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Air Mobility Command's Total Force Integration: A Critical Analysis

by

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United States Air Force

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AIR MOBILITY COMMAND'S TOTAL FORCE INTEGRATION: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

by

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ABSTRACT

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In 2007, Air Force Chief of Staff General T. Michael Moseley initiated the Air Force's total force integration (TFI) effort designed to cement 680,000 active duty, Air National Guard (ANG), Air Force Reserve Airmen and civilian employees into a more capable and efficient force by accessing aircraft assigned to ANG, Reserve, or active duty bases by members of a different air component through squadron association.[1] Unfortunately, there is little evidence that a systems thinking approach was applied by Air Mobility Command prior to executing the TFI initiative. With multiple squadron associations standing up, and others scheduled in the future, a critical analysis of Air Force guidance and its impact is essential to the service as it continues with the TFI effort--to determine if the strategic objectives are being obtained. With an ever increasing national budget deficit and impending Department of Defense budget cuts, it is imperative that the U.S Air Force operates in an efficient manner to present readily available combat air forces to the Combatant Commanders.

AIR MOBILITY COMMAND'S TOTAL FORCE INTEGRATION: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

> We continue to modernize our organizations to produce a more capable, affordable Air Force composed of Regular, Guard and Reserve Airmen. Through TFI, we aim to increase force-wide efficiencies and maximize combat capability for the Joint warfighter and our Nation's allies. We must leverage TFI to meet our highest priority manpower requirements. To accomplish this, we are analyzing all AF core functions for TFI applicability and are ensuring all potential initiatives meet validated requirement.[2]
>
> —CSAF General Norton A. Schwartz

Introduction

Since the invasion of Kuwait by Saddam Hussein in 1990, the United States Air Force and Air Mobility Command have been on continuous deployment to the Middle East, providing air refueling, airlift and aeromedical evacuation support for Operations DESERT SHIELD/STORM to Operations ENDURING FREEDOM and NEW DAWN. The continuous demand for air mobility operations has placed a great strain on the active duty force and members of the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command, who have been vital to the sustained mobility effort; over 60 percent of all air mobility aircraft reside in the Guard or Reserve, as well as 51 percent of the aviators. With recent Iraqi and Afghani surge operations and continuous humanitarian relief efforts, supporting everything from hurricane to earthquake and tsunami relief efforts, Air Mobility Command has been working at a break-neck operations tempo. Unfortunately, the Combatant Commanders mobility requirements have exceeded the command's active duty capability. In short, Air Mobility Command (AMC) was running out of aircraft before running out of active duty aircrews to operate them and greater access to Guard and Reserve aircraft was needed to execute our national strategic air mobility objectives. To garner this access, total force integration was borne.

Total force integration (TFI) is an Air Force initiative designed to allow access to Guard and Reserve aircraft by members of a different component. This program enables any one of the three components to operationally integrate personnel within the force structure of the host wing—the organization that owns the aircraft—and fly their aircraft. A typical AMC TFI squadron has aviators, aircraft maintenance, supply and medical personnel assigned to the unit, but dispersed throughout the host wing to work with their respective counterparts. The supporting personnel—aircraft maintenance, supply, fuels specialist, etc.—make up the majority of a TFI squadron, with the manning of each squadron based on the number of aircraft assigned to the Guard or Reserve unit (an AMC TFI unit typically ranges between 123 and 260 personnel, depending on the number of aircraft in the ARC wing). Furthermore, each component is responsible for its own funding to train and equip its members. The goal of total force integration is to provide the Air Force and the Combatant Commanders with the best possible capabilities to meet their mission requirements by leveraging the combined resources of the active duty or Regular Air Force (RegAF), Air National Guard (ANG), and Air Reserve assets.[3] Because there are different laws governing each air component, three distinct integration models were developed: *classic associate, active associate,* and *Air Reserve components (ARC) associate*.

