

United States Air Force



Testimony

Before the Senate Appropriations
Subcommittee on Defense

Guard and Reserve Hearing

Statement of
Lieutenant General Richard W. Scobee
Chief of Air Force Reserve

April 10, 2019



BIOGRAPHY



UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

LIEUTENANT GENERAL RICHARD W. SCOBEE

Lt. Gen. Richard W. Scobee is the Chief of Air Force Reserve, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C., and Commander, Air Force Reserve Command, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia. As Chief of Air Force Reserve, he serves as principal adviser on reserve matters to the Secretary of the Air Force and the Air Force Chief of Staff. As Commander of Air Force Reserve Command, he has full responsibility for the supervision of all U.S. Air Force Reserve units around the world.

General Scobee was commissioned in 1986 as a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy. He earned his pilot wings as a distinguished graduate of Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot training in 1987. He has served as an F-16 pilot, instructor pilot and flight examiner both domestically and overseas in Germany, South Korea and Egypt. The general has commanded a fighter squadron, operations group, two fighter wings and a numbered airforce. Additionally, he deployed as Commander of the 506th Air Expeditionary Group, Kirkuk Regional Air Base, Iraq, in 2008.



Prior to his current assignment, General Scobee, as the Deputy Commander, Air Force Reserve Command, was responsible for the daily operations of the command, consisting of approximately 70,000 Citizen Airmen and more than 300 aircraft among three numbered air forces, 33 flying wings, 10 flying groups and one space wing. He is a command pilot with more than 3,800 flying hours in the F-16, including 248 combat hours.

EDUCATION

1986 Bachelor of Science, U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Co.
1995 Squadron Officer School, by correspondence
1997 Master of Business Administration, University of South Carolina
2000 Air Command and Staff College, by correspondence
2005 Air War College, by correspondence
2006 U.S. Air Force Accident/Safety Board President Course, Kirtland AFB, New Mexico
2010 Joint Forces Reserve Officers Orientation Course, Joint Forces Command, Norfolk, Va.

2010 Leadership Course, Center for Creative Learning, Greensboro, N.C.

2011 Advanced Joint Professional Military Education, Joint Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Va.

2014 Dual Status Title 10/32 Joint Task Force Commander Course, Northern Command, Peterson AFB, Colorado

2017 Senior Executive in National and International Security, Harvard Kennedy School, Cambridge, Ma.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. June 1986 - July 1987, student, Euro-NATO Joint Jet Pilot training, Sheppard AFB, Texas
2. August 1987 - October 1987, student, fighter lead-in training, Holloman AFB, New Mexico
3. November 1987 - August 1988, student, F-16 Replacement Training Unit, MacDill AFB, Florida
4. August 1988 - November 1991, F-16 pilot, 526th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Ramstein Air Base, Germany
5. November 1991 - February 1993, operation location commander and air liaison officer, 1st Armored . Division, Baumholder, Germany
6. March 1993 - May 1997, F-16 instructor pilot, 19th and 78th Fighter squadrons, Shaw AFB, South Carolina
7. May 1997 - May 1998, F-16 instructor pilot, 80th Fighter Squadron, Kunsan Air Base, South Korea
8. May 1998 - August 2000, assistant Director of Operations and F-16 instructor pilot, 21st Fighter Squadron, Luke AFB, Arizona
9. August 2000 - April 2005, assistant Director of Operations and F-16 instructor pilot, 301st Fighter Squadron, Luke AFB, Arizona
10. April 2005 - July 2006, Commander, 301st Fighter Squadron, Luke AFB, Arizona
11. July 2006 - June 2007, Commander, 944th Operations Group, Luke AFB, Arizona
12. July 2007 - April 2009, Commander, 944th Fighter Wing, Luke AFB, Ariz. (April 2008 - November 2008, Commander, 506th Air Expeditionary Group, Kirkuk Regional Air Base, Iraq)
13. April 2009 - October 2010, Commander, 301st Fighter Wing, Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base, Texas
14. October 2010 - October 2013, Deputy Director of Operations, Headquarters North American Aerospace Defense Command, Peterson AFB, Colorado
15. October 2013 - October 2014, Director, Air Force Reserve Plans, Programs and Requirements, Headquarters Air Force, Washington, D.C.
16. October 2014 - May 2017, Commander, Tenth Air Force, NAS Fort Worth JRB, Texas
17. May 2017 – September 2018, Deputy Commander, Air Force Reserve Command, Robins AFB, Georgia
18. September 2018 – Present, Chief of Air Force Reserve, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C., and Commander of Air Force Reserve Command, Robins AFB, Warner Robins, Georgia

