Department of the Air Force Posture Statement
Fiscal Year 2021

Department of the Air Force
Presentation to the Committees
And Subcommittees of the
United States Senate
And the House of Representatives
2nd Session, 116th Congress

Statement of:
The Honorable Barbara Barrett
Secretary of the Air Force

General David L. Goldfein
Chief of Staff, United States Air Force

General John W. Raymond
Chief of Space Operations, United States Space Force

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Fiscal Year 2021 President's Budget Request

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AIR AND SPACE FORCE DESIGN FOR GREAT POWER COMPETITION

The international security environment is rapidly changing and becoming increasingly complex. China and Russia present real and growing threats to the national security of the United States and our allies. They continue to employ aggressive tactics to coerce neighbors, suppress dissent, and undermine freedom. Iran and North Korea seek outsized regional influence through violent extremism or the pursuit of nuclear weapons. These and other nations are pursuing capabilities specifically designed to limit or negate the advantages of the United States and our allies.

The 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS) reoriented United States defense strategy to focus primarily on great power competition with China and Russia. This shift profoundly changes the conversation on U.S. defense strategy, plans, and programs. We are developing new operational concepts to focus on more fully integrating joint military capabilities across warfighting domains. We will employ U.S. military forces in more distributed ways as we build technologies to connect those forces into advanced battle networks.

The Department of the Air Force—now two equal military services: the U.S. Space Force and the U.S. Air Force—has been working to align with the NDS for several years. In 2018, we needed Congress' help to recover from the damaging effects of sequestration and halt declining readiness across the force. The NDS and Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) were also released in 2018, and the Department began to align future conventional and nuclear forces design with the guidance in these documents.

In 2019, we continued readiness recovery, making significant gains across multiple aircraft and spacecraft fleets and mission sets. The Department also worked with Congress to make essential decisions on two important programs—the Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) and the Overhead Persistent Infrared (OPIR) satellite system—that set the tone for future modernization. The plan for recapitalizing these platforms had to change as they would not have survived in future conflict given the emerging threats. We moved away from developing large, vulnerable aircraft and satellite systems, and instead pursued the Advanced Battle Management System (ABMS) and Next-Generation OPIR. These systems are essential to robust Joint All-Domain Command and Control (JADC2) and the networked future force.

The Department's 2020 budget submission was our first informed by and focused directly on 2018 National Defense Strategy implementation. The demands this strategy placed on the Department drove Congress to ask: what forces are required to successfully execute the NDS? The *Air Force We Need* study assessed the baseline capacity required to meet NDS objectives, assuming current capabilities and concepts, at medium risk based on Combatant Commander Operational Plans and Timelines. We also made key organizational changes to drive toward future capabilities and concepts. Most significantly, the U.S. Space Force now stands as a co-equal branch of the military, the first new service branch since the Air Force was formed from the Army Air Corps in 1947.

In preparation for the 2021 submission, the Department of the Air Force conducted an exhaustive review of our portfolios and made hard decisions to better align with the NDS. Some choices required investments in the future at the expense of legacy platforms. In doing so, we will accept calculated short-term risk to pursue the Secretary of Defense's goal of irreversible momentum toward NDS implementation. We conducted multiple, complex wargame scenarios to assess alternative warfighting approaches against a peer adversary. We shared the results with Congress over the past year and talked openly about the implications for our Air and Space Forces. This 2021 budget reflects current analysis on the Air and Space Forces We Need for the future.

To achieve the objectives of the NDS, the Department of the Air Force will pursue an integrated design and field modernized forces that can:

- **Connect the Joint Force** so we can more seamlessly integrate as a Joint team,
- **Dominate Space** by defending our use of space while defeating hostile action,
- **Generate Combat Power** to blunt any attack against the U.S. or our allies, and
- **Conduct Logistics Under Attack** to sustain high-tempo operations as long as needed.

