

**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE**

**PRESENTATION TO THE COMMITTEE ON ARMED  
SERVICES SUBCOMMITTEE ON READINESS AND  
MANAGEMENT SUPPORT**

**SUBJECT: AIR FORCE FISCAL YEAR 2000 REAL  
PROPERTY MAINTENANCE PROGRAMS**

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ENVIRONMENT)**

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## **Introduction**

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, good day. I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss the Department of the Air Force FY 2000 Military Construction (MILCON) program. While this is my first appearance before the committee, I am nonetheless appreciative of your continuing support for our uniformed members and their families.

Mr. Chairman, we are cognizant that the Air Force could not maintain the quality of any of its facilities, and the advantages they provide, without the strong support we have always received from this committee, for which we are most appreciative.

## **Overview**

As we adjust to ever changing world conditions and revise our mission, plan, and structure to meet our responsibilities, both at home and those associated with peacekeeping and other deployments abroad, it is imperative that we establish and maintain standards to provide an adequate quality of life for our people. Since people have been and remain the most important weapon system in our inventory, we must listen to what they tell us they

need if we want to keep them in uniform. Well, we've asked, and we've listened, and we are now trying to respond to their stated desires for safe, accessible, and affordable housing, health care facilities, child development centers, and work environments. Meeting all of these demands is no easy task, yet we've made every effort to balance these needs with those of modernization. The FY 2000 MILCON budget request reflects the results of our strategy.

As we merge operations into an Expeditionary Aerospace Force (EAF), it is more important than ever that the interface and mutuality between the active and reserve components be seamless. This means ensuring the Air National Guard (ANG) and Air Force Reserve (AFR) receive adequate MILCON funding along with the Active forces. This budget also addresses their needs.

The Total Force concept enables the Air Force to aggressively manage the most formidable obstacles to troop retention and readiness – heavy taskings and tough fiscal constraints. Despite these challenges, we must balance MILCON needs across the total

force, to include our very capable Ready Reserve and Guard units, as we transition the Air Force into the 21st Century.

Support operations for our EAF concept must become better and less expensive: better, because quality infrastructure contributes to quality of life, which improves morale, retention, and the readiness of the force: and less expensive in order to free up funds for the high priority weapon systems modernization we need to maintain battlefield dominance.

We are continually examining internal operations and support activities to determine where we can leverage our resources. We are taking actions to right-size, to consolidate like functions, to demolish excess facilities, and to enhance joint use of facilities between service components and government agencies (such as the National Aeronautics and Space Administration), and to embrace better business practices. These initiatives focus on improving the efficiency and performance of the Air Force facility support structure.

The reality is that, in order to fund higher priority programs, the Air Force is underinvesting in installation programs. Each year

we balance installation support operations against other Air Force priorities, which results in a funding stream based on an acceptable level of risk. This means that our installation programs continue to be underfunded.

The maintenance and repair of facilities and infrastructure at Air Force installations are essential to our core competencies in support of national strategies and the Quadrennial Defense Review. We are striving to maintain facilities and infrastructure where Air Force people work and live to preclude weakening unit readiness, impairing mission accomplishment, or degrading quality of life. Consequently, the Air Force corporate strategy for the installation support program includes:

- Maintaining our operations and maintenance programs to preserve the quality of life of our personnel and their families.
- Ensuring that our MILCON program places emphasis on supporting new mission beddowns and current mission necessities, to include redirecting limited capital investment to our most pressing requirements.

- Ensuring continued access to critical ranges and airspace.
- Reinvesting in the few remaining overseas bases, which, even after host-nation burdensharing, have numerous facility needs critical to Air Force core competencies.
- Incorporating environment, health and safety cost considerations into core business practices to lower cost and to improve performance while continuing to fund critical environmental projects to meet compliance requirements.