SUMMARY OF JOINT ASSIGNMENTS

October 2010 - October 2013, Deputy Director of Operations, Headquarters North American Aerospace Defense Command, Peterson AFB, Colo. as a brigadier general

FLIGHT INFORMATION

Rating: command pilot

Flight hours: more than 3,800, including 248 combat hours

Aircraft flown: F-16

MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Distinguished Service Medal Defense

Superior Service Medal Legion of

Merit with oak leaf cluster

Bronze Star Medal

Meritorious Service Medal with four oak leaf clusters

Air Medal with oak leaf cluster

Aerial Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster

Air Force Commendation Medal with oak leaf cluster

Army Achievement Medal

Joint Meritorious Unit Award

Meritorious Unit Award

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with silver oak leaf cluster

Combat Readiness Medal
National Defense Service Medal with bronze star
Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal
Southwest Asia Service Medal with bronze star
Iraq Campaign Medal
Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
Korea Defense Service Medal
Humanitarian Service Medal
Air Force Overseas Ribbon - Short with oak leaf cluster
Air Force Overseas Ribbon - Long with oak leaf cluster
Air Force Expeditionary Service Ribbon with Gold Border
Air Force Longevity Service Award with three oak leaf clusters
Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" device
Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon with bronze star
Air Force Training Ribbon

EFFECTIVE DATES OF PROMOTION

Second Lieutenant May 28, 1986
First Lieutenant May 28, 1988
Captain May 28, 1990
Major Feb. 1, 1998
Lieutenant Colonel Sept. 12, 2002
Colonel Aug. 9, 2006
Brigadier General Dec. 22, 2010
Major General March 26, 2015
Lieutenant General September 7, 2018

(Current as of Sep 2018)

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AIR FORCE RESERVE POSTURE STATEMENT

FISCAL YEAR 2020

The Air Force is a Total Force.

The Air Force Reserve is a critical component of this Total Force and a vital part of our national defense. Our 70,000 Citizen Airmen are operationally integrated with their Active Component counterparts. We fly as one, train as one, and fight as one.

The Air Force Reserve provides cost effective strategic depth, rapid surge capability, and operational support to the joint force. We supply the manpower and capabilities needed to fill combatant commander requirements. We also provide critical rapid response, allowing the Air Force to quickly react to unforeseen events, such as natural disasters and contingencies, and we will be called upon to supply the manpower required for the high-end fight.

We also provide daily operational support to the joint force by participating in Air Expeditionary Force taskings, filling Active Component manpower shortfalls, and providing manpower augmentation during operations tempo increases. Our personnel train both Reserve and Active Component members in multiple mission areas, to include assisting Total Force pilot production.

In addition to world-wide military operations, the Air Force Reserve partners with and supports a number of federal and civil organizations, including the Drug Enforcement Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and a variety of civilian education and research institutions. We participate in and assist with numerous efforts, including humanitarian and disaster response actions, international counter-drug operations, education and technology initiatives, and global scientific research programs.

The Air Force Reserve offers a career extension opportunity for separating Active Component members. The accession of trained personnel allows the Air Force to retain fully qualified Airmen and saves millions of dollars each year in training costs. The retention of this talent increases the readiness of the Reserve component and sustains the capabilities of the Total Force.

