Interview

with

Ms. Katherine A. Wood,

Director, Plans and Programs

Air Force Test Center

Edwards AFB, California

15 October 2020

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JOHN T. MURPHY, USAF, DAFC
Historian, Air Force Test Center

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KATHERINE A. WOOD, NH-04, DAFC
Director, Plans and Programs

The opinions and facts expressed in this interview are those of the speaker. These comments have been transcribed as they were recorded during the interview. Unless otherwise noted, no attempt has been made to check or correct dates and other facts mentioned by the subject. The opinions are those of the subject and do not necessarily represent those of the United States Air Force or the Air Force History and Museums Program.

MURPHY: This is John Murphy, Air Force Test Center Historian conducting an interview with Ms. Katherine A. Wood, Director Air Force Test Center Plans and Programs Directorate. This interview was conducted solely through electronic mail. The interview has been formatted, reviewed and coordinated through the normal channels. The electronic mail string is attached at the end of this transcript.

Murphy: Your directorate appears to have a hand in a wide variety tasks and programs. Could you provide a breakdown of the mission of Plans and Programs?

Wood: Air Force Test Center Plans and Programs Directorate (AFTC/XP) Mission:

Architects of the AFTC Future Mission through Strategic Processes, Plans, Policies, & Partnerships; Supporters of the AFTC's Current Mission through Tactical Processes and Subject Matter Expertise.

XP Director:

- Chair of AFTC Resource Advisory Panel (RAP), AFTC Program Management Working Group
- Responsible for AFTC Council management
- Alternate Chair for AFTC Infrastructure Strategy Board (ISB)
- Leads XP team
- Manages XP office

Legislative Liaison (recently moved to be under Director of Staff instead of XP)

- Coordinates public engagements with Public Affairs Directorate
- Manages interactions with Congressional Delegations
- Coordinates responses to Congressional Inquiries
- Coordinates with IG on formal complaints
- Informs AFTC leadership of pending and passed legislation that impacts enterprise operations

XPT, Strategic Plans & Transformation Division

- Responsible for anything related to strategic planning, transformation, and all AFTC programs not under other functional areas
- Strategic Planning – author plans, plan/run Strategic Offsites, Assist in action plans
- Continuous Process Improvement and Innovation – Lead center activities and supports wings

Manages multiple programs: Continuity of Operations, Metrics, Military Construction, Concept Plan 70, Facility Planning, Critical Asset Risk Management, Energy Assurance, Support Agreements, Mission Essential Task Lists

Manages meetings of the AFTC ISB, AFTC PMWG, AFTC Metrics Working Group, AFTC METL team, AFTC Strategic Plans and Transformation Working Group, and others

XPI, Information Technology (IT) Office

Responsible for all things related to AFTC IT/Cyber

Senior Center Functional for IT/Cyber personnel

IT/Cyber policies, plans, programs – including Portfolio Management, Requirements/Resource plans, etc.

AFTC SharePoint management, Commercial Virtual Remote work environment (CVR) and Microsoft Teams expertise/training

Alternate COOP program manager

XP-OL, Wright-Patterson Operating Location

Responsible for all things related to Resourcing, including the AFTC Resourcing Guide

Manages: AFTC Program Objective Memorandum (POM) process, AFTC Flying Hour Program, Financial Allocation of AF/TEZ funds

Oversees: Test Improvement Planning and Programming, Facilities Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization, Civilian Pay Analysis

Responsible for reporting Major Range and Test Facility Board (MRTFB) financial/program status, and assigned as MRTFB reviewer for airfield encroachment and other Range Topics

Generates briefing material for the AFMC Fleet Board to ensure resource shortfalls (manpower, aircraft, or equipment) related to test and test support aircraft requirements are properly reported to gain advocacy from AFMC and other Major Commands (MAJCOMs).

Manages AFTC RAP Meetings, AFTC POM Working Group Meetings, and others

Murphy: In what ways has AFTC/XP supported the Center's goals and priorities?

Wood: We facilitate AFTC Strategic offsites to generate and/or update Center goals and priorities and communicate the results via the Strategic Plan and Brochure.