In each of these areas, we will work with Congress and our sister services, industry, academia, allies, and partners to develop and field innovative solutions. While focusing on the four key investment areas above, we will also continue to provide Combatant Commanders with **Ready Forces** to conduct **Strategic Deterrence**, **Homeland Defense**, and **Counter Violent Extremism.**

Finally, **Developing and Caring For Our People and Their Families** is an enduring imperative. American parents have entrusted their sons and daughters to our care. It is our sacred duty to ensure they are properly organized, trained, equipped, and courageously led. It is also our responsibility to take care of their families. With the enduring support of Congress, we will continue to provide them the resources and support they deserve.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE DESIGN PRIORITIES

CONNECT THE JOINT FORCE

Modern warfare is increasingly all-domain. Conflicts are not limited to the air *or* space *or* land *or* sea. Rather, they involve engagement in and effects across many or all domains, simultaneously. To prevail, the future joint force must be prepared to employ Joint All-Domain Operations (JADO), where individual military activities are more than synchronized or deconflicted. Instead, activities in one domain *enhance* the effectiveness of those in other domains and compensate for vulnerabilities.

Joint All Domain Operations as a new Joint Warfighting Concept creates simultaneous dilemmas for adversary forces, overwhelming them with too many threats to counter successfully. The Air Force and Space Force will generate windows of superiority in air, space, and cyberspace, with the joint force converging on the most important targets at speed and scale. When employed in concert with Army and Navy capabilities, opponents will have to defend their forces across all domains, all the time.

The Department of the Air Force will enable JADO by helping connect all forces into a cohesive battle network in ways they are not connected today. For example, our fifth-generation aircraft cannot easily share data with some legacy fighters, sensors on many Navy ships cannot cue Army Air Defense Artillery batteries, and Soldiers and Marines in battle cannot always access real-time video feeds from our international partners. The key to this effort is to build on our Advanced Battle Management System investments. ABMS is the foundation of true Joint All-Domain Command and Control which enables convergence of joint combat power. JADC2 connects sensors, systems, and weapons from different services and nations to allow the seamless sharing of information to all friendly forces. Our FY21 budget includes funding to develop the network, connectivity, and infrastructure for this critical capability while working closely with joint, interagency, and international partners.

The Department of the Air Force has been formally tasked by Secretary Esper to lead DoD-wide efforts to develop JADC2, and early experiments are already yielding positive results. A recent demonstration in Florida connected Air Force aircraft, Space Force sensors, Navy surface vessels, and Army Air Defense Artillery units to successfully defeat a simulated cruise missile attack. This joint team achieved 26 of 28 connectivity objectives and a series of firsts in this initial effort to effectively employ JADC2 in an operational setting directly supporting the Commander of USNORTHCOM/NORAD in defense of the homeland. This FY21 budget accelerates JADC2 experimentation, and the next demonstration is planned for April 2020.

To achieve true JADC2, this budget invests in digital engineering and common data architecture to connect not only Air and Space Forces but our Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and international teammates. Success in modern warfare requires a digital infrastructure with more open data systems than we have today. As part of these efforts, we will continue investments in the Digital Air Force initiative as we transition from in-house communications networks to an Enterprise Information Technology as a Service framework, using best practices of industry. This allows Air and Space professionals to focus more on warfighting and less on maintenance of our networks. The FY21 budget expands investments in technology solutions that streamline non-essential tasks for our Airmen and Space professionals.

DOMINATE SPACE

Maintaining a position of advantage in space is essential to winning in future conflicts. The President formally declared space a warfighting domain in March 2018 with the announcement of the new National Space Strategy.

On 20 December 2019, the President and Congress established the United States Space Force as the newest branch of the Armed Forces, an historic milestone for our nation. The standup of the U.S. Space Force is our **top** policy priority—we are aggressively developing the capabilities, warfighting doctrine, and expertise needed to outpace future threats. We are pursuing a Space Superiority Strategy to ensure we can deter hostile action, protect and defend our interests, and, when necessary, *fight in, through, and from* the space domain.