Strategic Environment

For two decades, Air Force operations have focused on counter terrorism and counter insurgency objectives. During ten of the last eleven years, budget cuts and the unpredictable appropriation of funds by Continuing Resolutions and the Budget Control Act degraded readiness across the Department of Defense. The Air Force Reserve was forced to stretch fiscal appropriations, deferring aircraft modernization, infrastructure upgrades, and equipment purchases. These shortfalls, combined with decreased training funds, reduced our overall readiness.

The re-emergence of great power competition necessitates that we rapidly restore our readiness and modernize our force. We must be able to engage in peer and near-peer conflict in the future

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operating environment. The battlespace of tomorrow will be drastically different from that of yesteryear, as technological advances are changing the nature of conflict, expanding warfare into new domains and increasing the need for certain key capabilities. We must enhance critical mission sets and ensure we have the resources to meet emerging requirements.

Regardless of where the next conflict occurs or which adversary it features, the Air Force will be at the forefront. – National Defense Strategy Commission

The Air Force Reserve Today and Tomorrow

In any future conflict, the Air Force will be at the forefront. Therefore, the Air Force Reserve must be prepared to fly, fight, and win in tomorrow's battlespace and to simultaneously operate in multiple warfighting domains. We must ensure we have the right force mix and the necessary capabilities to defeat any adversary. At the same time, we must sustain our current level of support to the joint force and maintain our readiness to respond to present-day contingencies.

The Air Force Reserve's warfighting ability depends on the timely allocation of funds. Predictable budgets allow us to deliberately program our spending, maximizing the readiness return of expenditures. On time allocations enable us to fully execute our flying hour and Reserve Personnel Appropriation funds, which we rely on to maintain a trained, ready force. Predictable allocations also facilitate modernization efforts, allowing us to sustain weapons systems and to systematically upgrade our infrastructure.

The on time allocation of the Fiscal Year 2019 budget greatly bolstered Air Force Reserve readiness. We know this achievement required considerable effort by Congress, and we thank you for your hard work. In addition to using this allocation to conduct training and complete readiness requirements, we also funded much needed construction, infrastructure improvements, and weapons systems sustainment. However, we still have significant backlogs in these areas, and we continue to face challenges associated with maintaining an aging aircraft fleet.

The Air Force Reserve's ability to support the joint force is directly tied to our integration within the Total Force. Our mission effectiveness is maximized when we maintain parity with the Active Component through the concurrent fielding and upgrading of airframes and equipment. Our interoperability and integration is further enhanced by associations between Active Component and Reserve units, which provide multiple readiness and cost saving benefits to the Total Force.

The Air Force Reserve must grow our capabilities to meet the demands of the future operating environment. In the past year, we activated our first cyber wing and our first intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance wing, which will serve as a base for the further expansion of these mission sets. Our Fiscal Year 2020 budget request aligns our space assets with the operational requirements of the Space Mission Force. We will continue to grow these evolving and emerging mission sets, while ensuring we have the proper force mix across the enterprise.

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The recruitment, hiring, and retention of full time personnel, particularly pilots and maintainers, is currently the Air Force Reserve's most significant readiness challenge. We are implementing multiple initiatives to remedy the current shortage, including converting approximately 1,200 Air Reserve Technician positions to Active Guard/Reserve over a three year period.

The Air Force Reserve has built our success on the hard work of our Airmen. They are an incredibly talented, experienced, and diverse force, and ultimately, they are responsible for executing the mission. Therefore, it is imperative that we take care of our Airmen and their families. We are committed to ensuring that our Reserve Citizen Airmen are resilient warfighters and that Reservists and their families have the support, resources, and care they need.

