Air Force Studies and Analyses Agency

EAF Transition Workshop

After Action Report, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

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Chapter 1

Introduction

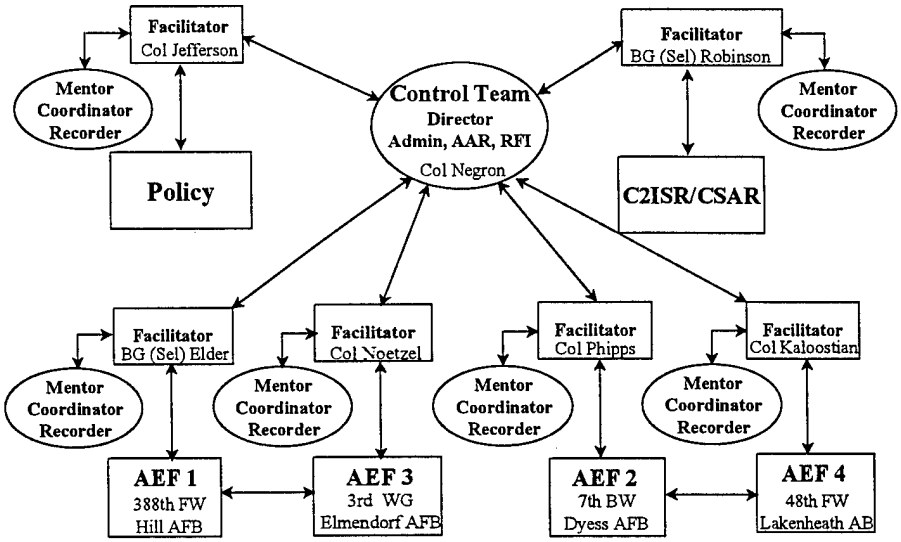
Concept Development, Workshop Objectives and Goals

The Air Force Studies and Analyses Agency (AFSAA), in support of AF/XOP, the directorate of Expeditionary Aerospace Force (EAF) Implementation, proposed hosting a "wargame" to test the EAF concept. As the concept for the wargame was developing, it became readily apparent that a true wargame would not be possible, since much of the necessary data would not be available in time. The focus then shifted from one of a wargame to that of a planning conference or workshop to review the current concept and further refine it.

In an attempt to scope the purpose and desired participants for this workshop, we decided to not examine the employment of forces. The EAF concept doesn't change how the Air Force employs forces, but it does change how the Air Force organizes to present forces to the theater CINCs. Aside from affecting Title X functions (i.e. organize, train, and equip), the concept of rotating Aerospace Expeditionary Forces (AEF) to support the steady-state contingencies every 90 days presents some challenges for Air Mobility Command and the lead wing commanders. Therefore, the focus of the workshop was on the preparation of AEFs to include the development of the AEF Management Staff (AMS) concept through deployment, re-deployment and stand-down (i.e. reconstitution). With the initial deployments of AEFs 1 and 2 scheduled for 1 Oct 99 and the first rotation to AEFs 3 and 4 scheduled for 1 Dec 99, the decision was made to limit wing-level participation to the respective lead wings to populate four AEF panels. Major Command (MAJCOM) and Numbered Air Force (NAF) representatives were invited to participate on a Policy Panel. Later a decision was made to include a panel to examine issues specific to the Command and Control (C2), Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR), and Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) communities, representing a subset of those assets that are managed by the Global Military Force Policy (GMFP). Finally, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, and Air Mobility Command representatives were added to each of the panels.

A depiction of the panel structure and relationships between panels is provided in the diagram below. The Control Panel consisted of those "running" the workshop (i.e. responsible for its oversight) as well as an After Action Report Team and a Request for Information Team.

Panel Structure



There was one overarching objective and three sub-objectives for the EAF Transition Workshop. Although the wording of the objectives went through several minor changes, the final stated objectives prior to the workshop remained essentially unchanged from those briefed to MGen Cook (AF/XOP) at the Initial Concept Review on 13 January 1999.