The *classic associate* model is the traditional model AMC has used for decades. This is the model where the active duty Air Force retains principal responsibility (possession) for a weapon system or systems (usually aircraft) and shares the assets with Guard or Reserve units. The Regular and reserve components retain command authority over their own forces, separate organizational structures, and chains of

command. There are varying degrees of functional integration between components, usually approved through memorandums of understanding or agreement (MOUs/MOAs).[4] But this model usually has limited interaction and integration between the component members.

The *active associate* model is where the reserve component—ANG or Air Force Reserve Component (AFRC)—retains principal responsibility for the weapon system or systems and shares them with an active duty unit(s). The reserve and the RegAF components retain command of their own forces and separate organizational structures, based on Integration Plan objectives and plans defined in MOUs/MOAs. This model relies on heavy integration between the active duty members and those of the other component; an example would be active duty aircraft maintenance personnel working on the flight line with members of the Guard or Reserve unit. This functional relationship also results in active duty personnel being subordinate to host-wing supervision. Furthermore, this type of association is garrisoned at a Guard or Reserve unit whose location may or may not provide traditional Regular component facilities such as: Base Exchange, dining facility, child care facility, housing, commissary, etc. If facilities are unavailable, the support functions are secured through the local community.[5]

The *Air Reserve Component associate* model integrates two or more ARC units. The designated host unit retains principal responsibility for the aircraft, which are shared by all. Again, the degree of integration is dependent on MOUs/MOAs or other documentation agreed upon by each component with varying degrees of support facilities on the Air National Guard or Air Force Reserve base. This model usually results in greater integration than a classic associate model but less than the active

associate model. There is only one ARC association involving mobility aircraft and it is located at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma.

Each air component is responsible for its own integration initiatives, approved by Headquarters Air Force and appropriate State officials. The first AMC active associate squadron—a C-130 Hercules squadron—stood up at the Cheyenne Regional Airport in 2007, with the 153rd Airlift Wing, Wyoming Air National Guard. Since that time, eight additional active associate squadrons have stood up at: Scott Air Force Base (AFB), Illinois; Pease AFB, New Hampshire; Petersen AFB, Colorado; Seymour Johnson AFB, South Carolina; Birmingham, Alabama; March Air Reserve Base, California; Keesler AFB, Mississippi; and Pope Field, North Carolina. There is no doubt that AMC leads the Air Force effort in implementation, but there have been issues.

Command structure, cultural differences and vague guidance for implementation have plagued Air Mobility Command's initiative. As a result, the Eighteenth Air Force Commander (Numbered Air Force Commander for Regular AMC units) developed an Air Force General Officer Steering Group, with Guard and Reserve representation, to hear and rule on component differences regarding implementation. In addition, several conferences were conducted to open a dialogue among the three components to distribute the lessons learned and identify areas for improvement, and the Eighteenth Air Force Commander plans to host an active associate squadron commander meeting to discuss their concerns with implementation.[6]

Command Relationships

The active associate squadron is under the command of the AMC Commander exercised through the Eighteenth Air Force Commander (18 AF/CC) and its parent wing

commander. However, the 18 AF/CC delegates the authority to exercise day-to-day operations to the host wing commander (Air National Guard Wing Commander) who has operational directive authority over the active associate unit to provide unity of effort for operational matters.[7] Operational direction (OPDIR) is defined as:

> the authority to designate objectives, assign tasks, and provide the direction necessary to accomplish the mission or operation and ensure unity of effort. Authority for operational direction of one component member over members of another component is obtained by agreements between component unit commanders (most often between Title 10 and Title 32 commanders) whereby the component commanders, in an associate organizational structure, issue orders to their subordinates to follow the operational direction of specific/designated senior members of the other component for the purpose of accomplishing their associated mission.[8]

By law, active duty and Air National Guard (when not in federal service, Title 10 duty) have separate chains of command, with the active duty chain of command flowing from the President of the United States and the ANG's flowing from the Governor of the State/Territory.[9]

Recently, the 18 AF/CC signed a memorandum for active associate units designating the host wing Operations Group Commander (OG/CC) as the primary rating official for the active duty squadron commander and the ANG/AFR wing commander as the additional rater. The squadron commander will remain the primary rater for the operations officer but the ANG/AFRC OG/CC will be the additional rater.[10] This was an attempt to codify the complex command structure associated within a TFI wing, by modifying an existing Air Force Instruction designating the primary rater of the active associate squadron commander as the host wing OG/CC. However, legal questions persist that prevent modification of Air Force Instructions at this time.