Implementing the National Defense Strategy

The Department of Defense will be prepared to defend the homeland, remain the preeminent military power in the world, ensure the balances of power remains in our favor, and advance an international order that is most conducive to our security and prosperity. – 2018 National Defense Strategy

Air Force Reserve Strategic Priorities

The National Defense Strategy is the United States' plan to compete, deter, and win in the future warfighting environment. America's military force must be able to defend the homeland, provide a safe, secure, and effective nuclear deterrent, defeat a powerful conventional enemy, deter opportunistic aggression, and disrupt violent extremists in a cost-effective manner.

To align our efforts with National Defense Strategy objectives and Air Force directives, the Air Force Reserve established three priorities. First, we must **Prioritize Strategic Depth and Accelerate Readiness** to ensure we have the manpower and capabilities required to support the joint force and to engage in the high end fight. Secondly, we must **Develop Resilient Leaders**, who can operate independently and generate combat power in tomorrow's battlespace. Finally, we must **Reform the Organization**, optimizing our warfighting capabilities and internal processes to cost effectively maximize mission capabilities and ensure we provide the highest levels of support to our Airmen and their families.

The Air Force Reserve is proactively implementing these priorities, which will guide future initiatives at all levels of the command. This effort will ensure we are in line with the National Defense Strategy, facilitate mission readiness, and improve all aspects of our organization.

The Air Force Reserve and the Air Force We Need

Last year, the Air Force conducted an analysis of the force structure and capabilities required to implement the National Defense Strategy, which indicated that the Total Force should grow to 386 operational squadrons.

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The Total Force currently has 312 operational squadrons. This number includes the Air Force Reserve's operational squadrons. When conducting the analysis, the Air Force assumed that the current ratio of Active Component to Reserve Component forces would remain constant. This study was focused on determining the needed combat capabilities, and specified the required number of operational squadrons by mission set, not by component.

For any planned future growth, the Air Force will evaluate which missions are best suited to each component. Although the distribution of mission sets and capabilities is still to be determined, the Air Force Reserve will grow in proportion to the Active Component, adding both operational units and the necessary support personnel to sustain these forces.

Associations

The association of co-located Active Component and Reserve units effectively amplifies readiness by improving the integration and interoperability of Reserve personnel. Associated flying units operate the same weapons systems, which enables Reservists to train on the Total Force's newest airframes and equipment. This provides multiple second and third order benefits to the Active Component and the Reserve, ultimately reducing operational and training costs for both. Associations also facilitate Reserve support to the Active Component and bolster the Reserve's ability to capture separating Active Component members, retaining their skills in the Total Force.

Our associations are not limited to flying units. There are associated Air Force Reserve units in multiple mission areas, including intelligence, cyber, and space, and support functions, such as maintenance, training, civil engineering, and security forces. These associations provide the same cost savings, integration, and interoperability benefits garnered by flying unit associations.

Currently, there are approximately 70 associations between the Air Force Reserve and the Active Component. Various Active Component entities have proposed additional associations, which include space, cyber, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) associations. The Air Force Reserve favors adding associations in locations and mission areas which will benefit the Air Force. We strongly support increasing the number of active associations, where the Reserve component is the lead unit and the Active Component is the associate.

Nuclear Deterrence

The Air Force Reserve's Nuclear Deterrence Operations force consists of one nuclear strike wing, seven nuclear command, control, and communications capable command posts, and seven tanker wings with nuclear air refueling missions. We are also in the process of converting two additional wings to tanker operations, which are projected to achieve nuclear capability within two years.

The Air Force Reserve conducted fifteen Nuclear Deterrence Operations assessments in 2018. These assessments validated that our nuclear tasked units were properly equipped and manned, verified that personnel were adequately trained, and confirmed our ability to generate nuclear forces. **The Air Force Reserve's Nuclear Deterrence Operations Forces are mission ready.**

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Emerging and Evolving Missions

Modern technology has expanded warfighting into new domains, revolutionizing how we fight and exposing us to new threats. Technology greatly enhances our combat capabilities, but our increasing reliance on integrated systems also creates potential vulnerabilities, necessitating the protection of critical assets. To retain our military advantage and to guard against new threats, the Air Force Reserve must keep pace with the current rapid rate of technological development. We must ensure we have the tools, capabilities, and skills required for future conflict.