- Explore the implementation of the EAF concept using AEFs 1 through 4
  - Provide a coherent picture of how the EAF concept will be implemented 1 Oct 99
  - Identify problems within AEF preparation, deployment, rotation and stand-down phases
  - Develop AF policy inputs for implementation of the EAF concept

A more detailed listing of objectives and desired outcomes were specified in the official message from AF/XO inviting participants to the workshop. The actual wording from the message is as follows:

> The objective of this workshop is to explore the transition from current AF operations in support of on-going contingencies to EAF operations. The focus will be on the preparation and rotation of assets from aerospace expeditionary forces (AEF) supporting worldwide taskings.
>
> Areas to be addressed include:
>
> 1. Command relationships (lead wings and forward deployed AOR)

2. Expeditionary combat support (equipment and personnel)
3. Mission impact (from wing level through supported CINC)
4. Transportation planning (deployment/re-deployment)
5. Low density/high demand (LD/HD) and other enablers supporting deployed AEF assets

Desired outcomes include:

1. Educate AEF-sourced units by "dry running" the transition
2. Identify "show stoppers"
3. Identify preparation issues and timeline
4. Uncover additional issues needing resolution
5. Generate policy input for the Air Force Instruction (AFI) on the EAF transition (or other operational instructions)
6. Propose solutions for senior decision makers

Finally, Col Allardice (AF/XOPE) summed up the objectives in the out-briefs to the SECAF and CSAF as follows:

- Test EAF concept
- Validate AEF sourcing data
- Educate participants

Chapter 2

Workshop Agenda, Insights and Lessons Learned

Day 1 – Overview Briefings

The conference was opened by CSAF, Gen Michael Ryan, at the Holiday Inn Rosslyn-Westpark ballroom. He was followed by a series of briefings covering the detailed concept of the Expeditionary Aerospace Force and the various contributions of the different functional areas of the AF including the Guard and Reserve. Cited below are the briefings and events that drew the most questions.

General Ryan provided a brief overview of the lessons and events that have led to the EAF concept and the genesis of the various iterations. He emphasized the EAF as a method of organizing to meet the needs of the National Command Authorities and to take care of the men and women of the Air Force. Noting the EAF was not an end state, but an evolving process, Gen. Ryan encouraged the workshop participants to set a process in place that would make the use of Aerospace Expeditionary Forces better every time. Some of the questions he fielded included:

Question: What is the feeling of the theater CINCs about the EAF?

Response: The CINCs have a good opinion of the concept, and understand the history and reasoning behind the Air Forces move to an EAF. While they have questions on the details, they are generally satisfied with our concept.

Corollary: The CSAF pointed out that one of the USAF's responsibilities to the CINC is to make sure that forces filling AEF duties do not detract from theater CINC Operations Plans (OPlan). Essentially, the AF must make sure that we have a capable force ready to fill in if an OPLan is executed while "tagged" units are not available.

Lt. Gen. Marvin Esmond (AF XO) opened the afternoon session. Gen. Esmond provided encouragement to the participants and described the effort as "Designing your children's Air Force." The decisions made during this week will have far reaching effects and will define the direction and shape of the United States Air Force for the next 20 years.

Question: Since the US Navy uses exercises like FleetEx to prepare for deployment, and they use "Joint" money to pay for it, can the USAF expect to do the same since we will be directing training specifically at a Joint problem and commitment?

Response: There may be joint funding made available for AEF preparation depending on the direction we take our training and CINC needs. While that may open up an increased amount of funds, we need to be most concerned about conducting the right training, and at the right time.

The AEF Management Staff concept was introduced by Col. Mark Jefferson (AF/DXOP). He gave a broad outline of the AMS concept and described the relationship of the AMS, the MAJCOMs and the CINCS. The AMS will act as the managers that orchestrate the preparation of the AEF to relieve some of the burden from individual wing leadership. In addition, the AMS will provide a central point for lessons learned and evolving concepts to assist follow on AEFs. Col. Jefferson was asked two questions about the force structure and the sizing concepts.

