuclear negotiator, reiterated that his country views the planned launch as legitimate after holding talks Monday with his counterpart in Beijing. He said the launch of the satellite is separate from recent talks with the United States and North Korea over food aid.

“The launching of the satellite is part to our right to develop space programs,” Ri said, warning the North would respond to any threats on its sovereignty.

“Regarding the peaceful purpose of the satellite launching, if others are practicing double standards or inappropriately interfere with our sovereign rights, we will be forced to react to it. But we will try our best for these things not to happen,” he said.

The U.S., Japan, Britain and others have urged North Korea to cancel the launch, calling it a threat to diplomatic efforts and warning that it would violate a U.N. ban on nuclear and missile activity because the same rocket technology can be used for long-range missiles.

South Korea’s presidential office called the launch a provocation that is aimed at developing a long-distance method to deliver nuclear weapons, Yonhap news agency reported.

China, North Korea’s main political and economic ally, expressed rare concern Saturday about the planned launch and called on all parties to exercise restraint. Ri said he met with his Chinese counterpart Wu Dawei in Beijing but did not give details about their talks.

North Korea said Friday that it would fire an observation satellite into space on a new rocket as part of celebrations next month of the 100th anniversary of late President Kim Il Sung’s birth.

The moratorium agreement was seen at the time as a promising step toward better relations between Washington and Pyongyang and progress toward restarting six-nation talks on North Korean nuclear disarmanent.

Nuland said Monday the U.S. is “heartened” that the other parties in the talks, including China and Russia, had made clear they regard the launch as a bad idea, violating North Korea’s international obligations.

“We are hoping and expecting that the DPRK will take that to heart,” Nuland said.

Associated Press Writer Matthew Lee contributed from Washington.

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**ITEMS OF INTEREST**

**I1**

**Dead Soldier's Effects Still Turn Up 2 Years Later**

(*Fayetteville Observer, 19 Mar 12*) … Drew Brooks

<http://www.military.com/news/article/dead-soldiers-effects-still-turn-up-2-years-later.html>

One Army widow's nightmare just won't end.

Brittany Frazier buried her husband in late 2009, only to learn two months later that not all of his remains were included.

Now, more than two years after Sgt. Daniel Frazier died a hero in Afghanistan, his widow has learned that not all of his personal belongings were returned to her, either.

Frazier, who said she has relived her husband's death with each new revelation, feels betrayed.

She wonders how many other widows or family members of deceased soldiers have gone through similar torment.

"I'm angry," she said. "What else are they hiding? Body parts?Belongings? It's just frustrating."

Each time, the news was delivered to Frazier by a casualty assistance officer relaying information from officials at Dover Air Force Base mortuary in Delaware.

News that personal effects of soldiers who have been dead for years have been sitting at the mortuary is the latest issue to surface at the Dover facility, which as been plagued by problems.

Dover is the entry point for remains of U.S. service members. It has been at the forefront of several scandals involving the mishandling of remains in recent years.

Late last year, a military investigation accused three managers at the mortuary of misconduct. One of those officials, the survivor assistance program manager, resigned this month, and two other supervisors have been punished for retaliating against whistle-blowers, according to the Associated Press.

In November, the Air Force admitted to losing small body parts of U.S. troops killed in Afghanistan on two occasions in 2009 and to sawing off the arm of a Marine in 2010.

Frazier's husband would have passed through Dover in late 2009, after the two instances in which Dover officials admitted to misplacing remains.

It is unclear whether the handling of Frazier's remains would constitute a third incident.

In February, a report on mismanagement at the Dover mortuary revealed that remains of those killed in the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks were mishandled when they were dumped in a landfill.

Officials at the base deferred comment about the Frazier case to the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Numerous messages left with spokespeople in that office over the past week were not returned.

Daniel Frazier was one of two paratroopers who died heroes Nov. 19, 2009.

He and Staff Sgt. John Cleaver were killed when a suicide bomber attacked their patrol outside Forward Operating Base Shajoy in Zabul province. The two Fort Bragg soldiers, both with the 82nd Airborne Division's 4th Brigade Combat Team, intercepted the bomber's vehicle, saving lives while sacrificing their own.

Frazier buried her husband in December 2009. Two months later, a casualty assistance officer contacted her to say more of her husband's remains had been found.

"I couldn't take it," said Frazier, who said she was still reeling from her husband's death.