The Air Force continues to look at our installation facility requirements with a view towards leaner operations. We are continuing to embrace better business practices by considering private sector business ventures for everything we do. This allows us to leverage our limited resources by incorporating new innovative ideas. These new ideas will continue to shape the templates for installations in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Mr. Chairman, I now would like to proceed to discuss the major programs in our FY 2000 MILCON budget request. I will review the total force MILCON program, to include discussion of the Military Family Housing (MFH) program. Finally, I will address the Air Force

perspective on the Department of Defense request for funding of the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) accounts.

### **Air Force Military Construction Budget**

The Air Force MILCON program consists of five principal areas: New Mission; Current Mission; Planning & Design and Unspecified Minor Construction; Environmental; and BRAC. New Mission construction supports the beddown of new weapons systems and force structure realignments. Current Mission construction revitalizes existing facilities and infrastructure, and builds new facilities to correct existing deficiencies. Planning & Design and Unspecified Minor Construction includes funds to design our construction projects and to fund a small program to handle urgent, unforeseen construction requirements. The environmental program consists of those regulatory compliance projects, which must be accomplished by law, or to avoid increased health or safety risks to people on or off our installations. The BRAC program supports the beddown of realigned missions.

The Air Force proposes financing its FY 2000 MILCON program through a combination of regular appropriations and

advance appropriations. We are requesting \$315 million in FY 2000 appropriations and \$686 million in appropriations for FY 2001 to enable completion of the FY 2000 program. This one-time financing methodology enables the Air Force to fulfill its commitment to providing quality facilities, while maximizing the use of FY 2000 resources for other readiness and modernization needs. The Air Force has added the \$686 million needed to complete the FY 2000 projects to its FY 2001 program. The use of advance appropriations for FY 2000 projects has no impact on the Air Force's planned MILCON for FY 2001 through 2005. This is not the preferred method of budgeting for construction projects, but we expect to execute the FY 2000 program without delays or added costs provided Congress approves full authorization and advance appropriations for the projects requested.

For FY 2000, we are requesting a program of \$1.85 billion for MILCON. This request includes \$1.75 billion for active duty MILCON (\$597 million for traditional MILCON and \$1.150 billion for MFH); \$73 million for ANG; \$29 million for AFR; and \$4.7 million for BRAC MILCON.

## **The Total Air Force Military Construction Program**

Similar to last year, the Air Force's FY 2000 MILCON and MFH programs were developed using a facility investment strategy with the following objectives:

- Maintain what we own
- Accommodate new missions
- Maintain quality of life investments
- Optimize use of public and private resources
- Continue demolition programs
- Reinvest overseas
- Continue environmental leadership

### **Program Overview**

Given the success of the corporate Air Force process, we continue to consider the Air Force total obligation authority as one pot of money. These funds are distributed based on the most urgent, corporate needs of the total force. The strategy for allocating these funds is inextricably tied to major commands (to include the AFR and ANG), Chief of Staff, and Secretary of the Air Force priorities.

To determine priorities, each major command submits a prioritized, unconstrained list of its construction requirements. The MILCON integrated process team, then uses a weighted matrix to establish a cross-cutting investment program. This results in an integrated priority list based on the most urgent needs of the total Air Force. The list integrates new mission, current mission, and environmental projects for active, ANG, and AFR components. This priority list is presented to the corporate leadership structure, to include the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Air Force, for final review and approval.

### **Current Mission**

“Maintain what we own” is the investment strategy underlying our current MILCON program. This concept results in identifying the minimum requirements to sustain readiness and quality of life while attempting to reduce the requirements via privatization and demolition. This strategy ensures that we exercise the stewardship entrusted to us for maintaining eighty-seven major installations.

Our FY 2000 current mission MILCON program consists of 54 projects totaling \$467 million. These projects include a variety of

facilities at a number of installations to include: runway and ramp repair projects at Eglin Auxiliary Field 9, Florida; Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona; Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina; and Elmendorf and Eielson Air Force Bases, Alaska; addition and alteration to the Air Force Reserve Headquarters facility at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia; and constructing two composite support complexes for the Air National Guard at Kulis, Alaska and Savannah, Georgia. These projects are critical to maintaining aircraft readiness and to enhance the work environment of the consolidated functions, thereby improving overall efficiency and reducing costs associated with stress and the frustration of system failure.