The question of “Who does the active associate squadron commander work for?” is complex. At the tactical level, the active duty commander works for the host wing operations, maintenance, and medical group commanders, with almost 75 percent of the active associate squadron personnel assigned to aircraft maintenance. At the operational level, the active duty commander works for the ARC host wing commander, but is administratively assigned to an AMC active duty wing. To further complicate matters, the parent wing active duty OG/CC is the performance report rater/signatory for all active duty officers below the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and senior enlisted members. Furthermore, at the strategic level, the active duty commander is under the command of the AMC Commander through the 18 AF/CC. Therefore, the active duty squadron commander is now rated by an ANG OG/CC, whereby aviators make up less than 25 percent of the active associate unit, whose chain of command flows through the Governor and not the President of the United States.

Cultural Considerations

The purpose of this section is to identify and discuss critical cultural issues to consider when leading an effective organization in a TFI relationship. To accomplish this goal, an assessment of the organizational culture is conducted by using a hybrid model taken from the work of Geert Hofstede[11] and the follow-on Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Program (GLOBE study)[12] using four of the nine GLOBE dimensions: *in-group collectivism, institutional collectivism, power distance*, and *assertiveness*. Following each assessment, elements of Edward Schein’s Organizational Culture Model[13] will be used to explain how to influence cultural change.

In-Group Collectivism. In-group collectivism reflects the degree in which individuals are integrated into the organization that express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness within the organization to execute the Air Force mission to fly, fight and win…in air, space and cyberspace.[14] As stated earlier, most active associate squadrons are comprised of aviators, aircraft maintenance, and other support personnel; support Airmen comprise more than 75 percent of an active associate unit. Why is this important? Most associate enlisted Airmen find themselves working for a rated officer, in an active duty flying squadron, for the first time in their careers. Therefore, the squadron commander's challenge is twofold: integrate non-rated Airmen into the flying squadron and integrate the squadron within the host wing. Of course this is easier said than done.

When standing up a new TFI squadron, time must be allocated for the associate squadron leadership to establish a climate of trust and organizational excellence within the unit. Maintenance and support personnel will be cautious, if not suspicious by having to work under the guidance of a rated flying squadron commander. This is an important cultural consideration for the active duty unit. Second, in addition to the rated command structure, associate personnel will find themselves working in the host wing distributed amongst the Maintenance, Operations, Support and Medical Groups, and Wing staff organizations. Nevertheless, the emphasis on teamwork, rather than the individual, is a very positive underlying cultural assumption regardless of component.

However, in-group collectivism can become a detrimental assumption if the wing members' identities become aligned with their component—(Active Component (AC) or ANG—affiliation to the point of becoming closed-minded. Eighteenth Air Force's recent focus on TFI issues—shown by multiple TFI conferences—reflects a perception (an

artifact) on part of senior Air Mobility Command (AMC) leaders that host wing leadership lacks an understanding of active associate points of view and perspectives. The ANG cultural preference to citizen-soldier in-group collectivism can lead to closed-mindedness that limits critical thinking within a TFI organization. Although the benefit of teamwork gained by in-group collectivism can improve the organizational culture, it can be misaligned in terms of its correlation with closed-mindedness, and must be changed.[15]

Change is hard, and changing an ANG culture is even more difficult because ANG units are very mature, successful organizations that have served their state and nation well during times of peace and conflict for decades. Schein warns, “members of the organization are likely to want to hold on to them [cultural norms] because they justify the past and are the source of their pride and self-esteem.”[16] Fortunately, Schein provides a model (beyond the scope of this paper) using embedding and reinforcing mechanisms to implement cultural change that includes: what leaders pay attention to, measure, and control on a regular basis; how leaders react to critical incidents and organizational crisis; how leaders allocate resources; how leaders allocate rewards and status; how leaders recruit, select, promote, and attrit personnel; organizational design and structure; organizational systems and procedures; the design of physical space, facades, and buildings; the use of formal statements of organizational philosophy, creeds, and charters; and rites and rituals of the organization along with stories about important events and people.[17] The importance here is to understand that there are a variety of techniques available to positively change culture.