She said she could not bare another burial, so the remains were sent to her father-in-law, instead.

Frazier said she doesn't know whether the remains were found in Afghanistan, or if they had been misplaced at Dover.

Most recently, Frazier was contacted Monday by a casualty assistance officer.

This time, she said, the representative told her that Dover had her husband's iPod.

Frazier said she believes the most recent call was the latest of several instances of "mishandling and disrespect of the remains and personal property" of soldiers killed in action.

"It's like I've been notified (of his death) all over again," Frazier said. "Why did it take two-and-a-half years?"

Officials had kept the iPod, she said she was told, because they wanted to make sure it did not contain classified information.

Frazier doesn't believe the explanation.

"I am being lied to," she said. "If they knew where it was, I don't understand why they didn't just wipe it clean. They are putting me through this all over again."

Frazier, 26, of Greensboro, still lives in Fayetteville and volunteers for the casualty assistance office at Fort Bragg.

She thought the iPod, which she said her husband listened to through his armored vehicle's internal speakers, didn't survive the blast.

A laptop Sgt. Frazier had with him in Afghanistan was returned. Officials were able to wipe the hard drive of the computer, which was protected by a fingerprint scanner, she said. So why couldn't they wipe the iPod's data clean, too?

"It was a load of crap," Frazier said. "Almost every soldier going overseas is going to have an iPod, they shouldn't have an issue just resetting it."

Frazier filed a complaint with Congressman Larry Kissell's office Monday. Since then, she has heard from Kissell and Lt. Gen. William Troy, director of the Army staff.

Frazier said Troy, who works at the Pentagon, told her that her husband's iPod was part of a list of 58 similar situations waiting to be cleared by the mortuary.

Frazier said she doesn't understand why she wasn't told about the iPod earlier. She said Troy told her he was working with Dover staff to make sure the issue is corrected.

Officials could not be reached to confirm Troy's remark.

Kissell, who is on the House Armed Services Committee, has spoken to the chiefs of staff for the Army and the Air Force about the issue and is working to ensure it will not happen again, a spokesman for the congressman said.

"The congressman is disgusted by what we've seen happen there," the spokesman said.

"It's a matter of making sure it doesn't happen again," he said.

Frazier said she hopes the attention will stop officials from making similar errors in the future.

On Friday, she visited a memorial paver stone dedicated to her husband at the Airborne & Special Operations Museum in downtown Fayetteville. She placed roses atop the marker and gently cleaned pollen from the crevices.

Frazier said she visits the paver stone every week or so, but comes more frequently when she is upset.

Since learning of her husband's belongings at Dover, she has visited the museum three times.

"I'm just tired of the game going back and forth," she said. "It's like it never ends. It's ridiculous -- how many times can they make you relive it?"

"I want to wake up and know that there are no more of my husband's body parts or personal effects laying around in a warehouse somewhere," she said.

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**I2**

**Slighted Air Force General Loses Battle with Pentagon**

(*Courthouse News Service, Ryan Abbott*

<http://www.courthousenews.com/2012/03/19/44817.htm>

WASHINGTON - A retired brigadier general cannot retroactively take a promotion that suspended after Hezbollah bombed the Khobar Towers, an apartment complex occupied by U.S. Air Force personnel in Saudi Arabia, a federal judge ruled.

Retired Brig. Gen. Terryl Schwalier sued the Pentagon and the Air Force, which initially found that he should get the promotion, for acquiescing to a Pentagon decision to deny his request.

"[The Department of Defense] did not act arbitrarily or capriciously in making this decision, and the Air Force did not act arbitrarily or capriciously in accepting it," U.S. District Judge Rosemary Collyer ruled.

Schwalier reported to King Abdulaziz Airbase in Saudi Arabia in July 1995 to assume command of the 4404th Wing, which provided aircraft to enforce the no-fly zone then in effect over southern Iraq.

The Khobar Towers, a large high-rise apartment complex that many Wing personnel called home, was hit by a Hezbollah truck bomb in June 1996. The blast killed 19 airmen and injured hundreds.

Schwalier had been scheduled to receive a promotion to major general in the coming weeks, as ordered by the president,

But he took the general's name off the list after Secretary of Defense William Cohen determined that Schwalier did not "adequately assess the implication of the possible attack."

Clinton had nominated Schwalier for a promotion to major general prior to the bombing, but the promotion was delayed for an investigation into the bombing. After Secretary of Defense William Cohen determined that Schwalier did not "adequately assess the implication of the possible attack," Clinton took the general's name off the promotion list.