We live in a world that is connected by digital systems, which support everything from communications to infrastructure. These systems span the globe. However, there are no borders in the digital world, making the United States vulnerable to attack from any adversary with an internet connection. Therefore, we must protect our information systems, and we must be prepared to engage our enemies in the cyber realm.

Today, every domain is contested-air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace.”
– 2018 National Defense Strategy

To optimize our cyber defenses, the Air Force Reserve is shifting to precision cyber security, which protects data at rest, data in transit, and the identity of individuals accessing the data. This focused approach will provide better protection than our current method of attempting to secure every item connected to our networks, which has become unfeasible. We also plan to transition some of our information technology support, service, and sustainment to the private sector, allowing our personnel to focus on mission assurance and active defensive cyber operations.

The ability to rapidly share information between warfighting assets will create unprecedented synchronization in the employment of forces, magnifying our situational awareness on the battlefield and amplifying our combat effectiveness. This synchronization is dependent on our capacity to gather, analyze, and synthesize data. Robust ISR capabilities are critical to the future fight, especially as the geopolitical environment shifts to great power competition.

Cyber and ISR capabilities will only increase in importance as technology continues to advance. To retain our military advantage in combat and to protect against threats below the level of combat, we must have both cyberspace superiority and information superiority. The demand for Air Force Reserve support in these two key mission areas is already high, and we are posturing our force to ensure we can meet these demands.

The recent activation of the Air Force Reserve’s first cyber and ISR wings provides a foundation for future expansion in these mission sets. We built these units to maximize our capabilities within each function. Our newly formed cyber wing is the only wing in the Total Force to operate all Air Force defensive cyber systems, and our ISR wing is the most mission-diverse ISR wing in the Air Force. Furthermore, we capitalize on our Reservists’ civil experience to enhance our mission capabilities and foster industry partnerships. Our diversity and career field expertise allow us to meet all Total Force support requirements in these critical missions, and we are postured to grow our forces to meet future needs.

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In any conflict, control of the high ground offers a great advantage. Space is the ultimate high ground. Our adversaries have realized this, and they seek to level the playing field by expanding warfighting operations into space. We must be prepared to defend our space assets and interests.

The Air Force Reserve is already a key contributor to the Space Mission Force. We conduct multiple space functions, including command and control, satellite operations, missile warning and missile defense, counter space operations, and electronic warfare support. We also provide launch and range support, conduct testing and training, and provide manpower for the Combined Space Operations Center. In response to Air Force Space Command needs, our Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 budget request rebalances 63 manpower billets into our Space Mission Forces by removing them from other lower priority mission sets. This is intended to right-size our space assets and will ensure we can meet future United States Space Command support requirements.

Rebuilding Readiness

Funding Readiness

The Air Force Reserve relies on flying hour funding and Reserve Personnel Appropriation (RPA) funds to maintain individual readiness. Flying hour funding ensures our aircrews have sufficient training and maintain required currency and proficiency. RPA funding gives us the ability to provide extra training when needed. We also use RPA funds to temporarily backfill vacancies and to augment our full time force as required to maintain readiness.

The Air Force Reserve executed 99 percent of both our FY 2018 flying hour and RPA budgets, and we are on track to execute all FY 2019 flying hour and RPA funds. The flying hour funding requested in our FY 2020 budget currently matches our anticipated execution. Any decrease in this appropriation request would impact our readiness.

Pacing Squadrons

Pacing squadrons are the operational squadrons required during the opening days of a peer fight. A few of these extremely high priority units are Air Force Reserve squadrons, and some of our associate units support Active Component pacing squadrons. We must be capable of providing the strategic depth demanded by a peer fight, therefore we are focusing resources on these pacing squadrons and supporting units to ensure they achieve readiness within the required timelines.