Changing assumptions of in-group collectivist requires increasing breadth and open-mindedness in members while keeping the core assumptions about cohesion and unit loyalty alive.[18] As a matter of fact, TFI units have already taken steps in this direction, in terms of how leaders allocate resources, by sending AC commanders to ANG supervisor training and squadron commander's courses. Furthermore, AMC has sent operational commanders to the Maintenance Course for Operational Commanders, to understand aircraft maintenance requirements. However, more must be done to include training for host wing senior leadership to understand AC promotions, performance reports, professional development, and command selection processes. The initial investment will be high, but the result will be a more integrated total force that will serve the Air Force and individual officers well for the rest of their careers.

Institutional Collectivism. Institutional collectivism focuses on the collective distribution of rewards, compensation, and promotion based on what is good for the group, as opposed to the individual.[19] In the RegAF, there is an underlying assumption of a medium level of collectivism, whereby individual skills are wanted and encouraged within the framework of being a team player. Medium levels of collectivism usually manifest itself in Airmen subjecting their own desires to those of the unit; service before self is an Air Force core value. But Airmen are encouraged and expected to become technical experts in their specialty field. And in some instances, this may lead to a non-commissioned officer's (NCO) selection to lead the duty section in lieu of a more senior non-commissioned officer (SNCO) who may not possess the same level of expertise.

However, in an ANG wing there is a low level of collectivism and work sections function day-to-day as an individualistic organization, whereby the majority of the

employees are civilian technicians with roles and responsibilities clearly delineated based on seniority, merit and wage scale. Additionally, the technician wage scale usually correlates to an NCO or SNCO rank, resulting in host wing members retaining almost all of the leadership positions due to their higher rank over their AC counterpart(s). This is understandable and easily accepted when the ranks are dissimilar. However, the challenges arise when the AC member out-ranks or is equal in rank to the host leadership.

When rank and technical merit are equal amongst work center members, the leadership within the work section should be integrated to reflect the organization makeup between the AD and ANG members; it is not uncommon to have more AC members assigned to a particular work section than ANG technicians. Associate Airmen must have opportunities to lead within the host wing to enable their professional development, leadership opportunities and eventual promotion. However, technicians also require responsibilities and supervision commensurate with their wage scale; replacing a technician leadership position with an associate member could result in a potential downgrade of that position—this result must be avoided. The TFI work environment and culture needs to be one of mutual support and understanding that differences exist but that they are strengths and not weaknesses; the host wing can ill afford to have an adversarial relationship develop between the AD and its members.

To enable success for all wing members, it is incumbent upon senior leadership to develop new organizational structures to accommodate professional development for wing personnel. Moreover, AC SNCOs expectations—to exclusively supervise personnel—must be tamped down. In a TFI organization, every Airman and technician

is required to work-the-line regardless of rank; this is an AC cultural shift but one that needs to be understood and accepted for the good of the TFI association. Using Schein's model, organizational systems and procedures should be changed to enforce a system whereby the most capable individual is allowed, where appropriate, to run a section based on merit rather than rank.

Officer rank structure in an ANG wing is also very high, and if the organization structure in place is unable to accommodate talent levels within the active associate squadron, AC officer promotions will suffer—straining the TFI relationship. In addition, TFI units should consider integrating AC leadership at the top levels prior to promoting from within, changing the paradigm for recruiting, selecting, promoting, and attriting officers per Schein's embedding mechanism. Although painful, this is a critical aspect for cultural change within the TFI organization.