Schwalier immediately filed for voluntary retirement, and six years later applied to have his military records corrected to reflect his promotion. He argued that the president could not remove his name from the nomination list because he had, in effect, already been promoted.

The Air Force Board for the Correction of Military Records agreed and recommended correcting Schwalier's military records and approving his retirement as a major general, but the Pentagon overturned this decision.

Collyer threw out Schwalier's petition for review Wednesday.

"Because the secretary of the Air Force acts under the authority of and subject to the 'direction [and] control' of the secretary of defense and because the DOD general counsel is the 'chief legal officer' charged with resolving legal disputes within the Department, the DOD did not violate the law or abuse its discretion when it got involved in Brigadier General Schwalier's application process and resolved a legal disagreement between the Air Force and the DOD," Collyer wrote.

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**I3**

**NASA Plans Flexible Wing Tests With X-56A**

(*Aviation Week, 19 Mar 12*) … Graham Warwick

<http://www.aviationweek.com/aw/generic/story_generic.jsp?channel=aerospacedaily&id=news/asd/2012/03/19/02.xml&headline=NASA%20Plans%20Flexible%20Wing%20Tests%20With%20X-56A>

After Lockheed Martin completes flights of the flying-wing X-56A for the U.S. Air Force, NASA plans to use the experimental unmanned aircraft to develop active control systems for slender, flexible wings on future, highly efficient transport aircraft.

Transfer of the aircraft from the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) is expected around the end of the year, with NASA flights planned to begin by the end of 2013, following development of a new research flight-control system, says NASA Dryden Flight Research Center engineer Starr Ginn.

Built by Lockheed Martin’s Skunk Works, the X-56A is designed to demonstrate active control techniques to mitigate flutter and enable lightweight, high aspect-ratio wings that will increase the endurance of surveillance platforms and the efficiency of transport aircraft.

NASA’s Subsonic Fixed Wing research program, meanwhile, is aiming to reduce wing structural weight by 25%, and to lower drag by increasing aspect ratio by 30-40% for conventional cantilever wings and up to two times for truss-braced wings.

Under the AFRL program, Lockheed is to demonstrate it can accurately predict the onset of flutter and actively suppress the three main aeroelastic instabilities of a slender, flexible wing: its rigid-body phugoid and first and second bending-torsion modes.

The 28-ft.-span X-56A will fly with four sets of wings: one stiff and three flexible. Flutter will be stimulated deliberately: if the wing breaks, the body with its engines and avionics will be recovered by ballistic parachute and reused. Lockheed has built two bodies.

The X-56A is powered by two small turbojets. Fuel is in the body, while the wing houses water ballast that will be moved in flight to change the mass distribution and mode frequencies, and prove the control system can suppress the instabilities in real time.

Lockheed’s proprietary flight-control system will not be transferred to NASA, Ginn says, so the agency will develop an open-source, flexible-wing control system that will include load- and shape-sensing using a network of fiber-optic sensors embedded in the wing.

First flown on NASA’s Ikhana (Predator B) UAV in 2004, the fiber-optic strain-sensing system will comprise 32,000 sensors along 16 optical fibers laid down in a pattern that enables the system to measure both the loads on the wing and its deformation in flight.

NASA also will build a highly flexible composite wing for the X-56A. This will be aeroservoelastically tailored to control its structural response to aerodynamic and control loads. It will also have control effectors distributed along the span using novel small actuators.

With an aspect ratio of 14, compared with around 7 for today’s transport aircraft, this new wing for the X-56A will use curvilinear spar-ribs, or “sparibs.”

Where traditional wings use spars to carry bending loads and ribs to carry torsion, the curving sparibs carry both and allow a lighter structure. Sparibs and tailored ply angles in the skins also control the wing’s response to aerodynamic and control loads.

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**I4**

**Lawyer: Bales recalls little of shooting spree**

(*AP, 19 Mar 12*) … Gene Johnson and John Milburn

<http://www.airforcetimes.com/news/2012/03/ap-lawyer-arrives-to-meet-afghan-killings-suspect-031912/>

FORT LEAVENWORTH, Kan. - The lawyer for the Army staff sergeant accused of slaughtering 16 Afghan civilians in a nighttime shooting rampage met his client for the first time Monday and said the solider has a sketchy memory of the night of the massacre.

