

"The Road Ahead"

Lieutenant General Darrell Jones
Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel & Services

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Lieutenant General Jones: We're going to talk a little bit about personnel today. This was interesting, when he said we were going to talk about the strategy involved in personnel. I almost snapped my head up and said, "we have a strategy?" Yes, we have a strategy. We're going about it pretty deliberately although most people would argue that maybe we don't sometimes. But we do have a personnel strategy. We're going to talk a little bit about that today.

Obviously, the mission of personnel is to provide people to the joint fight.

You know I'm surprised when people come talk to me and they say are we going to be joint in the future? It just sort of takes me back. We have come so far down that road for jointness that I don't think we could back out of jointness now if we wanted to. Somebody asked me the other day do we need a new Goldwater-Nichols. I said no, I think we're there. I think we have progressed so far as we fight as one team, having been to U.S. European Command and U.S. Central Command, that backing out of jointness would serve no one's purposes, and we just can't do it. We all have complementary abilities that we bring to the fight, so we will always be providing people to the joint fight. We will not see an Air Force show any time in the near future.

But, we also, while we're doing that, we have to take care of our families. I grew up in the Air Force. My dad was a master sergeant on KC-135s, a boom operator. I was always very very proud of that. I take this taking care of families pretty seriously because that was me. I remember walking down to the big slot car track at Columbus Air Force Base. It was like 12 lanes across, took up an entire room, like three times this size. It was the coolest thing I'd ever seen as a little kid, because our fathers at the time mainly were forward deployed to Vietnam. So I take that taking care of families pretty seriously.

But it's a different world. I have to tell you that I did not join the Air Force that my father joined. And my older son did not join the Air Force that I joined. Things are changing. And, we tend to wring my hands about that and worry about that, but that's just sort of the way of life. Things are going to change. Things get a little different, things get older. Money

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gets high, money gets low. People now, we're sort of in the middle of this famine for money. I joke that it's sort of like Sunday School. Joseph had his dream and there were seven years of plenty and seven years of famine. We're in about year two of the seven years of famine. Unfortunately, we didn't realize that was seven years of plenty or we would have put some of it away. So we're going to have to struggle through the next five years. A lot of people wring their hands over where we're going right now, but I've got to tell you, I don't wring my hands that much. The only reason some of the folks who haven't been in the Air Force very long really, really worry is because they don't know how it's going to turn out.

If you've been in the Air Force as long as I've been in the Air Force, and some of you in this room, you know there are ups and downs. There are highs and lows. There are times when we have a little money and there's times when we're scraping nickels together. So we will make it through this time of scraping nickels together and we're going to come out the other end strong. It's really not something I spend a lot of time worrying about.

I do spend a lot of time worrying about the young Airman. I always like to show this slide because when I talk about Airmen I want everybody to remember what type Airman we're talking about.

Look how young Airmen are. Seventy-four percent of all the Airmen in the United States Air Force are below the age of 34 years old. I've got shoes that old. I really do. I have a really nice pair of white bucks that I bought down in Mississippi that I take good care of and everything, and I don't wear them very much because people make fun of me, but I have shoes that old.

When I was Commander at Lackland Air Force Base I'd go up to the young trainees and say how old are you? Nineteen years old. I was wearing BDUs back then and I had black shoes and I'd go, my boots are older than you. They were around to 1977. These kids didn't come around until the '80s. So it's a pretty young force.

What we've got to worry about, we being senior leaders of the Air Force, is we can't believe everybody's just like us. We tend to mirror pretty badly. Senior NCOs, Senior Officers. We tend to think everybody is just like us.

I was in a room one time many years ago, none of the people there now were there. There was a group of senior four stars. We showed the recruiting video. After we showed the recruiting video I'll never forget, one of the four stars said, "You know, I'm not sure that resonates well."