This budget submission includes increased investment in four elements of a Space Superiority Strategy:

- Protect and defend the highly-capable satellite systems that we depend on today and will for some period of time.
- Field robust and resilient space systems with a diverse architecture that will make it increasingly difficult for adversaries to benefit from an attack.
- Develop the space warfighters essential to winning in an increasingly contested and congested domain.
- Finally, to ensure a credible strategic deterrence posture, we must demonstrate the ability and the will to defend vital national interests across all domains, including space. Therefore, we will develop a broad range of offensive and defensive options to respond if our national security space capabilities are threatened.

Space Domain Awareness is the foundation upon which the Department maintains spaceflight safety, provides indications and warning, and assesses adversary intentions and actions towards U.S., allied, and commercial partner satellites. We are fusing data from national, civil, and commercial sensors to produce the most comprehensive space threat picture in history to protect and defend national security space systems. This budget continues investment in our new Space Fence radar system, which reached initial operational capability in early 2020. It will allow for revolutionary gains in the way we view space—faster and with greater clarity than ever before. More importantly, it will bring major improvements to the way the U.S. tracks and characterizes space debris and adversary space systems.

In addition to the Space Fence, this budget continues to invest in capabilities such as the Geosynchronous Space Situational Awareness Program (GSSAP) and the Deep-space Advanced Radar Capability (DARC) to provide unparalleled space surveillance, tracking, and threat characterization capability to the joint force. GSSAP and the future DARC system will support the Joint Task Force-Space Defense mission to protect and defend U.S. and allied space systems.

We are also developing the operating concepts and technology required to advance space warfighting. We do not seek a conflict in space. However, we must maintain a position of strength and develop a credible warfighting capability in order to deter conflict and maintain a full range of options to ensure our national security. The Space Force is taking the lead to preserve U.S. and allied space superiority across the continuum of conflict and to defend U.S. interests and those of our allies and

partners. While our adversaries coerce, we collaborate. The most effective deterrent to a war starting or extending into space is an international partnership with established norms of behavior. The U.S. Space Force is poised to lead this effort.

Over-classification of space systems and technology is a challenge we are continuing to work through. It is difficult to explain our investment strategy in an open forum when most of the systems are highly classified. We are eager to meet with Members and Staff to build a common understanding of both the strategy and the investments needed to win.

GENERATE COMBAT POWER

To prevail in future conflict, the joint force must generate sufficient combat power to blunt an attack against the U.S. or its allies. The Department will deliver rapid, lethal warfighting capability to Combatant Commanders. Air and Space Forces are expected to arrive first because we fly into theater or are established in geosynchronous orbits above. These forces are then called to halt enemy activity while follow-on joint and allied forces are brought to bear. This budget continues critical recapitalization across multiple missions to include the B-21, KC-46, F-35, F-15EX, HH-60W, and T-7 fleets along with the critical munitions and sensor suites required for Joint All-Domain Operations.

In addition, this budget modernizes existing platforms that will fly well into the next two decades. Examples include a modernized B-52 with new engines and upgraded radar technology and munitions delivery options; updated F-16s with advanced fire control radars and datalinks; and the venerable A-10 which will provide close air support to ground forces well into the 2030s. Connecting these platforms, sensors, and weapons through ABMS and JADC2 will maintain their viability and combat lethality.

The fighter force is one example of how this budget invests in a new way of generating combat power. The Next-Generation Air Dominance (NGAD) program is maturing novel technologies for the networked, multi-domain joint force. NGAD will integrate legacy and future platforms with a mix of manned, unmanned, and optionally-manned aircraft.

This budget continues to fund Air Force investments in the intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) platforms, systems, and capabilities that enable current joint force operations. At the same time, it lays the foundation for an architecture that will eventually link sensors, shooters, and decision makers. The Air Force seeks to balance both near- and long-term risk by right-sizing the ISR available to dominate today's fight, while building the ISR enterprise necessary to provide decision superiority to the joint force in the future.

This budget takes full advantage of breakthroughs in digital design technology by investing in three critical areas: digital engineering, agile software development, and open systems architectures. Recent application of digital design technology in the T-7 program resulted in an 80% reduction in assembly hours versus conventional aircraft design and manufacturing methods. This engagement with industry will allow us to develop smaller fleets of new aircraft much faster with rapid technological innovation and adaptation. It is not good enough to procure better airplanes and satellites; rather, we must design and build systems differently today.