Question: When will the AF migrate from the "10 + 2" construct to 10 AEFs?

Response: The transition will take between 5 and 10 years to complete.

Question: What is the position of the AF on dependent and independent squadrons?

Response: We have placed in the POM and APOM measures to bring all of the squadrons up to independent status to alleviate some of the PERSTEMPO.

Maj. Clay Wisniewski (ACC/DOTO) followed Col. Jefferson with a presentation on the ACC draft AMS implementation plan. He emphasized the role of the AMS in preventing the repeat of errors and improving, rather than re-proving lessons learned.

Question: For the AMS personnel, who is paying the bill? Where are the bodies coming from?

Response: The billets were assigned from drawdowns in areas like Panama. Individuals have not been identified yet.

Question: How does the AMS fit into Crises Action Planning?

Response: The AMS will not be "hard wired" in the chain of command. We expect the AMS to have the best view of status of forces and grasp of which units are best able to deploy and meet the need at any time. They will advise the senior AF leadership only.

Question: If a situation arises requiring the AF to break the AEF concept, who is responsible for that?

Response: If the AEF concept must be broken due to national emergencies, the AMS will inform the CSAF, and the CSAF will address the requirement with the NCA.

Question: Who does the AMS work for?
Response: The AMS will report to COMACC for administrative purposes. ACC will essentially be the "steward" of the AMS and it will be physically located at Langley AFB, Va.

Question: Who is responsible for the success of the AEF?

Response: While the AMS will assist the individual wings in preparation, the individual MAJCOMs retain the responsibility of making sure their units meet DOC statements and combat readiness requirements.

Question: Have we looked at the PERSTEMPO of the AMS as they take on the requirements of 10 AEFs on a regular basis?

Response: Yes, and we intend to use technology like VTC, distributed training and other electronic connectivity as much as possible.

Question: Does the AMS have responsibility for FOLs once an expeditionary unit departs.

Response: No. FOLs are the responsibility of the theater CINC.

Col. Sandiford (AF/ILMY) presented support requirements and concepts for review and comment. A key concept of rainbowing equipment is the precept that we will make a dedicated effort to leave our follow on units good, "healthy" equipment in place.

Question: Are our units thinking of sealift?

Response: Not as much as we think we can once a regular rotation is in place. This may be a key element of meeting the known requirements.

Col. Hartney (USCENTAF/A3-DO) pointed out that we have already made in roads into theater CINC plans using the Expeditionary concepts based on analysis done in AFSAA and Checkmate. Pointing out his primary concerns as the Defense of Kuwait, CON PLANS and OSW, he believes that CINCs will use the AEF concept more if we are able to continue to quantitatively show their worth with solid analysis and experience.

Question: What is the basis for our "permanent" command structure?

Response: The security concerns of recent years and our legacy of changing requirements have moved us to keep some leaders in place for extended periods.

Question: What are your feelings about mal placed units for an MTW if forces are in theater for steady state operations?

Response: It is not optimum, but we will manage it on the fly. We have done it in the past, and feel it is better to accept some MTW inefficiencies rather than try to reposition during the fight.

Representatives from the 366th Wing, the 48th Fighter Wing and AMC presented lessons learned briefings. Key points were as follows:

There should be a single manager the wings can turn to for deployment help.

Plans and execution should be based on requirements, not "desired airframes."

A deployment is not complete without a debrief.

Visibility into the planning process, even in draft, is critical to wings meeting the tasking.

Question: How did the 48th get their ATO?

Response: Via STU III, TACSAT and other means.

Question: What was the 48th Command structure?

Response: The 48th deployed as an Expeditionary Group, attached to 16th Air force.

The conference adjourned for the evening.