I remember sitting in the back of the room as a young major thinking, 'I don't care whether you re-enlist or not is pretty much irrelevant at this point.' But you know, we all tend to think that people think like us. It's very dangerous. So as young leaders in the Air Force, you've got to make sure that you understand how these young people are thinking.

They're pretty much aliens to most of us. I know, because I have two of them. They are aliens. They think differently, they talk differently, they process information differently. Some people would say their values are different. I would argue that. I think their values are very, very similar to our values when we were young. They're just maybe articulated in a little different way.

This is what we're going to talk about. A little look back and forward.

The last couple of years people have rubbed their hands really bad about what's going on in the Air Force. They said. 'oh my God, the numbers of people are coming down between FY10 and FY12 are horrendous, we're never going to be able to make it. How are we going to do this?'

Well, good news. The good news is that at the end of FY12 we were going to be at our end strength short of anything unexpected happening that reduces our numbers. For the last two years the Chief and former Secretary told us we're going to make our end strength by the end of FY12. People would go oh my God, look at what's happening, all these bad things are happening. That's a pretty significant number. But let's put this thing in perspective if you will.

In 1989 the Berlin Wall came down and everybody wanted to cash in on the peace dividend. At the time we had about 650,000 or 620,000 people in the Air Force. Let's put this in perspective. When I go brief the Wing Commander and Group Commander's course, the first thing I tell them quite often is, I say, pull out a piece of paper and write down 650,000. They all look at me like I'm crazy. I say just write it down. After a few minutes somebody will be looking at their number and circling it. Oh, the reason I had you write down 650,000 is during the Q&A any statement that starts with "It would be nice if we could" or "Have you ever considered" or "Why don't we" the answer is 650,000.

If we had 650,000 people we might consider doing that, but it's a different world today. As an old boss of mine used to say, "new day, new chapter". It's a different perspective. That

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doesn't mean it's terribly worse than it was before. It just means it's terribly different. So we have to learn how to work within a 330,000-person Air Force in the active duty and 511,000 overall with the Guard and Reserve thrown in there. We've got to learn how to manage from that paradigm. It's not going to be that difficult.

Yes, we reduced the force. Thirty-nine percent smaller force since the Berlin Wall came down. Twenty-nine percent less stateside bases and sixty-six percent less forward deployed bases. So we're changing the way we do things. But it's not changing the basics of being an Air Force.

So let's talk about where we are today. That was a look back. Let's talk about the current state.

We are going down to a smaller, leaner force, by virtue of the fact that numbers keep coming down. Right now we're supposed to end FY12 with about 332.8 thousand people. We're actually going to be a little bit below that, you know, we'll hover right around that number. You never know until you actually get there what the final number's going to be. Although earlier this year I had a great perspective. A young captain came in and briefed me and he said we're really looking good on our end strength. I said great. He said in fact we predict that we're going to hit our end strength number closer than we have ever done before in history. I looked at him and I said 'history'? He said well, since 1992. That's all his thinking could access. I actually explained that we actually go back to 1947. [Laughter]. That was sort of news.

But we're going to be smaller and with that are going to be efficiencies.

As we pivot to the Pacific, you all know about the strategy and everything, somebody asked me if we were going to plus up in the Pacific? Somebody else before I came down the aisle said, you know, we may just not be reducing things in the Pacific, which may in fact be a plus-up. As we look and change our perspective to make sure we're focused in that part of the world. So that will change some of the paradigm from USAFE to PACAF and how we look at things. You say it will impact how we're doing things, but it's not going to change the way we deploy Airmen.

You know the number of 120-day deployments is going down. The number of 179-day deployments is going up. We still have a pretty robust number of 365-day deployments. What percentage of deployments do you think are 365 days? Take a guess. Five percent. That's a really good number. I personally would think it's 50 percent. That seems to be where I spend most of my time

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when we're talking about people going on deployment. It's actually seven percent.