We advocate for resources needed for Center goals and priorities as the XP-OL team develops and provides AFTC inputs to the POM resourcing process. The XPT team uses the AFTC ISB to

prioritize MILCON and Unspecified Minor Military Construction (UMMC) projects and advocates for our top priorities at AFMC and Higher level project reviews.

We ensure the AFTC Council topics support Center goals and priorities.

We ensure execution year financial plans properly address the center's goals and priorities.

We ensure we promptly gather information in support of out-of-cycle resource requests – like the Shortfall briefing in support of garnering over $85M to address FY20 shortfalls, including RBA shortfalls due to the Coronavirus Disease (COVID).

We research the current IT/Cyber status of the AFTC and provide recommendations on budgeting and timing of upgrades to better support the mission.

We manage programs related to AFTC priorities.

We assist in accomplishment of Action Plans in support of AFTC Goals.

Frankly, it is hard to find something we do that doesn't relate to the AFTC Goals and priorities.

Murphy: Today, what do you see as the greatest challenge for plans and programs?

Wood: Our challenge is to continue enabling enterprise processes/enterprise approaches to better support our customers.

Examples:

We've enabled a good Testing and Evaluation (T&E) project Metrics process across the enterprise – because of a continuous process improvement (CPI) effort we accomplished – but there are still ways it could be standardized and improved to provide even more information for decision-makers.

We've initiated CCaRS (an AF-standard) for Infrastructure and Modernization (I&M) projects across the AFTC but we don't have standard tools for all project management across the Center.

We've fostered enterprise thinking at the AFTC RAP, AFTC ISB, and AFTC POM Working Group so we can prioritize efforts as a team and with full awareness of Center goals/priorities.

Murphy: What would you say is your directorate's greatest achievement over the past 24 months?

Wood: Do I have to pick one? We've had multiple resourcing successes which have given AFTC tens of millions of dollars more than anticipated. We've had multiple military construction (MILCON) prioritization successes – which have led to progress in multi-million dollar construction projects which had never reached top of the AF lists before. Instrumental in initial detailed planning and funding to start the Joint Simulation Environment program. We've been successful promoting enterprise-wide cross-functional approaches with our AFTC RAP, AFTC POM Working Group and in the establishment of the AFTC Program Management Review (PMR) where we review AFTC obligations and expenditures in each Program Element Code area. We led action plans and completed them to establish the AFTC Infrastructure

Strategy Board (AFTC ISB) and the AFTC Project Management Working Group (AFTC PMWG). The AFTC ISB has been instrumental to gathering material to be successful with MILCON advocacy. We've fostered enterprise tools in the form of Comprehensive Cost and Requirement System (CCaRS) for Infrastructure and Modernization I&M Project reporting. We were ready to telework and use collaboration tools during COVID because most of our team already teleworked on a regular basis and had signed up as beta testers for MS Teams during its infancy with the AF.

Murphy: Does XP have a single area of concern, for its continuous operation? (Funding, manpower, etc.)

Wood: Manpower – we have trouble filling our vacancies in timely manners and we have inadequate manpower to execute/manage all of our activities/programs. XP used to have an XPO division but when that was removed, the work didn't go away – just the extra staffing did. So the work was farmed out – mostly to XPT – without any additional positions.

Murphy: Would you like to make any additional comments?

Wood: Nope.

Murphy: Ma'am, I thank you for your time. This concludes the interview.

From: WOOD, KATHERINE A NH-04 USAF AFMC AFTC/XP
To: MURPHY, JOHN T NH-03 USAF AFMC AFTC/HQ
Cc: GREENWELL, CHRISTEEN M NK-02 USAF AFMC AFTC/XP; DANE, CARL W NH-04 USAF AFMC AFTC/DS
Subject: Answers to interview questions
Date: Thursday, October 15, 2020 12:11:09 PM
Attachments: XP interview.docx

John,

Attached are the written answers to your interview questions. We can use the CVR meeting this afternoon for me to provide additional details or clarify answers. I ran the attached answers I drafted by Carl Dane, since he was the XP director for most of the time referenced in your questions. The attachment includes two adjustments based on his feedback.

Thanks.
v/r
Kathy

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