Power Distance. Power distance is the degree to which members can expect power to be distributed equally.[20] For example, if the power distance is high, Wing, Group, and Squadron commanders would expect and receive obedience based on their rank/authority with the decision-making process limited to one-way participation and communication. Depending on the context, this can be an effective method to organize, train, and equip all members within the host wing. However, if a high power distance culture resides exclusively within the host wing leadership, the associate squadron leadership will struggle to meet the deployment requirements in a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) environment that is associated during wartime.

Of all the TFI underlying cultural assumptions, power distance is probably the most misaligned element in an ANG organizational culture. Host wings need to conduct

an honest assessment of their power distance culture with the results communicated to the senior leaders within the organization. In general, operational AC leaders operate in a low to medium power distance culture. Subordinates are encouraged, if not expected, to make leadership decisions and then update their supervisor as appropriate. However, some ANG units may operate a high power distance culture. To prevent misunderstanding amongst members, the wing's cultural environment must be understood by active associate personnel.

We must acknowledge that differences in capability exist between full-time Airmen and traditional guardsmen. Weekend training accomplished once a month, coupled with one two-week training period per year, does not equate to the training opportunities available for AC personnel available 365-days a year. Here, deliberate role modeling by senior wing leaders, de-emphasizing aspects of the culture that reinforce power distance, is a must to change this cultural assumption. Using Schein's embedding mechanism of how leaders recruit, select, promote, and attrit, simply placing an NCO in charge of a work section during a SNCO's absence can break down a high power distance culture.

Assertiveness. Assertiveness can be described as the expectation members have about how forceful or timid they should be when dealing with others.[21] In a briefing to West Point cadets, Secretary of Defense Gates said, "…if as an officer—listen to me very carefully—if as an officer you don't tell blunt truths or create an environment where candor is encouraged, then you've done yourself and the institution a disservice."[22] This is where Schein's embedding mechanism of deliberate role modeling is critical in modifying this cultural assumption.

Wing leaders should develop a habit of public appreciation for professional dissenting thought, rather than castigating the dissenter and their opinion and subsequent removal from the inner circle of trust. The Wing Commander should set the expectations for thoughtful dissent, if the expectation is to operate in a high-performing organization. A culture that allows disagreement to be silenced is not conducive to organizational excellence, and according to Schein's mechanism of reacting to critical incidents, senior leaders should consider relieving officers who create a climate that punishes assertive behavior.[23] Moral courage is a trait long recognized as important in senior leaders. This trait should be encouraged, not squelched.

The intent of this section has been to highlight the cultural awareness within a total force organization in an effort to understand and change the culture within a host wing. To enact change, an organizational awareness of underlying cultural assumptions must be understood for the successful cultural shift required in a TFI effort. Recommended actions to modify the organizational culture were made in order to successfully navigate the difficult process of change. However, this is not a perfect solution for all TFI organizational issues, but it does provide a framework to communicate cultural assumptions, norms and ideas that may be at the heart of integration difficulties.

Focus Areas and Recommendations

The future security environment will provide numerous opportunities for AMC and place greater demands on the military capabilities of the Total Force. Airlift, air refueling and aeromedical evacuation requirements will have significant implications for the size and types of forces and capabilities needed to address hybrid threats. The Concept of

Operations, integration addendums, and Air Force Instructions provide broad guidance and little in terms of actual TFI implementation. But they do point to six broad focus areas, each of which is followed in this paper by recommendations concerning changes in concepts to enhance capability. The recommendations reflect advice, which the Total Force can use to inform the strategic dialogue, policy considerations, and subsequent guidance for implementation.