Day 2 – AEF Preparation Phase

For Days 2 through 4, the workshop moved to the Penthouse and 8th floor conference room of 1777 North Kent Street in Rosslyn, Virginia, the current home of AFSAA. Participants were assigned to one of the six panels: AEF 1, AEF 2, AEF 3, AEF 4, C2ISR/CSAR, and Policy. To frame the discussions for each day, a particular part of the 15-month AEF cycle served as that day's focus. On Day 2, the focus was on the AEF Preparation Phase, but was not limited to preparation activities only during this 60-day timeframe. Of particular interest and the topic that generated the greatest amount of debate on Day 2 was the AEF Management Staff (AMS) concept. The four AEF panels and the Policy panel received a second briefing on the concept from either Maj Clay Wisniewski (ACC/DOTO) or Col Steve Wright (ACC/DOO) along with a template deployment checklist. The response from the wings regarding the checklist was essentially, "we already have a deployment checklist" and quickly tossed it aside. Their desire is that the AMS provide a planning tool that would provide resource allocation guidance to identify needed assets, de-conflict among the various units that might be tasked and reduce the overall footprint. One of their major concerns was the placement of this new agency into the chain of command.

Question: What is the recommended command relationship and placement in the chain of command?

Response: Diverse opinions were expressed, but consensus was that the AMS should not be resident in a MAJCOM due to the perception of units serving multiple commanders. Lines of authority would be too complex to provide clear guidance and would not foster interoperability. The inability of the current reporting systems to provide units and the AMS required information was echoed in all panels. Each group encouraged the refinement of current processes and the use of evolving technology to correct his. It is extremely important to note that inadequate and repetitive site surveys are wasteful and inefficient.

Wing level inputs for the desired functions for the AMS included the following:

1. Wings do not want AMS to certify units ready for deployment.
2. Wing inputs for desired functions include:
   a. Information – ensure currency of Base Support Plans (BSP) and make available via the Internet
   b. Coordination – between units in an AEF, between AEF and theater, between incoming and outgoing units
   c. Integration – provide visibility into relationships between different UTCs and theater CINC requirements; coordinate with COMAFFORs; provide quality control for rotational TPFDDs
   d. En route visibility, coordination, and support – monitor deployments and re-deployments; serve as 911 for units and CINCs during AEF rotations for TPFDD execution problems
   e. OPR for AEF Lessons Learned Program—needs to be formalized; recommended that it be web-based

Another one of the objectives for Day 2 was to develop a major-events timeline for AEF preparation. Here is a summarized list that the AEF panels provided. Their perspective was what should the AMS be providing the wings preparing for deployment.

1. 180 days prior to deployment – Provide required UTCs and beddown locations; provide time-critical requirements (e.g. DIP clearances, host nation requirements).
2. 150 days prior to deployment – Provide TPFDD.
3. 90 days prior to deployment – Ensure force providers know what capability is required in theater.

A separate breakout panel was formed with a selected handful of MAJCOM representatives to further examine and define the AMS concept. A significant recommendation resulting from their discussions that eventually was briefed to the SECAF and CSAF was that the Blue and Silver AEF Preparation Teams (APT) be aligned with paired AEFs as opposed to even or odd numbered AEFs. Such a construct, as opposed to an odd/even AEF alignment, allows visibility across all "in-the-box" assets by one team.

Finally, the Policy Panel took up the specific issue of certifying units for deployment as a part of an AEF. To begin the discussion with a common baseline, Lt Col Dave Garten (AF/XOOA) presented a briefing on the current Status of Resources and Training System (SORTS) and some recommendations for gradually modifying the process to be able to handle AEF-unique reporting. The major recommendations resulting from this briefing and follow-on discussion were to use the current SORTS system and to examine AEF

specific Desired Operational Capability (DOC) statements for the squadron-level UTCs that would be certified by the squadron commander. At the end of the day, each of the four AEF panels presented a brief of the day's discussions to the Policy panel.