Lawyer John Henry Browne said Robert Bales remembers some details from before and after the killings, but very little or nothing from the time the military believes he went on a shooting spree through two Afghan villages.

“He has some memory of some things that happened that night. He has some memories of before the incident and he has some memories of after the incident. In between, very little,” Browne told The Associated Press by telephone from Fort Leavenworth, where Bales is being held.

Pressed on whether Bales can remember anything at all about the shooting, Browne said, “I haven’t gotten that far with him yet.”

Bales, 38, has not been charged yet in the March 11 shootings, though charges could come this week. The killings sparked protests in Afghanistan, endangered relations between the two countries and threatened to upend American policy over the decade-old war.

Earlier Monday, Browne met with his client behind bars for the first time to begin building a defense and said the soldier gave a powerfully moving account of what it is like to be on the ground in Afghanistan.

Browne said he and Bales, who is being held in an isolated cell at the military prison, met for more than three hours in the morning at Fort Leavenworth. Browne, co-counsel Emma Scanlan and Bales were expected to talk again in the afternoon.

“What’s going on on the ground in Afghanistan, you read about it. I read about it. But it’s totally different when you hear about it from somebody who’s been there,” Browne told The Associated Press by telephone during a lunch break. “It’s just really emotional.”

Browne, a Seattle attorney who defended serial killer Ted Bundy and a thief known as the “Barefoot Bandit,” has said he has handled three or four military cases. The defense team includes a military defense lawyer, Maj. Thomas Hurley.

At their meeting, Browne said Bales clarified a story, provided initially by the soldier’s family, about the timing of a roadside bomb that blew off the leg of one of Bales’ friends. It was two days before the shooting, not one, and Bales didn’t see the explosion, just the aftermath, Browne said.

The details of the blast could not be immediately confirmed.

Military officials have said that Bales, after drinking on a southern Afghanistan base, crept away to two villages overnight, shooting his victims and setting many of them on fire. Nine of the dead were children and 11 belonged to one family.

Bales arrived at Fort Leavenworth last Friday and is being held in the same prison as other prominent defendants. Pfc. Bradley Manning, who is charged with leaking classified documents to the WikiLeaks website, has been held there on occasion as he awaited trial.

Bales is “already being integrated into the normal pretrial confinement routine,” post spokeswoman Rebecca Steed said.

That includes recreation, meals and cleaning the area where he is living. Steed said once his meetings with his attorneys are complete later in the week, Bales will resume the normal integration process.

Bales’ wife, Karilyn, offered her condolences to the victims’ families Monday and said she wants to know what happened. She said her family and her in-laws are profoundly sad. She said what they’ve read and seen in news reports is “completely out of character of the man I know and admire.”

“My family including my and Bob’s extended families are all profoundly sad. We extend our condolences to all the people of the Panjawai District, our hearts go out too all of them, especially to the parents, brothers, sisters and grandparents of the children who perished,” Karilyn Bales said in a statement.

Court records and interviews show that Bales had commendations for good conduct after four tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. He enlisted in the military after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

He also faced a number of troubles in recent years: A Florida investment job went sour, his Seattle-area home was condemned as he struggled to make payments on another, and he failed to get a recent promotion.

Legal troubles included charges that he assaulted a girlfriend and, in a hit-and-run accident, ran bleeding in military clothes into the woods, according to court records. He told police he fell asleep at the wheel and paid a fine to get the charges dismissed.

In March 1998, Bales was given a $65 citation for possessing alcohol at Daytona Beach, Fla. He did not pay the fine nor did he defend himself in court. A warrant was issued for his arrest, but it later expired.

If the case goes to court, the trial will be held in the U.S., said a legal expert with the U.S. military familiar with the investigation who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the case.

That expert said charges were still being decided and that the location for any trial had not yet been determined. If the suspect is brought to trial, it is possible that Afghan witnesses and victims would be flown to the U.S. to participate, he said.

After their investigation, military attorneys could draft charges and present them to a commander, who then makes a judgment on whether there is probable cause to believe that an offense was committed and that the accused committed it.

That commander then submits the charges to a convening authority, who typically is the commander of the brigade to which the accused is assigned but could be of higher rank.

Associated Press writers Manuel Valdes in Seattle and Deb Riechmann in Kabul, Afghanistan contributed to this report. Johnson reported from Seattle.

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END OF FULL TEXT