Organizational Concept

- Strengthen the strategic relationship between AMC, ANG and AFRC by adapting the communications (same network), training and interoperability standards necessary to support global mobility operations.
- Give consideration to future and current TFI locations. Some locations have a high cost of living, leading to financial struggles for our young Airmen. Providing a cost of living adjustment has been discussed but is a more expensive option than assigning personnel to an active duty base—it may not be cost effective to be associated with units that reside in high cost of living areas or with those that have limited amenities. In addition, location affects manning. A benefit of TFI is the leveraging of ARC expertise and their ability to train our young Airmen. However, if dining facilities, dorms, etc. are not available in or near the host wing, the Air Force cannot send first-term Airmen to that unit. Therefore, one of the primary reasons for active association is negated based on locale. This also leads to shortfalls of trained aircraft maintenance NCOs in the active duty wings because they are diverted to fill the manning requirements within the TFI units.
- Integrate active duty personnel in leadership positions throughout the wing.

- TFI commanders should attend host wing staff meetings due to their span of influence throughout the wing.
- Support active duty functions such as executive officers and mobility sections. Recognize that the unit manning document provides the authorizations to meet unit tasking requirements, not the organizational structure of a squadron. Drawing manning from different Air Force Specialty Codes to meet active associate day-to-day administrative requirements and operational requirements is a normal occurrence in active duty units.
- If the TFI wing is collocated on an active duty base, encourage/support active duty personnel to career broaden by being detailed to a Group or Wing position in the active duty wing—assuming no impact to the host wing mission.
- Enhance career broadening by assigning active duty officers to work as executive officers for ANG/AFRC Wing and Group Commanders.

Command Responsibilities

- Continue to track the measures of merit to evaluate TFI progress: increase access to aircraft; balance aircrew and maintenance experience levels across the force; increase availability to support combat and training requirements; and preserve professional development. Results should be accessible by all AMC units to ensure transparency of integration efforts.
- Headquarters Air Force should re-implement the aircraft maintenance designation for aircraft maintenance personnel for permanent change of duty station consideration. Too much money is being spent on qualification training for

personnel requiring dissimilar aircraft training (e.g. F-16 crew chief assigned to KC-135 crew chief assignment).

- Institutionalize a robust and effective lessons learned capability that quickly identifies and shares both lessons identified and lessons learned across the Total Force and other Major Commands.
- Define expectation for flying Safety days. Does the active duty squadron stand down as directed by the AMC Commander in the chain of command, or follow the OPDir of the host wing?
- Support associate compliance with AMC chain of command guidance such as Wingman Day.

Operations

- Develop a culture where leaders and capabilities are well suited for contingency operations. Forces must be flexible and adaptable enough to operate across the spectrum of conflict and organizations.
- Develop the capability to conduct expeditionary operations in a flexible manner, with the ability to switch seamlessly between active duty and ARC personnel. At the same time, given the impending budget reductions, if active duty personnel are available to execute an AMC tasked mission, priority should be given to active duty personnel.
- ARC flight scheduling should transition to the Global Decision Support System II. This is the system the 618th Air and Space Operations Center, HQ AMC, and all AMC active duty wings use for scheduling purposes. It would enable aircraft availability and transparency for global mobility operations.

Aircraft Maintenance

- Enhance training standards to ensure active duty and ARC requirements are completely satisfied. If dissimilar, the active duty training requirements should default to the more restrictive standard.
- The Theater Battle Management Core Systems (TBMCS) training should reside under the Personnel Accounting Symbol (PAS) code of the host wing.
- Assign a Chief Master Sergeant to each active associate squadron to balance the needs of active duty enlisted Airmen with ARC senior enlisted leadership.
- The active duty unit training manager works directly for the active associate squadron commander.

Inspector General

- Clearly delineate in policy directives that active duty personnel can integrate with host wing personnel during higher headquarter inspections. It is already being done, but written guidance is always helpful.
- Clearly delineate policy directives that the host wing is responsible for Inspector General complaints lodged by active duty or ARC members within the wing.

Agreement and Administrative Considerations

- Memorandums of Agreement/Understanding should be developed between the active associate squadron commander and the appropriate wing leadership as partners. The term of these agreements should not be dictated by higher headquarters.
- Establish a policy for working on unit training assembly weekends. Attending weekend training is expected, but active duty personnel coming in on weekends

takes up valuable office space and training opportunities needed by traditional guardsmen.