Day 3 – AEF Rotation Phase

What is often depicted in graphical illustrations of the AEF cycle is an instantaneous swap out between successive AEFs in the 90-day deployment/on-call phase. Obviously, any swap out cannot be instantaneous. Initial AMC estimates for swapping all UTCs supporting Operation Southern Watch (OSW) is 11 days and for Operation Northern Watch (ONW) is 9 days. So, a complete swap-out of UTCs from successive AEFs supporting all steady-state contingencies may take 20-30 days. Until TPFDDs are further developed and refined, the exact number of days to execute the deployment and re-deployment of AEFs will not be known. Furthermore, the relationship of the commencement of the movement to the start of the 90-day window is not well defined. Does the movement start at the beginning of the 90-day window, is the movement expected to be completed by the start of the 90-day window, or is the start of the 90-day window somewhere in between the commencement and completion of the deployment/re-deployment of AEFs? Regardless of the answer to this question, what is significant about the rotation of AEFs is the tasking by UTC rather than AFSC. Additionally, AMC would like to make these moves as efficient as possible. To do so the Air Force needs to identify the maximum amount of equipment that can be left behind in theater, while optimizing the schedule for rotating forces so airlift aircraft return full and spend the minimal amount of time waiting on the ramp. Each of these issues need further examination to determine the impacts on the mission(s) required by the theater CINCs as well as the impacts on home stations. This provided the backdrop for discussions on Day 3.

The AEF panels provided timelines for rotation of forces by functional area and identified major categories of equipment that can be shared between AEFs. The basic caveat to the idea of leaving equipment in theater was that it could be done between units from the same wing. They identified concerns and obstacles to sharing equipment between units from different wings that would lead to degradation of home station capabilities to train if assets are left behind following a deployment.

Other concerns voiced by the AEF panels include:

1. Rotations scheduled around peak commercial air demands (e.g. Thanksgiving and Christmas). Since the bulk of personnel rotations are accomplished using commercial air, it will be impossible to avoid peak demands and meet 15-day rotations for ARC personnel.

2. Movements of AEFs need to be deconflicted with joint exercises.

3. Who owns the TPFDDs for rotations of AEFs?

4. Leaving "iron on the ramp for 180 days" to share between AEFs to limit airlift requirements poses maintenance challenges (primarily phase inspections).

5. Priority of parts in the supply system for units re-deploying.

There was unanimous support for pre-positioning equipment in the AORs to minimize lift requirements. In particular, the CHPMSK program for F-15Cs supporting ONW was touted as a proven program to reduce the mobility requirements.

Day 4 – AEF Deployment and Stand-down Phases

Following the rotation from AEFs 1 and 2 to AEFs 3 and 4 to support steady-state contingencies, all AEF panels examined issues at their respective home stations. For AEFs 1 and 2, they were tasked to examine issues during the stand-down phase. This is the two-week period following the 90-day deployment/on-call phase. This two-week down time for personnel returning from deployment will occur over a staggered period of time; that is, entire units may not necessarily all stand-down simultaneously for two weeks, but individuals will have time off as they return. For certain bases with UTCs aligned in successive AEFs, this may result in a shortfall at home when one UTC is deployed in a follow-on AEF as another UTC returns and stands-down. Additionally, AEFs 3 and 4 were to focus on identifying shortfalls at home while UTCs from their respective home stations were deployed.

Each of the AEF panels identified shortfalls in various areas at home during deployment and stand-down, particularly if backfill is not available. In one particular example, Elmendorf stated that of 170 authorized AMMO positions, only 157 personnel are assigned. Given the available data showing 33 tasked for AEF 1 and 91 tasked for AEF 3, then 124 of the 157 personnel assigned are unavailable during a period of approximately one month, which represents the rotation from AEF 1 to AEF 3 through stand-down of AEF 1 personnel. Other concerns included tasking significant numbers of Elmendorf engineers for deployment during winter months who would be needed for snow removal. These concerns must be addressed during the scheduling of Expeditionary Combat Support.

Day 5 – Final Out-briefs

On the final day, the workshop reconvened at the Holiday Inn Rosslyn-Westpark ballroom for a half-day of panel out-briefs. Each of the AEF panels were allotted 20 minutes to present a summary of the issues discussed and questions developed from the previous three days. Following the AEF panels were the C2ISR/CSAR panel, the Policy panel, and finally overall summaries were provided by the workshop director, Col Jose Negron, and Col Mark Jefferson representing Maj Gen Don Cook (AF/XOP).