We will continue our emphasis on the effective use of available resources to determine what we need, to care for what we own, to renovate or replace worn out facilities, and to look for opportunities to consolidate functions in retained facilities.

### **Accommodate New Mission**

It is important that our people are able to operate in an environment designed to accomplish their missions. The Air Force

modernization programs is designed to enhance the unique capabilities embodied in our specialized core competencies. These competencies provide the rapid, precise, global response that enables our combatant commanders to respond quickly to regional conflicts in support of the national strategy.

We need MILCON to support weapon system beddowns, such as the F-22 fighter, C-17 airlifter, B-2 bomber, KC-135 tanker, Joint Primary Aircraft Training System (JPATS), and to improve aircrew proficiency training by constructing, for example, the Enhanced Training Range in Idaho (Juniper Butte Range). Our entire MILCON program needed to support new mission requirements consisting of 23 projects totals \$154 million.

### **F-22 Raptor**

The F-22, our #1 modernization priority, is the Air Force's next generation air superiority fighter being developed to counter threats posed by advance surface-to-air missile systems and next generation fighters. The proposed location for the F-22 follow-on operational test and evaluation and the weapons school beddown is Nellis Air

Force Base, Nevada. The FY 2000 MILCON includes three F-22 projects at Nellis Air Force Base totaling \$19 million.

### **C-17 Globemaster III**

The C-17 Globemaster III aircraft is designed to replace our aging fleet of C-141 Starlifters, which currently are operating beyond their intended design life. The C-17 provides rapid global mobility by combining the C-141 airlift capabilities, the C-5 capability to carry oversize cargo, and the C-130 capability to land directly on short, forward-located airstrips.

McChord Air Force Base, Washington, was designated as the second operational base for the C-17. We had already identified Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina, as the first operational base, and Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma, as the C-17 training base. Since then, we have identified Jackson International Airport, Mississippi, as the proposed Air National Guard C-17 operating location. To support this program, the FY 2000 MILCON request includes Active and AFR facilities at McChord Air Force Base, Washington, and a corrosion control facility at Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina.

## **B-2 Spirit**

The B-2 is a multi-role bomber capable of delivering both conventional and nuclear munitions. The bomber represents a major leap forward in technology and is an important milestone in the U.S. bomber modernization program. Our FY 2000 MILCON program includes one \$23 million project at Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri.

## **KC-135 Stratotanker**

The KC-135 principal mission is refueling. This asset greatly enhances the Air Force's capability to accomplish its mission of Global Engagement. We have four projects in the FY 2000 MILCON to support the KC-135 totaling \$19 million. The projects are: flight simulator facilities at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia and RAF Mildenhall, United Kingdom; repair parking ramp at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska; and a squadron operations and aircraft maintenance unit at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas.

## **Joint Primary Aircraft Training System (JPATS)**

JPATS is a joint Air Force and Navy primary trainer. The JPATS T-6A Texan II aircraft replaces existing fleets of Air Force T-

37s and Navy T-34s. The aircraft will be used to train entry-level pilots, navigators, and naval flight officers. The FY 2000 MILCON includes one JPATS project at Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas for \$3 million.

### **Enhanced Training Range in Idaho (Juniper Butte)**

The Air Force is building a training range on Bureau of Land Management and Idaho state lands in Southwest Idaho, and modifying airspace for local training use by Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho, crews. The range will simulate real-world scenarios and will allow aircrews to plan and practice complex missions. This project will balance realistic local training with careful consideration of environmental, cultural, and economic concerns. In addition to providing realistic training, the range's close proximity to Mountain Home Air Force Base increases efficiency by allowing crews to convert time currently spent in transit to a distant range into actual training time. The new range will include a 12,000-acre drop zone site; a 640-acre and four 5-acre no-drop zone sites; simulated target areas; and 10 one acre and twenty quarter acre emitter sites. This multi-year range program

request includes \$15 million in FY 2000 for phase II, and \$2 million for a defense access road project.