This budget submission pursues advanced technologies and incorporates them into our weapons and platforms. These technologies include **hypersonic, directed energy, autonomy, cyber, propulsion, mass weapon payload systems,** and **advanced space systems**. These future capabilities will complement existing systems to allow us to achieve effects against enemy targets, kinetically or non-kinetically, in all domains, at speed and scale previously unseen.

Even as we generate combat power in new ways, humans will still operate in many of our combat aircraft. This will place them in harm's way and potentially require their rescue from hostile areas. Recovering isolated personnel remains a no-fail mission, so we are continuing our efforts to modernize our rescue aircraft. In 2019, we began testing our first HH-60W aircraft. This budget continues acquisitions as we recapitalize the helicopter fleet. In 2021, we will retire the first 27 legacy HH-60 aircraft.

The U.S. Space Force will take the lead for the Department's efforts to generate combat power in, through, and from space. Assured access to all orbits is fundamental to sustaining the United States' freedom of action in space. The National Security Space Launch (NSSL) investments in this budget ensure space domain access for the joint warfighter. The Space and Missile Systems Center's next phase, the NSSL Phase 2 Launch Service Procurement contract, will provide continued mission success and flexibility in the contested space domain.

The Space Force's Range of the Future initiative will modernize our launch architecture with adaptive instrumentation, infrastructure, and services. This effort enables Autonomous Flight Safety System operations while fostering partnerships with industry and other nations.

Space forces supported 26 successful launch missions from our Eastern and Western launch ranges in 2019. Each day they tracked more than 24,000 objects in space, ensuring safety and security of U.S. and allied space assets. Further, U.S. Space Force missile launch detection and characterization systems provided critical early warning to U.S. forces in Iraq during the recent Iranian missile barrage, helping to mitigate friendly casualties and attribute responsibility for hostile actions. This budget continues investments in tracking, warning, classification, surveillance, and other critical capabilities.

The Department's experimental orbital test vehicle, the X-37, recently completed its fifth flight after spending 780 days in space, and the fleet has now logged 2,865 total days in orbit. We are employing this reusable, unmanned vehicle to develop advanced technologies and experiment with new operational concepts while reducing the risk to future missions.

CONDUCT LOGISTICS UNDER ATTACK

Since the end of World War II, the United States has relied on established, fully-supplied, and well-defended bases. Today, American forces are extremely efficient in deploying large numbers of people, materiel, and weapons systems across the globe to fight from a small number of forward operating bases with well-developed infrastructure.

Our assessment, in line with the NDS, indicates that future battlefields will not allow us to fight this way, so we must be prepared to *move to win*. The Air Force will invest in forward-based stocks to enable forces to rapidly deploy to distributed forward locations. These locations will vary in size, setup,

and security, so we must be postured to protect our forces and make it difficult for enemies to target them.

Logistics will need to be lean and agile, allowing us to rapidly move people and materiel to and within a theater. As we reinvent logistics, the Air Force is investing in future transportation platforms and autonomous capabilities. We will continue to develop and field future vertical lift to move smaller amounts of equipment quickly to many more places than in the past. In these efforts, we are closely engaged with our sister services and industry to reimagine what is possible. These capabilities will be integrated with our battle networks, so we are taking steps to reinforce supply chain security with the components, subcomponents, materials, and software incorporated into defense systems and equipment.

In addition to developing future capabilities, we will continue investing in our existing and modernized mobility aircraft fleets. The joint force will depend upon the KC-46 to provide force extension and power projection. The Air Force continues to work closely with the contractor to reach full mission-capable status. This budget retires sixteen KC-10s and thirteen KC-135s in FY21 while maintaining the required 479 tanker aircraft. We are also looking closely at the right mix between modernized and legacy tactical airlift platforms.

READY FORCES

The Department of the Air Force fields capabilities the United States relies upon every day, across the globe and in space. Air and Space professionals are always on duty: standing the watch in missile launch facilities; performing satellite control operations; conducting intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance missions; patrolling and defending the cyber domain; delivering nuclear command, control, and communications capabilities; and guarding our skies. As we modernize to counter growing threats, we must also ensure that forces remain ready and able to offer options to our Nation's leaders.