A couple of months ago, I spoke at the Squadron Officer School and I was having trouble remembering the numbers. So I told my staff, I said I can never remember the numbers on who deploys, so they went through the briefing and put numbers on there. I showed the slide, I put it in backwards and I said okay, what percentage of the force deploys for 365 days? I saw the whole place going -- looking at themselves, and they all went 7. I'm sitting there going, smart kids. It was on the slide.

If you look up here, 34 percent deploying 120 days; 59 percent deploying for 179, and 7 percent like we just talked about. But look at the numbers on the bottom. This was pretty interesting to me. Fifty-five percent of our force has deployed at least one time. But look at the number that have deployed more than three times. Twenty percent of the force.

When I was at Lackland Air Force Base we used to do what we called aggregation missions which means they'd bring in sort of single UTCs, single Airmen, or small groups from all over the southwest. They'd spend the night at San Antonio. One night or two nights getting ready for the rotator. That was lots of fun for the cops -- spending your last one or two nights before you deploy for 179 days. You don't go to the library very often. But anyway, they spent their last couple of nights there in San Antonio and then they would ship out. I was shocked at how many people were on their second or third or fourth deployment. It was rare to have somebody say this is my first one unless they were just really, really young. That really had an impact.

But that's our force, we're a force that spends a lot of time doing the mission of the Air Force out there. And you know, we pay a lot for this force. We've reduce the force by 38 percent -- this chart says 34, a different snapshot in time. At the same time the price of that force has gone up 23 percent. Not real good. If you were the accountant in your family and you cut something by 34 percent while the price went up 23 percent, somebody would be asking you to look at your books.

When I used to do the compensation stuff, we have about a 15 percent pay gap between the active duty and the civilian sector and we've been very blessed the last 20 years of conflict that gap has closed. So the price of our force is going up and that's something that we have to deal with.

Personnel makes up almost 29 percent of the budget. So cost of people and cost of personnel programs is something we have to be very astute and make sure we're not losing anything. We have

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taken a policy, taken a strategy if you will, to protect the force today, and in the future.

Many years ago we used to say that we're not going to do a drawdown. By the way, we are not in a drawdown. We have not been in a drawdown for the last two years. The Marine Corps and the Army having to shed 100,000 people -- 80,000 and 20,000 respectively -- which is very close to percentage wise a big hit for both of them. They're going to be in a drawdown. I'm not sure what the magical number is that makes it a force shaping action or a drawdown, but we are not in a drawdown. We have been strategically shaping the force.

One thing we decided to do this year and the last two years was protect the seed corn. Before, we'd opened up programs just let anybody who applied get out and sort of tried to rearrange the deck chairs and correct things later. Now we're trying to protect the accessions. Our accessions are in the high 90 percent depending on your career field. We're doing very, very well in accessions. So we're not going to have the bathtub that many of you who are retired or many of you who are senior have seen career fields throughout our entire career that were just entire communities gone out and we've had to go back and figure out how we can compensate for those losses.

So we've been able to protect our seed corn. The bad thing is, if you protect the seed corn you've got to make people get out.

Our retention is at a 17-year high. Seventeen years. Somebody asked me the other day, they said 'what are you really good at?' I smiled and I said retention; really good at retention. I have nothing to do with retention. Retention is the impact of the economy, the impact of deployments over and over again. And when the economy's really bad, people are going to stay in the Air Force.

Somebody asked me one time, are we ever going to get to a point they pay people to leave and then a year later pay them to stay? I said no, probably not. It's just sort of the nature of what we do. People want a commitment, they can walk with their feet, so we've got to figure out a way to compensate them and keep them in the service. But we've got a three prong multi-year approach that's worked out pretty well. Voluntary programs first, incentives where required, where necessary, and involuntary programs where required.