### **Quality of Life**

Achieving and maintaining military readiness is our number one priority. While modern technology enables our forces to perform their missions more effectively, it cannot substitute for high quality people. People, our most treasured resource, are the critical components of readiness. It is imperative that we maintain a highly motivated and trained fighting force to effectively respond to the demands placed on them. We have 95,000 military members forward stationed or deployed and we urgently need to fund quality improvements that address our troops' top concerns: retirement pay; fair and competitive compensation; safe, affordable, and adequate housing; quality health care; balanced tempo; robust community and family programs; and expanded educational opportunities. These are the initiatives that commanders, first sergeants, and airmen say are important to them.

The quality of life of our people must be commensurate with the sacrifices we ask them to make. Addressing these concerns has

enabled us to better manage recruiting and retention challenges. Offering an attractive living environment to those aspiring to serve this great country results in improved quality of life for our personnel, and that, Mr. Chairman, translates into enhanced readiness.

The MILCON program improves quality of life by renovating or constructing dormitories and community support facilities. Our three-step dormitory investment strategy, as outlined in the Air Force dormitory master plan, is as follows: (1) the buy-out of all permanent party central latrine dormitories, now complete given the generous congressional support in FY 1999; (2) the elimination of shortages; and (3) the replacement of our worst remaining dorms.

We balance dormitory investment against additional requests for community support facilities. This year's MILCON program funds eight enlisted dormitory projects at eight stateside installations, and one project overseas, for a total of \$90.5 million. In addition to the dormitories, the MILCON program funds a child development center at RAF Lakenheath, United Kingdom; a dining facility at Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi; visitors quarters at

McGuire Air Force Base, New Jersey; and new or modified fitness centers at Travis Air Force Base, California; Schriever (formerly Falcon) Air Force Base, Colorado; MacDill Air Force Base, Florida; Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri; and Osan Air Base, Korea, for a total of \$51 million.

### **Optimize Use of Public and Private Resources**

As the Air Force operationalizes its EAF concept, we must free up precious funds for modernization. To do this, we continue to adopt modern business practices, e.g., eliminating redundancy; using competition to improve quality and to reduce costs; and reducing support structures to free up resources for other higher priority needs. Nonetheless, we must keep in mind that the purpose of our competitive sourcing and privatizing initiatives is the preservation of the “tooth” and streamlining the “tail.”

### **Military Family Housing**

We awarded our first housing privatization project last summer at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. While the contracting process took longer than we would have liked, it was necessary to

develop the new documents, policies, and procedures that will allow us to eliminate many hurdles on future projects.

The Air Force continues to solicit advice from national real estate and financial institutions on how to improve our performance in privatization. We firmly believe that through privatization we can provide new homes to our airmen in less time than using the standard MILCON process.

### **Utilities**

Meanwhile, we are embracing a defense reform initiative that places us primarily in the energy management business, which will reduce our role in the infrastructure business. Our goal is to privatize utility systems where it makes economic sense and does not negatively impact national security.

To date we have identified 463 utility systems for potential privatization, and analysis for 55 of these systems is currently underway. We have also programmed 204 systems for analysis in FY 1999, and the remaining 204 systems in FY 2000. As a result, the Air Force will be able to meet the goals established by the Department of Defense to privatize all utility systems by 2003.

## **Laboratory Infrastructure**

We are also exploring innovative partnership arrangements with industry to achieve real reductions in Research, Development, Technology & Evaluation (RDT&E) infrastructure costs through mutually beneficial use of Air Force-owned land and facilities. By working with local communities and government entities at the Air Force research sites, we are confident we can develop more efficient operations. One example is the joint proposal being negotiated between our Rome research site and the state of New York. Through a combined funding source consisting of MILCON, state and local government funds, and a bond issue, the Rome research site will be able to divest themselves of 14 old and expensive-to-maintain buildings in order to acquire one new building with greatly reduced operations and maintenance costs. Additional savings in manpower will come through reduced requirements for security, facility management, and maintenance. The innovative lease arrangement will substantially reduce the costs to the government while guaranteeing payback to the bond holders.