The demand for Department capabilities across the globe remains high. Over 28,000 Air and Space professionals deployed worldwide last year as part of the joint team to deliver America's air, space, and cyber power. In 2019, our service members flew more than 75,000 strike sorties and employed more than 11,000 weapons in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan. Mobility forces conducted more than 27,000 airlift and refueling sorties across the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, offloading more than 590 million pounds of fuel and moving more than 226 million pounds of cargo. Department personnel deployed in support of NATO collective defense missions in Poland and the Baltic States, filled continuous bomber rotations in the U.S. Central Command and U.S. Indo-Pacific Command areas of responsibility, and brought humanitarian assistance to millions of people in need around the world.

Despite this operations tempo, a major success story over the past several years has been the improved readiness across our force following the harmful effects of sequestration. We have increased mission capable rates across our pacing squadrons—our most in-demand units—and are continuing our efforts across all fleets. This budget requests $17 billion in sustainment and support for weapons systems and $9 billion for 1.2 million flying hours to train and hone combat proficiency.

The Department is also expanding investment into harnessing the power of data and the efficiencies it brings to operations. Predictive maintenance initiatives have yielded faster and cheaper

maintenance for our C-5 and KC-135 fleets, and this budget expands the initiative to other aircraft. We are digitizing data from years of maintaining legacy platforms, such as the B-52, to preserve and extend some of our oldest aircraft.

In 2018, we faced major readiness deficits which negatively impacted the morale of our Air and Space professionals. With the support of Congress, we have made major improvements to readiness over the past three budget years and are now more ready than at any time in the last decade. The momentum is undeniable.

STRATEGIC DETERRENCE

Nuclear deterrence is the highest priority mission of the Department of Defense – our deterrent underwrites every U.S. military operation around the world and is the foundation and backstop of our national defense. As the steward of two-thirds of the nuclear triad and 75% of the nuclear command, control, and communications, the Department of the Air Force needs the continued support of Congress to maintain the nation's credible and effective strategic deterrent. This need is even more critical today, due to the on-going evolution and fielding of other countries' strategic nuclear capabilities, including hypersonic weapons, which continue to challenge U.S. and allied security.

America's strategic forces would fail without robust and secure nuclear command, control, and communications capabilities. The Space Force operates the Advanced Extremely High Frequency (AEHF) satellite constellation to provide protected tactical and strategic, nuclear-hardened communications for the President and other national security personnel. Also essential to strategic deterrence is our ability to deliver a resilient missile warning capability. The Next-Generation OPIR system is our pathfinder survivable next generation missile warning constellation. This program is currently on track to meet a 2025 requirement date, a timeline far faster than historical programs due to streamlined acquisition, competitive prototyping, and extensive reuse of mature satellite and sensor technologies.

The Air Force is making significant investments in modernization and recapitalization programs that address both delivery platforms and weapons. Modernized versions of existing weapons, such as guided bombs, and modern replacements for existing capabilities, such as the Long-Range Standoff Weapon, will be joined by new technologies that provide advanced capabilities to the joint force. These systems are being fielded on a tight schedule that depends on stable requirements and resources to ensure our national strategic deterrence mission does not fail.

The Minuteman Intercontinental Ballistic Missile weapon system has served as the bedrock of nuclear deterrence since 1962. However, this system's service life can no longer be extended. The Ground-Based Strategic Deterrent developed in this budget represents a modern, sustainable design with the capabilities to ensure the Nation maintains its most responsive leg of the nuclear Triad well into the 21st century.

Our nuclear-capable bomber force represents the most flexible leg of the nuclear triad. The Air Force's future bomber, the B-21 Raider, is proceeding on schedule and on cost, and the initial test aircraft is progressing toward first flight. The Raider will be the core of our future nuclear-capable bomber fleet, and we are committed to fully funding the program in its current development phase to

maintain our aggressive and critical timeline for bringing it online. Combined with the Long Range Standoff Weapon, investments in this budget for B-21 development and B-52 modernization will maintain America's capability to deter adversary aggression, assure allies, and project combat power across the full spectrum of conflict.

