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Readers should note that the Morning Report and Weekend News provide a daily sample of independent news reporting about the Air Force and Space Force, and that inclusion of an article does not mean that its content is a completely accurate statement of facts or official policy.

OF NOTE:

• Hegseth Denies Reports of Missileless Shortages: Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth on Tuesday denied reports of depleted U.S. missile and interceptor stockpiles, calling reports by CNN and other agencies "not true" (Article 1). CNN reported Monday that the Pentagon has expended about 80 percent of its stores of Terminal High Area Altitude Defense missiles and half of its Patriot interception stocs commencing Operation Epic Fury on Feb. 28.
• Talley Assumes Command of AMC: Lt. Gen. Daniel Talley assumed command of Air Mobility Command during a ceremony at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., on Monday (Article 6). "Recent operations like Absolute Resolve and Epic Fury have reminded us that airlift and refueling, aeromedical evacuation, and global logistics are not simply supporting functions," Chief of Staff Gen. Ken Wisbrach said at the ceremony. "They create options for our nation's leaders, provide freedom of action for our combatant commanders, and make the employment of military power possible. … In every scene of the word, they enable maneuver."
• Space Force Awards $63Mil for SBAMTI: The Space Force granted task orders worth $63.7 million this week to develop Space-Based Airborne Moving Target Indication capabilities, Space Systems Command officials said (Article 11). "With these new partnerships, we are exploring unique innovations and technologies and fundamentally different ways to accomplish the [AMTI] mission," said Col. Ryan Frazier, acting portfolio acquisition executive for space-based sensing and targeting.

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JOINT NEWS
1. Hegseth disputes reports of depleted US missile interceptor stocks
(Stars and Stripes, 5 Aug 26) … Jennifer H. Svan
Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth called reports Washington depleted U.S. missile and interceptor stocks "not true" in a social media post Tuesday. CNN reported Monday that the United States has used about 80 percent of its stores of Terminal High Altitude Area Defense missiles and about 50 percent of its Patriot interceptors since commencing the current war with Iran. A report last week from the Center for Strategic and International Studies likewise concluded that U.S. missile stockpiles have been significantly depleted but that the United States still has enough interceptors for "any plausible scenario in the war against Iran." Any sick, according to the CRS report, would come from a large-scale conflict against China or Russia. Pressed on Thursday and Tuesday that the United States could establish a deal with Iran as soon as this week, adding, "It could happen. Tomorrow or the next day. A lot of progress has been made."

2. Trump, Hegseth clashed at Camp David over Iran missile depletion concerns
(Washington Post, 5 Aug 26) … Tara Copp, Natalie Allison and Noah Robertson
Chief Pentagon spokesman Sean Parnell on Tuesday denied reports that President Donald Trump confronted Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth about reported shortages of precision munitions and interceptor defenses. "Secretary Hegseth did not mislead anyone about our munitions posture, and he did not blame Deputy [Defense Secretary Stephen] Feinberg," Parnell said. "These claims about depleted stockpiles, internal disagreements, the secretary's position on Iran … are equally fictional." Two U.S. officials said on background Tuesday that Trump had demanded answers from Hegseth on U.S. missile and interceptor stockpiles and that munitions shortages led Trump to postpone an international summit of the U.S. military campaign against Iran. White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt also denied the allegation took place, calling it "100 percent fake news." Leavitt added, "President Trump has the utmost confidence in Secretary Hegseth."

3. Pentagon augments new Micron Smart System program director in fresh push for C2 integration
(DefenseScoop, 5 Aug 26) … Brandi Vincent
Army Col. Molly Schlitzer has been appointed to direct the Micron Smart System programs for the Pentagon's Chief Digital and AI Office. A Defense Department official said this week that the DOD "is continuing to evaluate programmatic options to ensure our warfighters have access to [command and control] capabilities at the best value for the American taxpayer. The Micron Smart System is proving a key asset and user interface for the Combined Joint All-Domain Command and Control network. In March, Deputy Defense Secretary Stephen Feinberg directed the Pentagon and military leaders to mature MSS into a program of record by September. "Transitioning MSS to a POR will provide the stable funding and sustaining necessary for deliberate, sustained development and enterprise-wide integration to give our commanders the C2 necessary to fight and win tonn," he wrote.