Another example of an innovative approach to infrastructure requirements is the proposal for Brooks Air Force Base, the home of

our Armstrong research site. The Brooks “city base” concept is being explored with the city of San Antonio and the State of Texas. This concept would allow us to retain a research campus while turning the rest of the base infrastructure over to the local government and to private contractors. It also would allow the local community to have access to the facilities currently at Brooks, and would provide a valuable place for future industrial and commercial development while retaining areas for parks and recreation. As with the Rome research site in New York, the city base at Brooks would greatly reduce infrastructure costs to the government since it would no longer be responsible for the upkeep of the support facilities and would need to maintain only the facilities actually used for research. These types of partnerships with the local communities have great potential and may become models for future Air Force infrastructure plans.

### **Demolition**

While we strive to increase our maintenance dollar for infrastructure or new facilities; we must continue to demolish worn out or obsolete facilities in order to reduce recurring operations and

maintenance costs. Over the past three FYs, we have demolished over nine million square feet of obsolete facilities.

### **Overseas Military Construction**

We must also invest in force protection, safety, and quality of life at our overseas bases. We now have eleven overseas main operating bases, of which six are to the East: two in England, two in Germany, one in Italy, and one in Turkey; and five bases in the Pacific: three in Japan and two in Korea. After years of base closures and force reductions, we have achieved stability in the overseas arena. However, the reduced MILCON investment coupled with inadequate host-nation funding does not meet our overseas requirements. Consequently, while we are actively pursuing NATO funding, increased host-nation funding, and payment-in-kind, our quality of life improvement needs remain greater than available burden-sharing funding can satisfy.

Our FY 2000 MILCON program for our European and Pacific installations totals \$77 million. The program consists of a consolidated corrosion control and maintenance complex, a KC-135 flight simulator facility, and an operations facility at RAF

Mildenhall; and a consolidated support complex at RAF Lakenheath, United Kingdom. Also in the program are a \$2 million global positioning system control station on Ascension Island, and a \$2 million project for apron security lighting at Lajes Air Base, Portugal. As mentioned earlier, there is one overseas dormitory project; an addition/alteration to the physical fitness center, at Osan Air Base, Korea; and a child development center at RAF Lakenheath, United Kingdom. We ask for your support of these important operational and quality of life projects that represent critical requirements for our airmen and their families located overseas.

We are sending a precautionary prefinancing statement to the NATO infrastructure committees for all NATO-eligible European projects. These statements will permit recoupment from the NATO infrastructure program if eligibility is subsequently established.

### **Environmental Military Construction**

As our record shows, we are dedicated to enhancing our already open relationships with both the regulatory community and the neighborhoods around our installations. We strive to ensure

that our operations meet all environmental regulations and laws, and we seek out partnerships with local regulatory and commercial sector counterparts to share ideas and to create an atmosphere of trust.

Our continuing campaign to foster an environmental ethic within the Air Force, both here in the US and abroad, has enabled us to enhance operational readiness, be a good neighbor, and leverage our resources to ensure that we remain a leader in environmental compliance, cleanup, and pollution prevention.

As a result of these cooperative efforts over the past two years, the Air Force environmental program has received top honors in almost one-third of the 42 awards recognized by the Department of Defense. We were recognized for overall environmental quality, pollution prevention, and recycling. Additionally, our measure of merit targeting no-enforcement actions is paying dividends. We have reduced our open enforcement actions from 263 in FY 1992 to just seven in the first quarter of FY 1999.