Chapter 3

Summary

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Following the workshop, a hot wash was convened to determine the scope of the briefing to be delivered up the chain of command and eventually to the CSAF and SECAF. The following observations were relayed in the out-brief:

- Unit reality check was critical—unit participation increases the sense of urgency
- Lead wing commanders want greater leadership role at expeditionary bases
- AMS role is critical—still developing
- Wings say it takes 3 squadrons to get 2 deployed (independent or not)
  - Units deploy crews at 1.5 ratio and are manned at 1.2-1.25, creating a crew shortage
  - Low funding of spares/parts leaves aircraft holes, but must deploy full up units; results in borrowing from other squadron(s)
- Transition of multiple units creates shortfalls (back to back squadron deployments from same wing needs to be studied)
- Strong support for pre-positioned assets in rotational situation
- Need to deconflict outside taskings
- TPFDD is the right way [that is; consensus that we need to develop TPFDDs for AEF rotations]; but we must act quickly
- EAF lessons learned concept [function of AMS] received strong support—need to develop
- Units recognized need to update all AFIs

All agreed that the workshop was beneficial for educating wing participants while providing necessary feedback to MAJCOM and Air Staff planners developing the EAF concept. However, wing-level participants were disappointed that the available data was not more fully developed. There was a general expectation that they would receive more specific data outlining expected taskings that they could begin to use to plan for deployments scheduled for this fall. However, there was a general consensus to hold a similar workshop for AEFs 5 through 10, but with the hope that the "real" data (i.e. TPFDDs) would be available for review.

Following the workshop, a data hot wash was convened to review the data collected and determine what was useful for follow-on studies and workshops. Here are the main observations resulting from that hot wash:

- Base Support Plans are out of date
  - Critical to discussion of TPFDD flow
  - Vital to determining what parts of a UTC to take
  - Demonstrated by discussion of billeting at PSAB
- Players expected completed TPFDD
- Data provided exceeded 50% level of this expectations
  - Players interpreted the term "notional" to mean "fictional"
  - Limitations due to incomplete data from earlier conferences, or conferences yet to be held
- Insufficient data for Beddown Capabilities Assessment Tool (BCAT)
  - Presentation of sample outputs well received by participants
  - Useful for educating players about the model
- Data useful for follow-on studies or next workshop
  - Munitions inventories
  - Fuel inventories
  - Re-supply rates
  - TPFDD has some cross over to follow-on AEFs
- Data requirements for follow-on workshop
  - Steady-state sortie rates by MDS
  - Structure of tailored UTCs
  - TPFDD validated by AMC
  - Valid listing of deployed location equipment and permanent party personnel in a useful format

Although we weren't able to obtain all of the data that we felt necessary and that the participants expected, everyone involved felt that the workshop was a tremendous success. However, as we move closer to the IOC of 1 Oct 99 for the EAF, there are two things that must happen to guarantee continued success: (1) a validated TPFDD for AEF rotations must be developed, and (2) the AMS must be stood up and be heavily involved.

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13. ABSTRACT *(Maximum 200 words)*

The Air Force Studies and Analyses Agency (AFSAA) in coordination with the Directorate of Expeditionary Aerospace Force Implementation (HQ USAF/XOP) sponsored and hosted the first EAF Transition Workshop during the week 8-12 March 1999. Over 220 participants representing the first four Lead Wings, Numbered Air Forces, Major Commands (MAJCOM), Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard, and the Air Staff explored the transition from current Air Force operations in support of on-going contingencies to EAF operations. The focus of the workshop was on the preparation of Aerospace Expeditionary Forces (AEF) through the first scheduled rotation of AEFs. Participants provided Air Staff and MAJCOM planners much needed feedback to further refine the EAF concept while validating the essentials of the concept.

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