AIR FORCE NEWS
4. Lt. Gen. Daniel Talley assumes command of AMC
(Air & Space Forces, 5 Aug 26) … Stephen Losey
Lt. Gen. Daniel Talley assumed command of Air Mobility Command during a ceremony at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., on Monday. "Recent operations like Absolute Resolve and Epic Fury have reminded us that airlift, aerial refueling, aeromedical evacuation, and global logistics are not simply supporting functions," Chief of Staff Gen. Ken Wilsbach said at the ceremony. "They create options for our nation's leaders, provide freedom of action for our combatant commanders, and make the employment of military power possible. … In every scene of the word, they enable maneuver." Talley said AMC is a warfighting command that plans, integrates, and fights alongside every combatant command. "We shape the plan, set the force, sustain the campaign, and preserve freedom of maneuver for joint force commanders," Talley said. "When the mission is complete, we bring that force home." Talley will be the first three-star general to lead AMC following the downgrading of its commander billet last year.

5. Air National Guard cameras incentive includes $7,500 bonuses
(Stars and Stripes, 5 Aug 26) … Matthew Adams
The Air National Guard launched a Summer Surge Incentive this week, offering up to $7,500 for Airmen joining from the active duty or Reserve forces. Col. Mark Wellborn, the ANG's director of recruiting and retention, said the incentive program is part of an effort to reach individuals looking to make an impact in their communities. "As the Air National Guard recapitalizes and modernizes in force to meet the needs of tomorrow, we must also evolve how we recruit and retain the talent our missions require," Wellborn said. Chief Master Sgt. James Chubb, chief of the ANG's Recruiting and Retention Accessions Branch, said every accession and retained Airman matters. "By consolidating incentives and retention incentives into a focused campaign, we encourage immediate action from qualified applicants while helping commanders retain experienced Airmen," Chubb said.

6. Trump said Qatar jet was destined for his library. That may change.
(New York Times, 5 Aug 26) … Maggie Haberman and Eric Lipton
The Pentagon is considering the conversion of the VC-25B bridge aircraft, and an older VC-25A aircraft could instead be given to the Trump Presidential Library, a White House official said on background Wednesday. One White House official said President Donald Trump has considered decommissioning one of the older Air Force One aircraft but also plans to take the Qatar jet when he leaves office, though Trump has said the plane is a gift to the Defense Department and that he won't use it after he leaves office. An Air Force official said Wednesday that no decision has been made as to the VC-25B bridge aircraft's fate, adding that it could be used by a future president or other federal government officials.

7. Air Force plans to keep its M18 pistols
(Stars and Stripes, 5 Aug 26) … Jennifer H. Svan
The Air Force plans to keep the big Smith M18 pistol as its sidearm, an Air Force spokesperson said Wednesday. "The Air Force is satisfied with the M18 Modular Handgun System currently employed across the department," the spokesperson said. "We do not plan to consider other handgun options until the current system approaches end of service life. Until then, our limited small-arms procurement budget must remain focused on older and higher priority weapons." The spokesperson said the Air Force has revalidated the M18's safety and reliability following a service-wide inspection last year. The Air Force Life Cycle Management Center purchased about 125,000 M18s, according to a 2020 news release.

8. Air Force doctor's mobile app helps keeps Team all branches meet fitness standards
(Defense Media Activity, 5 Aug 26) … Jim Garamone
A mobile app developed by an Air Force physician at Yokota Air Base, Japan, allows service members to calculate their physical fitness scores, track their progress and build training plans. "I wanted all of the branches to be in one app," said Capt. (Dr.) Zachary Hoida, an urgent care physician with the 374th Medical Group. "Why do we have a different app for every branch? That was the first thing to solve." The Military Fitness Score app charts a service member's performance over time, tracks individual events and allows users to set goals and upcoming test dates. It can also analyze results and recommend areas of improvement, Hoida said. "I wanted to help people actually get to their goals on PT, especially with the new standards," he said. Capt. Adaline Kosowski, an urgent care nurse and fitness manager with the 374th and one of the app's beta testers, said the app could replace binders and printed instructions with a centralized repository for fitness records, testing guidance and instructional videos.

