This report represents the culmination of a concerted effort within RAND’s Project AIR FORCE to examine the political, operational, logistical, and force protection issues associated with overseas basing for the Expeditionary Aerospace Force. The result of this effort, presented here, is a strategy for global access and basing of U.S. aerospace forces. This study builds on a body of previous RAND research relating to enhancing the United States Air Force’s expeditionary capabilities, including:


This work was sponsored by the Deputy Chief of Staff for Air and Space Operations (AF/XO) within the Air Staff and should be of interest to planners and operators within the Air Force. It may be of value to policymakers elsewhere in the Department of Defense and the U.S. government who are involved in arranging and maintaining relationships that can either facilitate or hinder other states’ cooperation with the United States in the full range of military operations.

Our research was conducted within the Strategy and Doctrine program of Project AIR FORCE. Comments are welcome and should be directed to the Program Director, Edward Harshberger, or to the lead author, David Shlapak (David_Shlapak@rand.org).

Primary research for this study concluded in late 1999, so events of 2000 and 2001 are not fully reflected here. However, nothing that has transpired would, in our opinion, dramatically alter our conclusions. Indeed, the terrorist attacks on the United States in September 2001 and the subsequent “war on terrorism” reinforce our main premise, which is that the United States—and the Air Force—must prepare for challenging contingencies in unexpected places at inconvenient times.

PROJECT AIR FORCE

Project AIR FORCE, a division of RAND, is the Air Force federally funded research and development center (FFRDC) for studies and analysis. It provides the Air Force with independent analyses of policy alternatives affecting the development, employment, combat readiness, and support of current and future aerospace forces. Research is performed in four programs: Aerospace Force Development; Manpower, Personnel, and Training; Resource Management; and Strategy and Doctrine.