Unit Readiness

The readiness of our force is paramount. Last year, with the help of Congress, the Air Force Reserve reprogrammed and distributed an additional \$90 million in RPA funding to facilitate the completion of readiness related tasks and training. We also allocated operations and maintenance funds for the purchase of readiness related equipment and training items, to include resources for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) requirements, Ability To Survive and Operate requirements, and weapons qualification training. We added a thirteenth drill weekend to focus on CBRNE training, weapons qualification, and Self Aid/Buddy Care (SABC)

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training. As a result of these actions, 80 percent of our personnel now meet weapons training requirements and approximately 90 percent meet CBRNE and SABC training requirements.

The Air Force Reserve is a predominantly part time force. We must ensure optimal use of our Airmen's limited time to maintain both individual and unit readiness. However, over the past decade, the Air Force Reserve has shifted ancillary and support taskings to the individual Reservist. This increased the time Airmen spent on administrative items and reduced the time available for training and mission requirements, impacting readiness.

To restore our readiness, we must reduce the administrative requirements placed on the individual Airman. Last year, the Chief of the Air Force Reserve instructed the force to eliminate unnecessary requirements by directing all Reservists to "cease, re-align, or consolidate duties not directly tied to readiness." To facilitate this effort, we assessed our internal processes and eliminated over 200 self-inspection checklists and several instruction supplements. Both these actions provided our Airmen additional time to focus on readiness and ensured the Air Force Reserve was in alignment with Secretary of the Air Force guidance to reduce ancillary requirements across the Total Force.

The Air Force Reserve's FY 2020 budget request aims to further alleviate the administrative burden on our Airmen by increasing the number of both full and part time squadron support personnel across the command. The addition of these support personnel will reduce the non-mission related tasks requirements levied on the individual Reservist and allow our Airmen more time to complete training and readiness requirements.

Medical Readiness

In the past year, the Air Force Reserve has made great gains in medical readiness. We streamlined our headquarters level medical case processing, eliminating a backlog of more than 2,000 cases. Timely medical review expedites the recruitment process for critical career fields, such as pilots and medical professionals, and minimizes the time Selected Reserve members spend in a non-ready status while awaiting medical review.

The Air Force Reserve is also increasing full time support in Reserve Medical Units across the enterprise. The additional support will improve the quality of medical case submissions, reducing processing time, and will improve unit ability to complete physicals. As a result, our Airmen will spend less time waiting in the medical clinic and more time training.

We also removed participation restrictions on members with duty limiting medical conditions. Previously, Reservists with duty limitations were not allowed to attend training without approval from the Air Force Reserve Command Surgeon General. This negatively impacted both individual and unit readiness, as the majority of these members were physically capable of being present at drill, completing some training requirements, and assisting with squadron operations. Under the new policy, these individuals will be able to participate in training within the limitations set by medical personnel. Commanders will consider mission requirements, physical limitations, and safety when making the determination to restrict participation for individuals on medical profile.

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Full Time Manpower

Overall, the Air Force Reserve is slightly below end strength targets and we are experiencing a shortage of full time and part time personnel in certain critical career fields. These vacancies decrease our overall readiness, put undue strain on our full time support and hinder our ability to train our part time force. We have backfilled some of our full time vacancies with RPA support, but this is only a stopgap measure which is dependent on volunteerism. To ensure mission readiness, we must restore our full time staffing levels.

Readiness recovery is first and foremost about people.

– U.S Air Force Posture Statement, FY 2020

Our full time force is a mix of civil service Air Reserve Technicians (ART), which comprise the bulk of our full time support, and Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) personnel. The current manpower shortage is a direct result of low ART manning. We have a relatively low number of AGR vacancies. This shortage is most critical in the pilot and maintenance communities.

