



# Air Force Association

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The nearly 150,000-member Air Force Association, formed in 1946, is an independent, nonprofit, civilian aerospace organization that promotes public understanding of aerospace power and national defense. AFA is led by volunteer leaders at the national, state, and local levels. The association has chapters in all fifty states, Europe and the Pacific.



AFA publishes the monthly *Air Force Magazine*, a highly regarded aerospace journal that reaches the desks of those in the highest levels of government, industry, defense, business, academia, and the media. AFA's educational affiliate, the Aerospace Education Foundation, conducts educational outreach programs and distributes educational materials that focus on aerospace, technology, and national defense, to schools, educators, and the American public. [Click here](#) to go to What's New or explore our site through the navigation bars to the left and above.

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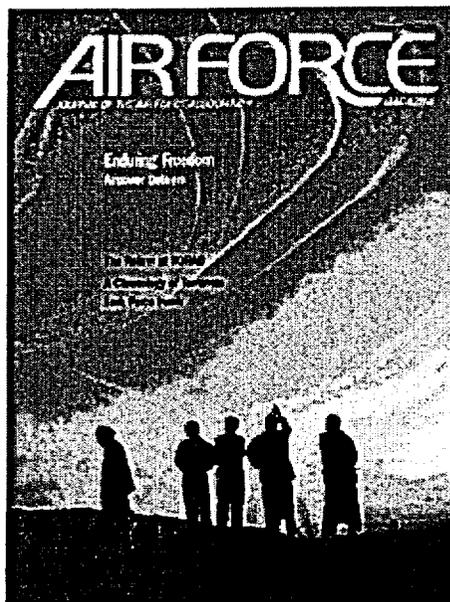
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**AIR FORCE Magazine** is the monthly journal of the Air Force Association and one of the world's foremost publications in the fields of defense and aerospace. From Air Force operations, programs, and people to the exploits of Air Force heroes, the award-winning **AIR FORCE Magazine** reports on important aerospace news and developments, and provides authoritative background material. **AIR FORCE Magazine** is the reference for the Air Force and aerospace. Its special issues and features include the Air Force Almanac and Space Almanac, special aircraft, and informative charts.

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likely to accept the discipline and uniformity that a tour in the military requires.

Pay and pension increases now moving through Congress could help. Sen. John W. Warner (R.Va.), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, has another idea: shorten enlistments, despite the fact that such a move would raise training costs considerably.

In a March letter to service chiefs, Warner urged them to consider reducing enlistment time from four years or more to 18 months.

The Army already allows two-year enlistments in a number of combat arms specialties. The Navy has a handful of two-year slots available. The Air Force, and the Marines, have continued to insist on a four-year minimum.

### **F-16 Crash Rate Rising**

F-16 crash rates are rising again after years of decline, and worried Air Force officials can see no obvious cause for the spike.

In 1996, the Class A accident rate for the lightweight fighter jet was a record-low 2.14 per 100,000 flying hours. In 1997, it climbed to 3.0 and in 1998 to 3.89. As of mid-February, the Fiscal 1999 F-16 crash rate was 5.83 per 100,000 flying hours.

Engine trouble may be one reason. Of the nine 1999 crashes, six were caused by engine failure. Five of 1997's 11 Class A accidents were engine-related.

But officials caution that "engine failure" is a broad term that can cover everything from design problems to poor maintenance. And engines have not been failing in the same manner--each has been a unique and isolated problem.

Still, Air Force officials had an informal meeting at Luke AFB, Ariz., this winter to discuss the possibility of acute F-16 engine problems.

Over time, about 52 percent of the F-16's Class A accidents have been caused by pilot failure, according to manufacturer Lockheed Martin. Some 36 percent have been engine related.

### **For the Record**

"The Parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and consequently they agree that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the Party or Parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area."

**-Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, basis of NATO, signed April 4, 1949.**

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