Our major environmental stewardship projects are the renewal of the Barry M. Goldwater Range in Arizona and the Nellis

Range in Nevada. We anticipate submitting renewal legislation to Congress in late summer. Our environmental compliance MILCON request for FY 2000 totals \$27 million for eight, class-1 “must pay” compliance projects. Our program primarily focuses on projects for fire training facilities, which are closed due to fuel contaminated land and potential ground water contamination. These fire training facilities are located at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii; an ANG fire training facility at Savannah International Airport, Georgia; and an AFR fire training facility at Homestead Air Reserve Station, Florida. We also have two wastewater treatment facility projects at RAF Feltwell and RAF Molesworth, United Kingdom; a hazardous material storage facility at RAF Mildenhall, United Kingdom; a sanitary sewer line project at Schriever Air Force Base, Colorado; and a project to close the landfill at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam.

All of these projects satisfy class-1 requirements. (Class-1 compliance requirements refer to conditions or facilities currently out of compliance with environmental laws or regulations, including those subject to a compliance agreement.)

### **Unspecified Minor Construction**

We have requested \$15 million in FY 2000 for unspecified minor construction, which will provide the total Air Force with a primary means of responding to small, unforeseen facility requirements that cannot wait for normal MILCON. From FY 1994 through FY 1998, a total of \$6 million was reprogrammed into the account to fund urgent requirements. The FY 1994 through FY 1999 accounts are fully obligated, or committed, to valid projects.

### **Planning and Design**

Our request for FY 2000 planning and design is \$35 million. These funds are required to complete design of the FY 2001 construction program and to start design of our FY 2002 projects.

### **Construction Supervision, Inspection and Overhead**

The Air Force active and Reserve forces will annualize its appropriations for construction supervision, inspection and overhead over five budget years based on FY 1993-97 outlay rates. This defers total obligation authority in the initial budget year, and budgets for supervision, inspection, and overhead funds as needed, as opposed to maintaining unobligated balances.

## **Military Family Housing**

As in years past, we consider family housing to be one of our most important programs. We are convinced that no other facility program so greatly influences the performance and commitment of our people as much as having quality homes for our families.

Maintaining our responsibility to the family housing program is even more important in this era of major force reductions and increased frequency and length of deployments. Because these factors are so stressful for military families, it is imperative that we continue to emphasize quality of life issues to mitigate the stress. Consequently, we have developed, consistent with the corporate priorities of the Air Force, a housing program to best serve our families.

Due in large part to strong congressional support, our MFH investment program has been sustained during recent force structure changes. As of this fiscal year, the average age of our housing inventory is 35 years and 61,000 of our 110,000 units require revitalization.

Our MFH investment has three prongs: the replacement/improvement program, the operation and maintenance program,

and the leverage we can obtain through a balanced privatization program. The \$328 million FY 2000 MFH replacement/improvement program will replace 1180 worn-out units at 15 separate locations, and will improve 1334 units at 15 locations. The housing operations & maintenance program totals \$822 million. It supports “must pay” requirements such as refuse collection, snow removal, utilities, leases, and critical housing maintenance tasks. These are essential repairs that must be done to keep the houses in good condition. Finally, we will use privatization at selected locations to leverage our funds. Privatization is a tool which allows us to accelerate the buyout of repairs to adequate homes and we ask for your continued strong support for our requested investment levels to ensure we have sufficient capital to accelerate the repair of our inadequate housing.

### **Housing Improvements**

The Air Force “whole house/whole neighborhood” improvement concept has proven extremely successful. Under this concept, we upgrade older homes to contemporary standards by updating worn-out bathrooms and kitchens, replacing obsolete utility and

structural systems, providing additional living space as permitted by law, and, at the same time, accomplishing required maintenance and repair. The result is a cost effective investment that extends the life of these houses 25 years. In addition, the “whole neighborhood” program provides recreation areas, landscaping, playgrounds and utility support systems to give us attractive and functional living environments.

Our FY 2000 improvement request is \$124 million. This amount revitalizes 1334 homes at 15 bases. This includes \$74 million for 903 homes stateside, \$49 million for 431 homes overseas, and \$1.2 million for two neighborhood improvement projects.

