Whether mobile SCUD missiles that are difficult to detect, recognize, and attack from airborne platforms or small groups of national police operating at night to drive Albanian Kosovars from their homes in waves of “ethnic cleansing,” the U.S. Air Force (USAF) encounters elusive targets more and more often. This book presents the findings of a Project AIR FORCE FY 2000 study on elusive ground targets. Sponsored by the Director of Strategic Planning, Headquarters, USAF, the study sought to help the USAF better understand and prepare for a world in which elusive targets are the norm rather than an aberration. Toward that end, the book assesses concepts and technologies that could improve the USAF’s capability to detect, classify, recognize, and defeat a broad range of elusive targets—from mobile ballistic or cruise missiles to dispersed ground forces. The study also investigated the use of friendly special operations forces to detect and identify elusive targets. See William Rosenau, Special Operations Forces and Elusive Enemy Ground Targets: Lessons from Vietnam and the Persian Gulf War, MR-1408-AF, 2001.

This study was conducted as part of the Strategy and Doctrine Program in RAND’s Project AIR FORCE. It should be of interest to airmen serving in plans, operational, analytic, and R&D organizations, as well as the broader defense community. The information derived from it is current as of January 2001.

Project AIR FORCE, a division of RAND, is the Air Force’s federally funded research and development center (FFRDC) for studies and analysis. It provides the USAF with independent analysis of policy alternatives affecting the deployment, employment, combat readi-
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