9. Long-range ISEAM deal gives Air Force new standoff strike option
(Defense News, 5 Aug 26) … Jeff Martin
The Air Force awarded a $75 million contract to Boeing to begin supplying BRU-111 Payload Delivery Units, which will be used on GBU-75 Joint Direct Attack Munition Long Range munition, Boeing executives said this week. The new ISAAM LR will have a range over 300 nautical miles for a 500-pound payload, far exceeding the 45 nautical mile range of the ISAAM-ER. Retired Col. Mark Gunzinger, director of future concepts and capability assessments for the Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies, called the direction "long overdue," adding that the new ISAAM will give the Air Force new options for medium-range standoff strikes. The new ISAAM-LR will cost "far less than more exquisite stand-off munitions," Gunzinger said, "so they should be considered as an affordable mass capability." He recommended the Air Force buy the ISAAM-LR at scale and integrate the missiles into its bomber and fighter forces.

10. Grant gates southern states student activists protecting US role in Korean semiconductor project
(Hankyoreh, 5 Aug 26) … Kim Tae-gyun and Ryu Ji-hye
The individuals who were detained at Osan Air Base, South Korea, this week were affiliated with a student activist group protesting perceived U.S. interference in a proposed $232 billion semiconductor complex, South Korean police said Wednesday. National Police spokesperson Jaho Song said the demonstrators are under investigation for violating the Protection of Military Bases and Installations Act. South Korea informed Gyeonggi Airport last month on the site for a government-backed semiconductor complex, which would require moving a Republic of Korea Air Force installation. Maj. Lance Hayden, a spokesperson for 7th Air Force, said U.S. Forces Korea has "important military interests" there and will coordinate with the ROKAF to preserve readiness.

SPACE FORCE NEWS
11. Space Force awards 3 Jones $63Mil to track airborne targets
(Breaking Defense, 5 Aug 26) … Theresa Hitchens
The Space Force granted task orders worth $63.3 million this week to develop Space-Based Airborne Moving Target Indication capabilities, Space Systems Command officials announced this week. This task order is focused on diversifying Space Force capabilities and ensuring the service doesn't rely on a single technical solution, said Col. Ryan Frazier, acting portfolio acquisition executive for space-based sensing and targeting. "With these new partnerships, we are exploring unique innovations and technologies and fundamentally different ways to accomplish the [AMTI] mission," Frazier said. "Maturing these varied technical solutions now gives us distinct performance advantages for the future and guarantees we are fielding the absolute best technology available."

12. Space Force activates 77th Surveillance Squadron for space-based target tracking
(GeoInstitute, 5 Aug 26) … Jane Edwards
The recent activation of the 77th Surveillance Squadron will support the Space-Based Moving Target Indication mission and the Space Force's Objective Force 2040 vision, officials with the squadron said Tuesday. "This capability immediately enhances our global combatant commands, giving them the vital battlespace awareness needed to make decisions at speed and hold any adversary at risk," said Col. Nathanel Pence, commander of Space Delta 7. Pence said the squadron's force structure pairs space operators with intelligence analysts, allowing the unit to quickly identify targets and deliver actionable data to warfighters.

OF INTEREST
13. Iran, Oman agree to new shipping routes in Hormuz as Washington, Tehran crack new agreement
(Washington Times, 5 Aug 26) … Vaughn Cockayne and Tom Howell Jr.
Iran and Oman have agreed to coordinate commercial shipping routes through the Strait of Hormuz, a spokesperson for Iran's Foreign Ministry said Wednesday. But Emanuel Bagheri said the agreement doesn't make the Strait safe for commercial transit so long as the U.S. naval blockade "and other actions against Iran and its interests" remains in place. Iran closed the strait in March after the United States and Israel commenced Operation Epic Fury on Feb. 28. The Trump administration has said it will not accept any deal that imposes tolls on ships traversing the strait, which is considered international waters under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Meanwhile, Iran funded Houthi rebels claimed responsibility for attacks against Saudi vessels traversing the Red Sea, threatening to choke a second vital waterway in the region.