We are short approximately 360 full time pilots. The Air Force Reserve does an excellent job capturing separating Active Component pilots, however, almost all affiliate in part time status, forcing us to rely on new hires to fill full time vacancies. We are currently allocated 96 undergraduate pilot training slots per year. To ensure we use all allocations, we now hold six annual selection boards. We filled 99 percent of our FY 2018 our pilot training slots and are on track to use all FY 2019 slots, having already filled over 60 allocations.

The Air Force Reserve is actively engaged with the Aircrew Management Council regarding national pilot production. We are also working with accredited aviation colleges and universities to develop solutions to the nationwide shortage and have created a pathway program for pilot candidates which is similar to those used by major airlines.

In addition to our pilot shortfalls, we also have a deficit of approximately 1,500 full time maintainers. This lack of trained and fully qualified maintenance personnel has directly resulted in a decrease in aircraft availability and mission capable rates.

The Air Force Reserve's maintainer shortage is a subset of our ART manning shortage, which shares the same underlying causes. Nearly all of our full time maintenance authorizations are ART positions. In certain career fields and geographic locations, ART salaries and benefits are not competitive with the civilian industry. In addition, the cumbersome and lengthy civil service hiring process has prolonged the duration of vacancies and caused us to lose candidates.

The issues which currently hinder our ART manning are much less prevalent in our AGR force. AGR positions offer both higher salaries and greater benefits, and the AGR assignment process is shorter and more streamlined than the civil service hiring process. As a result, AGR hiring and retention rates are higher, and AGR vacancies are of shorter duration.

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The Air Force Reserve is implementing multiple recruitment and retention initiatives for mission essential and critically manned career fields, such as bonuses and special salary rates. This includes incentives specific to ARTs, pilots, and maintainers. We have also adjusted and revised policies to allow for greater retention in critical career fields and removed internal barriers to improve recruiting and decrease hiring timelines.

Air Force Reserve readiness depends on sufficient end strength and the adequate manning of all career fields. To enhance recruitment, we are increasing the size of our recruiting force, and we now have recruiters dedicated to ART hiring. We are also targeting our recruiting efforts to hire personnel in critically manned career fields and individuals with in-demand skill sets. In addition, we are offering recruitment bonuses and constructive credit for new hires in certain career fields.

Modernizing the Force

Modernization

The Air Force Reserve owns some of the oldest airframes in the Total Force. The average aircraft in our inventory is 37 years old, nine years older than the average Active Component aircraft.

Older aircraft are difficult to maintain, requiring more time and resources to operate. Maintenance needs increase as an airframe ages, and older aircraft are more prone to corrosion. Sourcing parts for these aircraft can be challenging, as certain components are no longer in production. Eventually, it becomes cost prohibitive and too time consuming to maintain aging platforms. Therefore, fleet modernization, recapitalization, and weapons systems sustainment are critical to maintaining Air Force Reserve mission readiness.

The acquisition of new platforms, such as the F-35 and the KC-46, ensures the Air Force Reserve has the capabilities required for the future fight. The battle management systems on board these platforms are essential for multi-domain operations. We are currently in the process of upgrading certain legacy airframes with the capabilities required for the future fight, which includes these battle management

...American technological innovation, and a culture of performance will generate decisive and sustained U.S. military advantages.

– 2018 National Defense Strategy

systems. Recent weapons system modernizations have included aircraft radar and targeting enhancements, defensive systems upgrades, and datalink and communication system upgrades.

Concurrent Fielding

The Air Force Reserve's operational abilities are tied to our ability to integrate into the Total Force. We are most effective when we can operate interchangeably with our Active Component counterparts. Therefore, whenever possible, we must maintain parity with the Active Component.

The concurrent fielding of new airframes, aircraft upgrades, and other equipment allows us to maintain operational parity and enables integration with the Active Component. The Air Force Reserve can only provide strategic depth and operational support to the joint force in mission areas

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where our personnel are trained on the required weapon system. Therefore, concurrent fielding maximizes our ability to support Active Component missions.