To modernize the nation's strategic and bomber forces, we propose an acceptable reduction in near-term capacity to increase overall capability. The B-1 fleet is nearing the end of its service life. For a period of time last year, only 12 of the 55 aircraft in the B-1 fleet were fully mission-capable. We propose retiring 17 B-1 aircraft in FY21 to invest in the most mission-capable bombers.

2020 is the Year of Integrated Base Defense, focusing on training and equipping our Airmen to defend bases as our primary power projection platforms as we guard our nation's critical installations and infrastructure. This FY21 budget continues developing and deploying the technology to fully integrate the command, control, and communications capabilities essential to effective base defense.

Congress has recognized the importance of modernizing U.S. nuclear forces after decades of deferred recapitalization and has fully funded these programs. We request continued support to modernize and sustain the Nation's nuclear deterrent.

HOMELAND DEFENSE

Our ready forces that support the homeland defense mission include radars and early warning systems, alert aircraft and aircrew, and supporting infrastructure. This FY21 budget invests across all these areas. The centerpiece of the overall Department of Defense budget, Joint All-Domain Command and Control, is the most essential investment we can make to enable the Commander USNORTHCOM/NORAD to have the situational awareness and the ability to bring joint all-domain capabilities to bear. We continue to partner with this team daily on the number one mission in the NDS: defense of the homeland.

The American way of life, including our $19 trillion economy, depends on a wide array of space capabilities. This budget supports the Space Force's efforts to rapidly field a satellite communication capability to deliver flexible, resilient communications capabilities in support of Homeland Defense. The Global Positioning System (GPS) continues to provide critical position, navigation, and timing capabilities with signals that are three times more accurate and up to eight times more anti-jam resilient than previous generations. This helps ensure our forces across the globe can target and defeat threats at ranges that outstrip adversary weapons while providing civil services like the "blue dot" on smartphone map applications.

Defense of the homeland also involves defeating malicious threats online, where we must counter direct aggression as well as indirect sources of influence. Department of the Air Force cyber warriors are constantly at work, under the newly-reactivated 16th Air Force, to "Defend Forward" with actions to deter adverse action and defend friendly networks and information. We are also closely examining all friendly systems and capabilities to identify and mitigate potential cyber vulnerabilities and reduce the potential for adversary exploitation.

To successfully execute the Homeland Defense mission, the Air Force will continue upgrading limited numbers of existing aircraft to include modernizing the radars in some F-16s. These updated legacy aircraft will be complemented by new-build F-15EX aircraft which are significantly more capable and cost-effective than the F-15Cs they will replace, aircraft already many years past their designed specifications and no longer candidates for service life extensions. The F-15EX will help eliminate the gap between the fighter aircraft we have and the fighter aircraft we need while leveraging other nations' investments in updating the F-15 program. Ultimately, the Air Force must field a robust fighter force, anchored by the F-35, able to detect and defeat threats across a wide spectrum. Homeland defense requires a mix of 4th- and 5th-generation capabilities, and we are investing to achieve that future force.

Engagement across the globe also contributes to the Homeland Defense mission. As we build a network of partners, allies, and emerging security partners, we enlist help in deterring aggression and containing threats. We will continue to provide training and assistance to foreign nations through military equipment sales, training programs, and personnel exchanges. The Department of the Air Force remains committed to collaboration with key allies and partners, and we have accelerated and expanded combined participation in air and space operations, exercises, wargames, and education.

Residing at the intersection between the U.S. Homeland and two critical regions—Indo-Pacific and Europe—the Arctic is an increasingly vital region for U.S. national security interests. The Air Force has more missions and investments in this region than any other U.S. military service. The Department of the Air Force is a cornerstone of the Nation's defense in this region with installations positioned across Alaska, Canada, and Greenland and composed of large air bases, training complexes, and a constellation of more than 50 early-warning radars and missile defense facilities. We are continuing our investments to include the upcoming beddown of the F-35 at Eielson AFB, placing more 5th-generation aircraft in Alaska than anywhere else in the world. In addition to modernizing the world-class Joint Pacific Range Complex, we continue to build interoperability with Arctic allies and partners. Sustained future investment in modernized missile defense, enhanced space capabilities, and improved domain awareness will ensure the Joint Force can respond to contingencies in, and from, the Arctic.

COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM

Countering violent extremist organizations (VEO) is a critical and complex mission that requires interagency and international cooperation. The military is one source of power available for this task, and the Department of the Air Force is at the leading edge of these efforts. Airmen of Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) are engaged worldwide to counter VEOs. They are coordinating airstrikes, conducting direct action missions, employing munitions, and providing persistent armed overwatch and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities.

We are also working to build partner capacity and help foreign forces combat VEOs in their own homelands. The Air Force, working with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, has split the Light Attack experiment into two separate but linked efforts. First, building on the FY19 approval to procure several AT-6 and A-29 aircraft, we are establishing two experimental detachments at Hurlburt Field and Nellis AFB. Using these aircraft as prototypes, we will continue development and fielding of a coalition-friendly battle network that increases interoperability and allied and partner contributions. Second, we will partner with U.S. Special Operations Command through our air component, AFSOC, to

build requirements and rapidly field armed overwatch aircraft to support ongoing and future counter-VEO and counter-terrorism missions.

These two efforts are complementary as the Light Attack experiment feeds technology and tactics, techniques, and procedures for this fight while we improve support for our Special Operations Forces engaged in combat operations. We appreciate the support of Congress as we continue this important work.

DEVELOPING OUR AIRMEN AND SPACE PROFESSIONALS

Our platforms and systems may be the best in the world, but our most valuable assets are our people. With the support of Congress, we have grown our force over the last three budget years by 7,820 Airmen on the way to an active force of 333,700 for a total force of 699,013 authorized end strength to include Active Duty, Guard, Reserve, and Civilian Air Force and Space Force professionals. Our FY21 budget adds 1,500 additional personnel in F-35 and refueling operations, maintenance, and combat support.

Additionally, we are currently developing detailed plans to transfer more than 6,000 personnel into the U.S. Space Force in FY21. We will continue developing this cadre of Space professionals across more than 15 career fields who will eventually form the core of a Space Force that will protect U.S. interests in space well into the future. During the transition, members eligible for transfer will be provided options, depending on their specialty code, their preferences, and Service needs.

In November 2019, we graduated our first USAF Weapons School Space Enlisted Advanced Instructor Class to help lead future space forces. SPACE FLAG exercises continue to provide groundbreaking training for our Space professionals, carrying the Department's legacy of realistic training into the newest service.

The Department of the Air Force is continuing our efforts to develop the joint leaders essential to our future force. In order to develop and promote the right kind of leaders, we have established criteria by which we assess performance and potential. Underpinned by a foundation of impeccable character, we ask of our leaders:

- How well do they accomplish their mission?
- How well do they lead their Airmen or Space professionals?
- How do they manage the resources they have been assigned?
- How have they improved their unit?

We have also reformed our promotion boards, expanding the Line category into six competitive sub-categories in order to better match personnel with requirements. Furthermore, we are eliminating below the primary zone promotions to better align the experience and rank of our officer corps with those of our sister services while allowing our leaders more time to develop the excellence and expertise they will need.

Diverse, resilient, and ready Airmen and Space professionals are the bedrock of the Department's readiness and lethality. We are continuing efforts to increase representation of diverse

service members through a number of initiatives. These include the Rated Diversity Improvement Strategy, the Air Force Junior ROTC Flight Academy, recruiting efforts at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and the Aviation-Inspiration-Motivation (AIM) High Outreach Program which engages young females through interaction with Air and Space Force role models. Increasing the overall diversity of our force is a warfighting imperative, and we are committed to fielding and developing diverse Air and Space Forces.

