

BACKGROUND

It has been seven years since the massive military threat posed by the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact evaporated. After 40 years of cold war and the occasional hot war, the United States is at peace. Yet despite this state of peace, the U.S. military in general and the U.S. Air Force (USAF) in particular find themselves remarkably busy. From enforcing no-fly zones in Iraq to supporting peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia, the USAF is maintaining an unprecedented peacetime operations tempo.

USAF assets are proving invaluable for responding to a multitude of peacetime challenges. Airlifters carry relief supplies, rescue personnel, peacekeepers, or combat forces. Surveillance platforms track fighter aircraft, airborne drug smugglers, and mechanized ground forces. Reconnaissance platforms, both manned and unmanned, provide theater commanders with high-quality imagery and signals intelligence. Finally, fighter aircraft enforce no-fly zones, support ground forces and—along with bombers and gunships—make punitive strikes. For these reasons, USAF aircraft, from the Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) to AC-130 gunships, are in constant demand by theater and joint task force commanders conducting various military operations other than war (MOOTW).¹

¹MOOTW is the Joint Staff's term for a diverse collection of military activities below the level of major regional conflicts. MOOTW includes disaster relief, humanitarian aid, search and rescue, peace operations, arms control, military support to civil au-

Indeed, these peacetime demands, *driven primarily by multiple on-going peace operations*, are so great that they are disrupting routine training and exercises necessary to prepare for major conflicts, thereby producing excessive overseas deployments for many personnel and undermining morale. This situation is producing a dilemma for the USAF as it struggles to fulfill today's commitments without degrading either its capability to fight future wars or the quality of life of its personnel.

Although it is impossible to precisely predict future MOOTW demands, our review of the evidence suggests that MOOTW demands on the USAF are likely to be enduring. Even if peace operations were to become less frequent, other MOOTW demands would take their place. These other demands may not produce the optempo associated with current peace operations, but they are likely to present unique challenges of their own, possibly requiring new tactics and technologies.

Politically, MOOTW are likely to be conducted under more-restrictive rules of engagement (ROE) than war. There is likely to be a much greater sensitivity to casualties—both of U.S. citizens and of others. Since peacekeeping and other MOOTW activities may be going on in the midst of a civilian population, ROE will likely be a prime determinant of every action. Only rarely will it be possible to take action based on military considerations alone. In this regard, MOOTW may come to resemble police work, requiring that those involved receive specialized training.

Technically, MOOTW may pose challenges that are different from those of war and that are, to some extent, derived from the political context and the ROE. For example, countersniper operations in an urban environment would require much more discriminate use of force than in war, presenting, in turn, a major technical challenge because U.S. forces would be required to detect, positively identify, and neutralize snipers without harming friendly forces or non-combatants. Advanced sensors, low-flying unmanned sensor plat-

thorities, strikes, raids, enforcement of sanctions, counterdrug operations, foreign internal defense, support to insurgencies, evacuation of noncombatants, and hostage rescue. See U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War*, Washington, D.C.: The Joint Staff, Joint Publications 3-07, 1995.

forms, precision low-yield lethal weapons, nonlethal weapons, and other new technologies will likely be required for air power to be effective against these and similar targets.

PURPOSE

The objective of this report is to help delineate the challenges facing the USAF below the level of major conflict and to offer some new concepts to both minimize the disruption MOOTW are having on training, combat readiness, and morale and to enhance USAF MOOTW capabilities. The report is organized around the following questions:

- What types of MOOTW has the USAF participated in previously?
- Which operations have been most stressful?
- Have MOOTW hindered training and lowered readiness?
- If so, how can these effects be minimized?
- What tasks will the USAF be assigned in future MOOTW?
- How can USAF capabilities be enhanced to accomplish these tasks?

ORGANIZATION

This report is divided into two parts. Part I, Chapters Two and Three, gives background information on MOOTW and describes the current MOOTW situation. Chapter Two presents an overview and analysis of those MOOTW the USAF and its predecessors have participated in since 1916. Chapter Three analyzes how MOOTW optempo is affecting force training, readiness, and morale, and explores several options for addressing these problems. Chapter Four begins Part II of the report, which deals with the future needs for MOOTW. It discusses the reasons MOOTW have taken on greater importance in the post-Cold War environment. Chapter Five identifies current and future MOOTW tasks that the USAF could be assigned and presents some new concepts of operation to accomplish these tasks. Chapter Six presents study conclusions. Appendix A contains the database of 869 USAF MOOTW operations from 1916 through 1996 that was de-

veloped by our study. Appendix B presents additional information on two peace operations (Joint Endeavor and Uphold Democracy) for which unclassified historical data were available. Appendix C provides supporting data for the discussion in Chapter Three.