### **Housing Construction**

We are requesting \$186 million for FY 2000 projects, with \$173 million at 14 stateside bases to replace 1105 existing houses, and \$13 million at one overseas base (Lajes) to replace 75 existing houses that are no longer economical to maintain.

### **Operations, Utilities and Maintenance**

Our FY 2000 request for family housing operations, utilities, and maintenance is \$703 million. These funds are necessary to

operate and maintain the 110,000 homes in the Air Force inventory. Approximately 41 percent of this request represents the Air Force's obligation as the landlord for items such as utilities, refuse collection, and other key services. The remaining 59 percent of the funds is for maintenance for the homes and infrastructure.

### **Planning and Design and Leasing**

We have requested \$136 million for planning and design, and for leasing. This includes \$17 million for planning and design of new construction and improvement programs, and \$119 million for leasing approximately 4,100 domestic and 3,900 foreign homes. The leasing program supports critical missions in non-traditional locations, such as foreign sites where family housing is not available, and for recruiters not located near military installations in the US.

Our FY 2000 MFH budget request reflects our policy to ensure that our families have access to safe, affordable and adequate homes; and mirrors our strategy to modernize on-base housing by improving our worst first. We are committed to improving retention by providing our Air Force families with homes and communities

that are comparable in design and amenities to private sector housing. Our “whole house-whole neighborhood” concept for developing a housing community plan for each installation continues to put our people first by fostering a sense of community and supporting neighborhood identity. We seek to achieve a pride of ownership mentality within our family housing community.

### **Base Closure Accounts**

The Air Force BRAC FY 2000 MILCON request is \$4.7 million for 3 construction projects supporting the BRAC 1995 decision to realign Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, and for final design costs of FY 2001 BRAC construction. The projects are a communication facility addition, and a maintenance facility, at Kelly Air Force Base, Texas, and a civil engineering shop addition, at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

The Air Force requirements included in the Department of Defense FY 2000 budget request for the BRAC accounts are designed to support the President’s Five-Part program by continuing to transfer property at closure installations as quickly and efficiently as possible to communities for economic reinvestment

at the earliest opportunity. As part of the defense budget, the Air Force request reflects a thorough review of all remaining requirements and careful budgeting to fulfill validated requirements to the greatest extent possible within the budget constraints.

The Air Force continues to be committed to timely environmental restoration that is protective of human health at our closure bases. In addition to converting bases to civilian use, we continue the realignment beddown process at remaining installations to ensure that base closure neither disrupts our operational requirements nor adversely affects quality of life. We appreciate the support of this committee in helping us meet these objectives.

Our successes in base conversion are numerous. The Environmental Protection Agency recently highlighted the Air Force fast-track cleanup program at the former Bergstrom Air Force Base, Texas, designed to meet the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport opening date. We intend to apply our many lessons learned to future base conversions should the Congress approve additional rounds of closures.

One final comment on BRAC. Reductions in Air Force manpower and force structure have outpaced those in infrastructure, which results in commanders spending scarce resources on unneeded infrastructure. Consequently, the Secretary of Defense has requested, and the Air Force supports, two additional rounds of base closures. Further BRAC actions are necessary to ensure we have the proper force structure and topline for modernization necessary to properly execute our mission and to maintain day-to-day activities. We need BRACs now, because the Air Force has more bases than it needs and any delay in this process delays the realization of critical cost savings. As previously stated by Acting Secretary of the Air Force Whit Peters, “simply put, base realignment and closure is tomorrow’s readiness decision that we must begin planning today.”

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I thank the committee for its strong support of the Air Force MILCON program, which contributes immeasurably to the Air Force’s readiness, retention, recruiting, training and quality of life programs.

Our FY 2000 Air Force MILCON submission reflects the corporate priorities supporting the total Air Force vision to continue our position as the world's best and most respected air and space force, while working to maintain our aging physical plants. Our installations are crucial factors in Air Force readiness. We rely on our bases to serve as our launch platforms to effectively project U. S. air and space power, as well as places where our people live and work. This budget submission reflects our commitment to maintain the quality of Air Force installations.

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee.