



CHIEF's Sight Picture

3 May 2002

The Road Ahead

It's been almost six months since my last Sight Picture addressing our nation's war on terrorism and the vital contributions of our airmen to its success. Secretary Roche and I are proud of your efforts--the United States Air Force has done an extraordinary job meeting the intensive joint operational requirements of Operations NOBLE EAGLE and ENDURING FREEDOM. Our entire Total Force Team has demonstrated the ability to fight the war on terrorism for the long haul. However, we know that keeping up this pace without a clear road map of what lies ahead has a direct impact on your quality of life. We also understand there are many questions concerning Stop Loss, mobilization and demobilization, and future operations that need answering, and we are aggressively working to deliver them to you as soon as possible. Three critical assumptions will drive our answers and be factored into our plans at every echelon of command:

- 1) Our heightened force protection conditions will become our new "normal,"
- 2) Securing our nation's skies is also a new constant and includes fighter, tanker, AWACS, and transport support, and finally,
- 3) Our heightened tempo of operations is likely to continue at its current pace for the foreseeable future.

We know many of you have questions regarding Stop Loss. We have completed three reviews and to date, 61 officer (38%) and 99 enlisted (33%) AFSCs have been released. We will continue to review the remaining AFSCs for further releases. Also, our mobilized guardsmen and reservists want to know when to expect demobilization. The Deputy Chief of Staff for Air and Space Operations (AF/XO) is coordinating an effort to evaluate our mission needs and determine which AFSCs can be demobilized as soon as possible. At the same time, we are evaluating where, when, and how to shift from a crisis response mode--with heavy reliance on mobilized guard and reserve--to our "new steady state," which would utilize volunteer guardsmen and reservists to help meet our mission taskings. We need these results to determine our long-term requirements for our mobilized members and how long to continue Stop Loss for those in our most stressed skills. We expect to provide this information to you by 30 May.

We also face the challenge of determining our requirements after mobilization authority expires. Most of the initiatives we're considering are being worked within the context of our FY04 program and budget development. We are looking at funding

efficiencies and maximizing utilization of technology, both of which will allow us to shift manpower into our critically short AFSCs. We may have to move some work from military to civilian (both civil servant and contractor) members of our team, or augment our military with civilian help. Secretary Roche and I will update you on our plans when we forward them to the Secretary of Defense this August.

We can't be certain of what lies ahead in the Global War On Terrorism, but we can and must carefully manage our force requirements to assure we will achieve victory in whatever turn this war takes. We'll continue to work these issues hard and update you accordingly. Again, we are immensely proud of our Total Air Force Team and commend you for your service and dedication to our country.



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