We try to walk you, before we have to do anything really bad we try and ask you if you want to get out. Let people get out the door and make sure we can afford to lose them in their year

and their career field. We've gotten pretty scientific these days, we're down to year group and AFSCs, if you want to get out of the Air Force you can go into the web site today and see your resource managers and say hey, what are the chances of me getting out? They'll be able to tell you by year group how many overages or underages there are in your career field for that AFSC. That helps a lot, because if we're 20 under we're not going to waive everything and we can't let you out; but if we're 20 over, we're going to look pretty favorably on you getting out. As opposed to just people applying and wondering what's going to happen to them for six months or four months, however long it takes to process that application. So this volunteer approach of shaping the force has turned out pretty well.

The civilian sector, you know, we've got sort of the same thing. We started off with FY11 PB, we were going to grow 21,500 civilians in the out years in the Air Force. When Secretary Gates said we're going to hold civilian growth to the FY10 levels, we were able to go in and make the case that we needed to redirect folks on our nuclear enterprise, acquisition excellence, some of the other things they had told us to do, and they allowed us to grow about about 4,000 people. That's the difference in the red and the green line there.

We've gone through three rounds of VERA; VERA is Voluntary Early Retirement Authority; and, VSIP - Voluntary Separation Incentive Pay. You don't realize until you speak in public to people how much of an acronym test you are sometimes. You start throwing out a word -- I think I know what that means. You know what it is, but if you -- You have to get to the point that you really know what the letter stand for.

We've gone through our third round of VERA/VSIP. We made the decision that we're not going to do wholesale RIFs right now to try and reach our numbers because we're that close. We're going to be able to work out through attrition and everything else.

Now that doesn't mean that people might not be RIFd in the Air Force, because one thing you have to take away is, RIF is not a four-letter word on the civilian side. On the military side of the house, you say we're going to have a reduction in force, we have a board - we have a number, we're going to have to meet that number of people that are going to leave. On the civilian side of the house actually starting a RIF opens up various new authorities you can have for moving people around and placing people so starting a RIF on the civilian side is sometimes a positive thing. We are not going to be RIFing very many people on the civilian side of the house. In fact the ones going on now, if there are any, there are very few in the Air Force. I always

say that we're not doing any RIFs and somebody will say I know one person. They're very small in number, things where programs have been terminated, where we stop funding a program, we've moved on to the next thing or project. So it is very very limited.

Next slide.

So this is the world we manage. The perception is that all the good deals are going away and that all the bad deals are increasing. I would argue that is not the case. I really don't believe in my heart of hearts that that's the case. Every group of men and women in the Air Force have had to struggle with things.

I talk to youngsters and they get concerned about retired pay, things like that. I tell them, I've on a separate retirement system than they're on. They sort of look at me and say - 'There are two retirement systems?' Yeah, there really are. We've adjusted things over the years. You can read things that are in the press and people say we've got to worry about. There are a lot of things we have to worry about. I guess my answer is, you've got to look at the big picture. We're only worried that people wring their hands every day about how this is going to turn out because they don't know the answer.

We have made it through much tougher times in the Air Force.

Now, I will tell you that there are going to be tough times. We are in the seven years of famine. I think the next three, four, five years, and I'm not measuring with any accurate instrument at all, but for the next few years money is going to be tight. We're going to have to focus on what we do and be very careful with everything we do in the Air Force execution. But to do that we still have to take care of the people. I think we're doing that pretty well.

Let's look at where we're going. You are going to see a lot of consolidation. People ask me, one of the most recent things we did in the personnel business, we consolidated three of our FOAs in San Antonio. We had the Air Force Personnel Center, the Air Force Manpower Agency, the Air Force Services Agency and we brought them all together under one new super FOA. It's still called the Air Force Personnel Center, but we didn't rolled up manpower and services under the Personnel Center. We pulled them all together. In the next nine months you're going to see remapping of strategies and moving around all the boxes on the organizational chart, where you probably won't recognize it in a year from where it was before.

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Somebody asked me why we did that. Somebody said you could have kept it the way it was, and we believe you could have been providing better service to the MAJCOMs and the wings and things like that, to the customers out there. I don't argue that. I guess what I tell people is we can't always give you the personnel service we want to give you, but we can give you the personnel service that we can afford to give you. Our job is to make sure that it's good quality personnel service.