CARING FOR OUR PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

While we develop our people, we must also care for them and their families. The Department of the Air Force, along with our sister services, continues to address numerous challenges. These include suicide and sexual assault, aircrew retention, personnel retraining, spouse employment opportunities, quality of schools and Privatized Military Housing, and PFAS issues affecting our installations and the communities that host them.

Suicide and sexual assault continue to be insidious threats to our force. Suicide devastates families and units, and it affects the entire Department. Sexual assault is a crime against a fellow Airman or Space professional, one which is unacceptable and unthinkable. We will continue to devote resources and invest in programs, such as the True North initiative, which are designed to increase resiliency and connectedness among our Airmen and Space professionals. We will reinforce a culture of dignity and respect where our people feel protected, valued, and supported.

Shortages across our aircrew career fields persist as threats to readiness. We have seen signs of progress in addressing these complex and critical issues, but much work remains. We must increase production, absorption, and retention of aircrew and their families. The Air Force is employing lessons learned from Pilot Training Next, now in its 3rd major iteration, to streamline undergraduate pilot, combat systems officer, and air battle manager training programs.

Absorbing new aircrew into mission-ready units and providing necessary experience remains a challenge. Total Force partnerships help us place newly-trained members in highly-experienced units as we strive to balance experience levels across the force. These efforts require retaining aircrew, especially pilots, in higher numbers than in recent years. We are expanding the Career Intermission Program to provide flexibility and choice to our aircrews as they reach critical career decision points.

Our investments in this budget will involve some mission changes for some units, to include our Reserve and Air National Guard forces. Aircraft type or mission changes will require new skills, and we are committed to retaining and retraining personnel as we adjust capabilities. We are expanding efforts to ease transitions from Active to Reserve and Guard components, allowing increased flexibility along a continuum of service. Even with changing aircraft or missions, there are no plans to inactivate any wings at this time.

Air and Space professionals could not make the necessary sacrifices to serve without the support of their families, and the Department is making investments to address crucial quality of life concerns. Alongside our sister services, we will continue to advocate for reciprocal professional licensing for spouses and improved quality of schools. We have recently implemented the Support of Military

Families initiative, which will explicitly consider such issues when the Department of the Air Force makes basing decisions.

A vital part of caring for our Airmen and Space professionals and their families is providing a safe, secure environment for them to live and work. We are addressing serious challenges with Military Privatized Housing and have directed considerable resources toward correcting substandard living conditions. This budget increases manning at the base level, providing personnel required for proper oversight of our Project Owners and advocacy for our residents. We will also continue to address the root causes of mold or moisture issues in many of our housing units. Along with our sister services, we are preparing to institute a Privatized Housing Tenants' Bill of Rights to further empower residents. We are committed to regaining the trust of families who have been let down, and we will continue this work for as long as it takes to get it right.

PFAS is a national issue that requires national solutions. The Department has already spent $447.5M identifying, investigating, and responding to PFAS releases; taken drinking water response actions at 23 installations to improve safety; and completed 165 of 189 required CERCLA PFAS Site Inspections. To enable our continued work, this budget requests $304 million for the Environmental Restoration program as part of the total $851 million Environmental Program request at Active and Guard bases.

MOVING FORWARD

The message of the National Defense Strategy is crystal clear: a more lethal, resilient, and rapidly innovating Joint Force, combined with a robust constellation of allies and partners, will sustain American influence and ensure favorable balances of power that safeguard the free and open international order. Failure to meet our defense objectives will result in decreasing U.S. global influence, eroding cohesion among allies and partners, and a loss of military advantage.

To align the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Space Force with this direction, we are putting forward an aggressive budget based on a new blueprint for joint warfighting. Joint All Domain Operations and the command and control networks required to connect the joint team form the centerpiece of this strategy. If we are to achieve the vision of the NDS, the joint force must fight together and deliver all-domain capabilities in a way that overwhelms our adversaries. We must acknowledge that all global military operations are connected to and rely on a safe, secure, and effective nuclear arsenal. We appreciate Congress' support with on-time budgets and the willingness to take prudent near-term risk to build a winning, networked force of the future. With this budget, the Department of the Air Force makes significant contributions to achieving irreversible momentum toward implementing the National Defense Strategy.