- Determine policy for “down” or Phoenix Fridays due to flex schedule; active duty commander should determine the status of this day for active associate members and coordinate with host leaders. Between “down” and “off” Fridays, due to flexible schedules, there are 24 training days lost—an entire month of training.
- Change the primary rater of the active duty squadron commander to the host wing commander. This will enable the parent wing commander to be the additional rater and provide clarity to chain of command issues. Furthermore, it would enable meaningful stratification against active duty peer commanders. Although not a Group commander, the active associate squadron commander typically leads up to 30 percent of the entire day-to-day manning within an ANG wing. In addition, this change would be appropriate given the span of responsibilities across multiple Groups—it alleviates the concern of being rated by the OG/CC when 80 percent of the squadron is not directed under the operations group.
- If the primary rater of the TFI commander is not changed, then the 18 AF/CC should be allowed to assess the qualifications of the host OG/CC; the 18 AF/CC should know the qualifications of the host OG/CC and whether or not they meet standards on their performance report(s).
- The process by which the 618th Air and Space Operations Center tasks a participating TFI wing must be codified. Just by using the word “tasks” in the

previous sentence conjures mixed emotions from ARC units, and the concept of directly tasking the TFI unit brings greater discomfort to host wing leadership.

- Enhance the system to fill unit task codes and codify the process to reclama tasked positions. Currently, the parent wing commander takes responsibility for personnel tasked in the host wing.

Conclusion

This paper examined concerns for TFI implementation in AMC, and will prove helpful for future integration initiatives in this unpredictable and complex environment that will strain all of the components that make up the Air Force. No single component can meet the mobility challenges alone, and the credibility and capability of AMC depend on every component doing its part. It is, therefore, essential that AMC continue to demonstrate its strength and resolve, which is rooted in total force capabilities. These qualities sustain AMC as we work to keep mobility assets available for the Combatant Commanders. We must be tireless as we work together to build support for integration that continues to espouse the values and ideas upon which it was founded. To do this, the TFI effort must maintain a common understanding of what constitutes readiness and how the total force would respond, thus sending a clear signal of preparedness.

A comprehensive approach, developed in concert with Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command, is fundamental to the readiness of AMC. It goes without saying, that the more comprehensive our approach, the more ready our mobility assets will be to execute our airlift, air refueling and aeromedical evacuation operations. To be effective in this environment, we must develop better partnerships, leverage relationships and work with our Air Reserve Component to improve the transparency of

information and decision-making. Success will depend on our ability to manage cultural disagreements effectively and mitigate the consequences that spring from parochial interests. Anticipation is crucial to AMC's preparation for the future. Investment in long-term awareness and long-term analysis will give AMC a significant role to play as it works with the ARC to discern forthcoming challenges. Training processes must adapt and improve, and our leaders must be both well-versed in current trends and grounded in history in order to make informed decisions.

To respond effectively in this environment of uncertainty, the capabilities of AMC will always need to be flexible and adaptable. Historically, every Major Command that has transformed successfully has done so by clearly identifying specific operational problems that need to be addressed. To this end, the AMC total force will have to maintain and improve existing capabilities, and in some cases develop new ones, to address emerging mobility challenges. The insights and recommendations in this paper are meant to stimulate dialogue and inform decisions on what needs to change. Furthermore, the opinions may support the development of operational guidance that will address TFI's role in the future security environment.

Preparing for future challenges is difficult, but by scanning the horizon periodically and reviewing our assessments, we can increase our ability to adapt and respond to security threats. The goal is not to be perfectly right in this active associate operational concept. However, it is vital that AMC gets it sufficiently right, so that it can overcome the surprises that inevitably accompany crises. Ultimately, the men and women who make up the total force embody AMC's greatest operational strength. It is they who give AMC the ability to improvise rapidly to unexpected situations. It is

incumbent on AMC and the reserve components to ensure that these Airmen receive the doctrine, training, education, and material they need to succeed in their mission.

Endnotes

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