It would be great -- If I had my way I'd go back to a consolidated base personnel office. I'd put 75 personnelists at every base plus a really robust number of people out in the orderly rooms. It'd be back to the future. I would do that because I'm old.

I've got to tell you, youngsters, young men and women in the Air Force - I've got to stop saying youngsters - young men and women in the Air Force, young Airmen, young civilians, young officers, don't want to go to a consolidated base personnel office. As much as that hurts me. I think I'm the last active duty CMPO Chief of the Air Force. They don't want to go there.

My younger son got out of school and went to work, and we're now helping him set up his apartment and stuff, and he comes out the room and he's really frustrated. He's frustrated because he calls the cable company to set up his cable and he went through all this technology, touch screens answering everything. We said, 'Stuart, what's wrong?' He said, 'I've got to call and talk to somebody.' It was like, they don't want to talk to somebody. They're used to doing things on-line. That puts the responsibility back on us. We've got to make sure our computer system, our web pages and everything else are conducive to people doing things on-line.

If you're going to cut the people so that you can go to automation, you might want to make sure the automation is good. That's our responsibility.

We have a lot of personnel webpages out there. I'm sometimes a little frustrated because I can't find info out there. I can't find what I'm looking for on some of the web pages. That is not a criticism of personnel. That's a sort of criticism of the proliferation of web pages in everybody's career field. The only reason I talk about mine is, I surf my web pages and if I were to surf yours I would probably find exactly the same thing. We've got to provide our customers a rewarding experience when we tell them to go on line and do their job. If we say use virtual out-processing, we say use virtual TMO, whatever, then it's got to be a rewarding process because that's how they were raised. They were raised going to web sites where

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things worked. And, when they don't work and they actually have to talk to somebody, they get irritated...

A couple of years ago General Welsh, when he was USAFE commander, asked us to take a look at who was on the commander support staffs. He said Darrell, everybody has left the CSS, the orderly room if you will, to use a term of my day. I say orderly room, people go - commander support staff. They say why are we putting support staffs so small? Well, think about this. Since 2005 we're reducing the number of people in the Air Force by six percent. In the same period we're increasing the number of squadrons by 11 percent and we cut personnelists and comm/computer folks, the people who are in the orderly rooms, by 52 percent. Something you don't hear very often from an education major at Mississippi State - this is a simple math problem. We cut everybody out there. Back when we did PB 702, when we took great reductions, the question was who do you want to cut? Tooth or tail? We said we're going to cut the tail. I've got to tell you, I've got two dogs. I can tell you right where their teeth are and I can tell you right where their tail is, but I'm not so sure where to draw the line between them. Where does tail become tooth and vice versa.

When the orderly room of the flying squadron and the orderly room of the maintenance squadron has to pull in flyers and maintainers to do personnel work, or when the operations folks go to go outside the wire and there's nobody there to fix the meals for them, some of that tail is really getting close to tooth. Those are the things we're trying to work with as we go down. We've done a study, we plan on increasing the number of people in the orderly room. That's the good news. The commander support staff. Next year we should see rolling out. We went to interview 4,000 people at 40 different bases. It was pretty interesting. As we briefed the outcome of it, one of the key take-aways was we've moved knowledge operations from the squadron level up to the group level at all the bases. Eighty-two percent of all the group commanders that were interviewed told us we need to put the knowledge operators back down to the commander support staff level. Eighty-two percent. You know what makes that stat really amazing? That was not one of the questions. That wasn't one of the questions on the standard questionnaire we gave them. When they're all telling you that at 82 percent and that's not even a question, you better listen.

So we're moving the knowledge operators back down to the commander support staff. We're doing a review of what the knowledge operators are doing to see how we need to work on that career field. And working with A6 and A1 together, we're putting together what would be sort of the orderly room of the future.

One problem was no one was the OPR for orderly rooms in the Air Force. Think about that. We all had our little pieces. Personnel had a piece, finance had a piece, com had a piece, but nobody was the OPR. So we're changing that. AI's becoming the OPR. AI's becoming the OPR, as we look at the orderly rooms about 78 percent of all the billets which are still associated with orderly rooms were com computer. By our best estimation about 80 percent of all the work we've done is personnel work.

In the old days, the 702s -- does anybody know what a 702 is? You're as old as I am. The 702, the admin troop, if you will, the admin Airman, would type of a discharge package on the computer with carbon paper because that string of one-line memory typewriter hadn't come yet. The IBM Selectrics hadn't got there yet so they had to type up a discharge package. They would walk it over to the consolidated base personnel office and they would hand it to the personnel airman and they would type it into the computer. We didn't trust anybody to type things directly into the computer. Nowadays, with centralization and everything else, you have orderly room Airmen typing things directly into the computer. That's why it's gone from admin work to personnel work. That's why we're changing some of the billets down there.

A new thing you're going to be reading about a lot is the new Transition Assistance Program. We have the current TAPs, Transition Assistance Program, in the Air Force. It's about a three-day program. As we start reducing the number of people in the military, as I said, mainly in the Army and Marine Corps, Congress said we've got to take care of people leaving the military, and I 100 percent agree with that. They want to make sure that people are using the transition assistance programs.

We in the Air Force are doing pretty good because in the Air Force 95 percent of everybody leaving too advantage of the transition assistance program. We now have a VOW Act. The VOW Act adds time to the Transition Assistance Program to even make sure we have more services being offered for young men and women leaving the service, and that's a good thing. Unfortunately it's going to drive the bill up to cost us some manpower slots. We've already had to go to put manpower slots against that. And when you throw in the Veterans Employment Act in there, you're throwing in optional programs, two- or three-day programs for the three tracks of people they want to do when they go outside which is education, entrepreneurship or business. So that's going to increase the number of days people will be doing this.

This is a billable service to do, but it will help us better take care of our Airmen so you'll be seeing that as we roll out.

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I get asked a lot of questions about tuition assistance and are we still going to have tuition assistance. Yes, we're going to still have tuition assistance. I will tell you it's under great scrutiny.

I'll give an interesting stat. We believe in education in the Air Force. When I came in the Air Force 100 years ago, on the day that I entered 24 percent of all the enlisted force in the Air Force had some education levels higher than high school. Twenty-four percent. Today if you took that same poll the answer is 96 percent of the enlisted force has something over high school. One year of college, two years of college, associate's degree. Obviously the Community College of the Air Force has helped that tremendously. It's a wonderful way for us to send people out of the Air Force with an associate's degree as they go back out into the work force, or to make that first hurdle as they start earning their master's degree.

It's going to be under pressure for tuition assistance for the numbers coming down, it's really too early to tell. I will tell you all the services are in lock-step because frankly whatever we offer to an Airman needs to be offered to a Soldier, a Sailor, a Marine, a Coasty. We have to do things together. This is something that's really getting a little scrutiny in the next few years.

With everything changing, what's happening with the culture of the Air Force? The thing that I value so much, the culture of being an Airman. It's changed. We went out last year to talk to a bunch of Airmen about services programs. I've got to tell you, services programs are wonderful at base level in the things we offer, and they're very similar to what I had when I was growing up. I've been doing this a long time.

So we started looking at how these things might change. I remember I was briefing at a wing the other day and I said you know, our service programs are very very similar to what we had when I was a young kid. I said about the only thing we don't have is ceramic shops. They went, we have a ceramic shop. I thought we got rid of all of those. I thought they left because they'd fallen out of favor. We're trying to help bases look at what they need in the services arena to regenerate their Airmen. Think about it, that's what services is really about. Allow someone to deploy, allow them to come home, to regenerate, to get ready to deploy, get ready to do the Air Force's work. Folks are different today.

