

April 4, 2008

AFA Members, Congressional Staffers, and Civic Leaders, there is one Command in the Air Force we hear little about ... and that is AFMC. AFMC's mission is to deliver war winning capabilities to the warfighter -- on time, on cost. As such, AFMC conducts research, development, test and evaluation, and provides the acquisition management and logistics support necessary to create the next generation of Air Force weapon systems while ensuring our current weapon systems are ready for war.

A quick look at AFMC numbers gives an appreciation for the magnitude and significance of this Command:

- AFMC is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest command in the Air Force
- Over 73,000 people - military & civilian (I remember when it was the largest)
- AFMC manages about \$56B - 41% of the Air Force Budget ... and nearly 12% of the overall DoD's budget

AFMC's operations are centered on its acquisition and sustainment missions ... and here is the story of the entire Air Force

**Maintenance** (no surprises here - it costs more and more to maintain our aging force)

- 17 years of combat ... in harsh environments - wear and tear, sand and salt
- Depot required funding increased from \$2.5B in FY99 to \$6.2B in FY13 (estimated)
- A-10: 49% increase in engineering disposition requests by depot
- AC-130: 37% increase from FY05 to FY06
- F-16: 77% increase since 2001
- F-15: 20% increase in workload over last 4 years

**Modernization**

- In the 1940s and 50s, there were 62 new fighter and bomber aircraft starts, 38 were cancelled
- Since 1986, there have been only two fighter/bomber starts -- F-35, Next Generation Bomber
- Average years in development have gone from approx 3 to approx 14
- Average years flown per airframe has increased from about 9 to about 25 today
- By retirement, nearly 50 KC-135s will be in their 90<sup>th</sup> year of flying
- If the KC-X slips 3 years and we purchase 8/yr vice 15/yr, the aircraft won't retire until 2082 ... when it will be 126 years old [Gasp!!]

To put the above point another way: How many of you have flown, or would be willing to fly on an airline today still using the Boeing 707 or Douglas DC-8? Much like the KC-135, these aircraft were also designed in the 1950s. The major airlines would be out of business if they followed the same model.

It takes longer and longer to develop aircraft and at the same time, we are flying them longer and longer - consider the following:

- Years in development by timeframe:
  - Fighter development: 40s - 2 yrs, 50s-70s - 4 yrs, 80s-present - 14 yrs
  - Bomber development: 30s - 3 yrs, 40s-50s - 4.5 yrs, 80s - 14 yrs
- Years flown by era (example aircraft provided):
  - P-38 - 9 yrs; F-84 - 15 yrs; F-4 - 32 yrs; F-15 - 44 yrs (perhaps longer)
  - B-17 - 8 yrs; B-47 - 13 yrs; B-52 - 85 yrs +; B-1 - 60 yrs +
- Worse ... when you look at Development Planning (DP) for new aircraft, we are woefully behind in considering a required future platform
  - DP for the F-15 took place one year before the 1<sup>st</sup> flight of the F-4D (60s)
  - DP for the F-22 took place three years before the 1<sup>st</sup> flight of the F-15 (70s)
  - First flight of the F-22 took place over six years ago
  - Have not begun consideration for its replacement
  - Not taken the first steps to sustain air superiority

It takes way too long to develop aircraft today - requirements change over time.

Example: If you set the requirements 20 years ago for a car, do you think you would want to have a different sound system in it today? How about a more fuel efficient engine?

We have to do a better job at recapitalizing the Air Force, to committing the necessary funding - otherwise we risk the future of our children and our grandchildren.

For your consideration,  
Mike

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