Infrastructure

The fiscal constraints of the past ten years have created a backlog in Air Force Reserve construction and infrastructure improvement projects. We currently estimate over 120 future year military construction (MILCON) projects, which will cost approximately \$890 million. We also require approximately \$1.53 billion to fund Facility Sustainment, Restoration and Modernization (FSRM) projects.

Both MILCON and FSRM projects are prioritized based on multiple factors, which include mission impact and facility condition. In FY 2019, the Air Force Reserve received \$122 million in MILCON funds and \$85 million in FSRM funding. We have requested \$61 million in MILCON and \$114 million in FSRM for FY 2020. These appropriations will be used to fund mission-driven construction and modernization requirements for Air Force Reserve facilities.

Investing in the Total Force (Service Members, Families, and DOD Civilians)

The Air Force Core Value 'Excellence in All We Do' includes providing excellent support to our Airmen and their families. – Lt Gen Richard Scobee

Yellow Ribbon Re-Integration Program

Our FY 2020 budget requests \$17 million for the continued funding of the Yellow Ribbon Re-integration Program, which provides support and resources to deploying Airmen and their families. The Yellow Ribbon program began ten years ago as a temporary initiative but has evolved in to a sustainable, life changing program.

Participation in the Yellow Ribbon program is voluntary. The program is comprised of one pre-deployment and two post-deployment events. Reservists who take part are authorized to bring all dependents under the age of eighteen and one adult guest of any relation to events, which provide attendees with tools and access to resources to help mitigate the challenges associated with deployments and build reintegration skills.

This enriching and educational program has been shown to enhance attendees' knowledge of critical resources. Yellow Ribbons participants are better prepared for deployments and to manage the stress associated with deployments. Airmen who attend these events are more willing to continue service, and their families are more supportive of their continued service. In FY 2018, the Air Force Reserve hosted 51 Yellow Ribbon events.

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Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

The personal resiliency of our Airmen and their family members is an extremely high priority for the Air Force Reserve. We have multiple on-base entities which provide wellness-related support for our Airmen and their families. We actively disseminate information about both on and off-base resources to our personnel through multiple channels, including digital communications, unit information boards, and commander's calls.

The recent increase in service member suicides is particularly concerning. In response, the Air Force Reserve is evaluating new methods to prevent suicides, including using algorithms and integrated databases to identify at risk Airmen, and creating protective policies and programs to help these individuals.

To further improve the personal resiliency of our Airmen, we are expanding a program which embeds medical professionals in high risk units. This initiative gives personnel quick and easy access to medical care, including mental health support, provides leaders with information and tools to improve the health of their unit, and may help predict and prevent suicide.

The most common mental health issues among Air Force Reserve members are anxiety and depression, similar to that of the general population. We are proactively addressing stressors associated with military service, and we conduct person to person mental health evaluations during both annual and post-deployment medical screenings to monitor individual wellness.

There is a Violence Prevention Integrator on all nine Air Force Reserve host installations and at Fort Worth Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, where we are the lead Air Force wing. All other Air Force Reserve units are tenants on Active Component installations and are provided this service through the host unit program. Air Force Reserve medical facilities are staffed with a full complement of mental health specialists. We are evaluating requirements for integrated medical support, including mental health support, in operational units.

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In the past year, the Air Force Reserve enhanced readiness and improved mission capabilities. Our FY 2020 budget request will allow us to continue these efforts. The appropriation and allocation of the requested funds will enable us to provide support to the joint force while we further ongoing preparations for the future fight. We will continue to increase readiness throughout our organization, by training our personnel, upgrading and modernizing weapons systems, improving our infrastructure, and enhancing our interoperability as part of the Total Force. This budget request will boost manning levels, preserve our strategic depth, and posture our force to meet future operational requirements. We thank you for your continued support as we ensure the Air Force Reserve remains a combat ready force that is prepared to fly, fight, and win for years to come.