People raise their hand back there and say we need to consolidate base personnel offices. If I said hey, we need to get together and do something, they would ask me two questions:

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whose house? and what can I bring? That's the way we all need to think.

The youngsters we found out, 69 percent of the Air Force are millennials, they start texting on-line to set something up. They would set up all of the preliminary work that we do in the virtual world, and then they would actually get together.

Now one of the things they told us is they want a sense of community. They want some place they can go and hang out. When I talk about service activities I talk in terms of buildings. The bowling alley, the library, the golf course, the auto body shop. I talk in terms of buildings. Most of y'all, if you'll admit it, are visualizing the same thing. The youngsters don't think that way. They think in terms of capability. What they want is something like a community college. They want to go into the coffee shop, which by the way is connected to the learning center/library. Which goes into the outdoor rec. Outdoor rec I believe is very very very important to our young airmen and their ability to regenerate. And get that sense of community where they can all hang out together. If the bowling alley and the auto hobby shop, all those things are connected to it so much the better.

Obviously with limited resources we're not going to be able to rebuild everything but we can start off with knocking some walls down both virtually and literally to help bring our Airmen together and help them do the things that they like to do a little better.

We went out last year and said what is the core to being in the Air Force? What's the core to being an Airman? We found out that it was fitness centers, child care, youth programs, dining halls, Airman Family Readiness Centers, libraries and outdoor rec. When we decided what was core to the Air Force the way we did it was we looked at what services we thought we could provide, what services the Airmen said they needed to regenerate, and what they were using. That intersection there was where we decided to make the core of the Air Force. We're trying very hard to fund that core. I would tell you in today's environment we're going to be challenged to fund 100 percent of the core to some of those services programs.

But you know, we've got some of the best people in the world, certainly some of the best people in the military. We're looking at great innovations and future programming and future weapon systems which are fixed by our -- They're made possible by the innovative Airmen we have.

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So I don't worry about the future. I get asked that question every now and then by groups of young Airmen. They say do you lay awake at night worrying about the future? I say no. I lay awake at night because I'm 55 years old. It has nothing to do with worrying about the future. The future is really coming together. The future is going to be okay. It's going to be tough. Don't think I'm just up here saying it'll all work out. It's going to require some hard work by some great Airmen in all career fields to make sure the future is secure and we come out the other end leaner and better at what we're doing. I don't worry because the quality of Airmen that we have in the Air Force that are able to do that. Analyze the situation, decide the way we're going, help us come out with a good outcome at the other end.

So let me take a couple of questions.

I told a group of ROTC cadets today that I knew all three verses to the Jeopardy song if they wanted to ask questions. I'll start singing.

Question: [Inaudible - about manning, career-field management.]

Lieutenant General Jones: We do that every year. We try to adjust the manning levels and the personnel system is always trying, if you're at 60 percent and the worldwide average is 80 percent, that [inaudible] back there, especially on the enlisted side because the enlisted side, master sergeant and below, are done sort of ostensibly by the computer with a little human interaction in there as opposed to on the officer side when it's all done by humans still. Well, all done by assignments officers. There's a difference.

So it's always churning to get that 60 percent level up to the Air Force's worldwide levels. Everything on the enlisted side of the house, the officer side a little bit, too, is driven by overseas vacancies. People are staying a lot longer than they used to at their bases. I don't think they're going to stay their whole career at one base, but it's not uncommon now to have people spending a lot longer at a base than they used to spend. And that's just sort of part of where we are. The PCS budget, the permanent change of station budget. We watch that one closer. I don't mean a lot closer than we used to as in we didn't watch it, but it's a lot smaller than it used to be so it's a lot easier to watch. So, we have to be very prudent of it.

So, I would say that if you're at a base where the manning is 60 percent, the manning area is around 60 percent, it's unrealistic to expect to go somewhere. But if you really want to

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go somewhere, the gateway to the world, go overseas, volunteer to do a 365, and then you get your base of preference coming out. Korea is full of nobody wanting to PCS there, the people going there as a stop go somewhere else on their follow-on. They can take tell you exactly where they are going when they leave. It works out well for us too. Come with us, give us a 365, we'll try and get you where you want to go.

So it's not getting a lot better as you move up in rank, it changes every day with AFSC, skill level, [inaudible].

Question: [Inaudible]. Subject of AFSCs, skill levels, symbiotic relationships.

Lieutenant General Jones: We've all read and heard a lot about the Guard and Reserve and the active force mix these days. I certainly don't claim to be an expert on force mix. I will tell you that each component of the Air Force - active duty, Guard and Reserve -- brings something unique to the fight. We've got to fine tune that instrument or a tuning fork, we've got to fine tune that relationship so that we're maximizing the good parts, the efficient parts of each one of those organizations. We can't afford to put too much or put a disproportionate amount in any one of the three organizations that would cause that engine to sort of run out whack. I think that's what the big brains are trying to do right now. The folks that do that for a living, decide how much airlift, how much fighter support, how much of something do we get from the Guard and Reserve. I think it's facilitated by the fact that we're talking to each other, we're listening to each other, and it's going to be hard to get it right. I will tell you whatever the answer is, everybody may not agree with that answer. But it certainly won't be an answer that we've gotten to because everybody's not talking.

From a personnel standpoint, we sort of fall in behind there. That drives what we're doing. That's the strategy of how many people we have. But it drives unexpected bills, you know. If you put - for years the Guard and Reserve have benefited from the active training everybody. To give them full-up Airmen, full-up rounds, go in the Guard and Reserve because maybe they can't stand the tempo, and I don't mean that pejoratively. They need a break from the tempo of active duty so they step in the Guard or Reserve. If the tempo of the Guard and Reserve is exactly what it's like being on active duty then there's no push for them to step in the Guard and Reserve. Then the Guard and Reserve have to start training their own people and their bill for training goes up. So, if anything, it's a very complicated equation. I do not claim to be smart enough to have the right answer for you.

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Question: [inaudible - about Secretary Donley's remarks earlier in the day about sequestration].

Lieutenant General Jones: I can't give you a date. We're sort of all waiting just like you. Reading the papers on whether sequestration's going to kick in or not. We are really hoping that the Congress comes together and passes what they need to do to get us where sequestration doesn't kick in. If sequestration kicks in, it's sort of then how much does the military pay? Are they going to be exempt in part of sequestration? That's why it's unknown right now.

If they have to play completely it's going to drive one bill; if we play in a smaller degree it's going to drive another bill. So it's impossible to tell you right now.

I will tell you as soon as we know, you're certainly gonna know. It's not like we're going to hold the information. The day this is decided over on Capitol Hill, in the halls of government, it's going to be out there in the public press and we're going to be pressing right behind them, going really fast to figure out what that means for the force structure in the Air Force. And I just can't predict, because we don't know. Are certain groups going to be off limits? Are they going to protect certain areas or not? If we have to reduce the numbers and not make a good play in reductions. So I would just be wildly speculating if I tried to go down that road.

Anybody else?

First off, let me thank you for coming today. I was a little worried. When they asked me to speak I said okay, but my paranoid side is nobody will actually come. They said you're speaking at 4:00 o'clock today. I was going, you've got to be kidding me. I would be tired by 4:00 o'clock. And thank you for letting me slip in a few minutes late. One of the colonels in our area's father passed away and we had a funeral in Arlington. I thought it was important to attend that. So I raced down here. I thought I'd be here ten minutes early, but we got in traffic about five miles out. Oh my gosh, we're going to be late. But I knew that everybody here would understand if I was a few minutes late, so thank you very much.

Thank you for coming, please enjoy the symposium. We're going to be around most of the week. If you have questions, don't be shy.

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