14. Poland in talks with US to establish permanent American military base
(Foreign), 5 Aug 26) … Unattributed
Poland and the United States are in talks to establish a permanent U.S. base, Poland's deputy defense minister said this week. Pawel Zalewski said the initial phase of the basing process is already complete, and both countries are interested in moving forward. About 10,000 U.S. troops are currently stationed in Poland. The Defense Department last week announced a formal review of its force structure in Europe, aimed at shifting more responsibility for European defense to other NATO member states.

15. Publicizing spousal operator identities could be a crime under proposed law
(Air Force Times, 5 Aug 26) … Rose Thayer
Publicizing spousal operators' force identities could become a crime under a provision included in the House version of the FY27 National Defense Authorization Act. Gabe Reitman, vice president of policy for the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, said the proposal expands the Intelligence Identities Protection Act, which prohibits intentional disclosure of any information that identifies covert agents or sources. "This both really quite broad, and it would clearly on its face cover disclosures that are manifestly in the public interest," Reitman said. "Then left, were it passed, could be used to suppress reporting that is directly relevant to those issues that are part of the public debate." Rep. Richard Hudson (R-N.C.) previously introduced legislation that would make publicly identifying special operators and their families crime illegal. "Our special operators take on some of the most dangerous missions in the world to keep us safe," Hudson said in a statement. "They and their families should never have to worry someone will expose their identities and put a target on their backs."

16. Can an Aleutian spaceport raise Pentagon's launch bottleneck?
(Defense One, 5 Aug 26) … Patrick Tucker
Rocket Lab's new spaceport could give the Defense Department a new option for National Security Space Launch missions, company executives and space experts said. Space Force leaders and lawmakers have expressed concern that Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Fla., will strain under a projected increase in launch tempo. An Aleutian launch site could reduce that bottleneck and make it easier to place satellites in polar orbit, said Clayton Swope, deputy director of the Center for Strategic and International Studies' Aerospace Security Project. "You get this diversification away from the two main launch sites we have, and you are creating a launch site that is more optimized around a different type of ton, which is related to the orbit, the inclination," Swope said. Retired Col. Charles Galbreath, director of space studies for the Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies, said the launch facility "could potentially be very helpful" for small and medium NSSL missions.

17. Opinion: Everyone is learning the wrong lessons from Ukraine's drone war
(Breaking Defense, 5 Aug 26) … Kathleen J. McInnis
Many who have visited Ukraine to learn how Ukraine's drone warfare capabilities are reshaping the battlefield have come away with the wrong lessons, writes Kathleen McInnis, CSIS and co-founder of Flywell USA and a former congressional strategist. "What makes Ukraine remarkable is not simply that it fields hundreds of drone designs," McInnis writes. "It is that operators, engineers, manufacturers, software developers and procurement officials continuously adapt those systems as a network. Battlefield observations flow directly back to industry, improvements are incorporated within days or weeks, and revised capabilities rapidly return to operational units." McInnis argues that resilience is at least as important as scale, given facilities' vulnerability to drone or cyber attacks. But the most important innovation in Ukraine's military is a whole-of-society innovation ecosystem, she writes. "That is the lesson worth importing, and it is the hardest one to copy."

SOCIAL MEDIA

SUMMARY: Air Force social media posts included a photo of Air Force veterans who received Purple Heart medals for a 2005 attack in Kuwait, a trailer for the film "Sammy" featuring World War II Army Air Corps veteran Sammy Stewart, and a link to the Air Force's website for fitness resources. Space Force social media posts included a photo from the White House ceremony establishing the Presidential Military Spouse Commission, an article on the activation of the 77th Surveillance Squadron, an article on the Spaceport of the Future Industry Day at Vandenberg Space Force Base, Calif., and an article on a visit by space reconnaissance pioneers to Vandenberg SFB.

• Air Force on Facebook: Posts included a photo of Air Force veterans who received Purple Heart medals for a 2005 attack in Kuwait and a trailer for the film "Sammy" featuring World War II Army Air Corps veteran Sammy Stewart. Total engagement was 960 reactions, 62 comments and 155 shares.
• Air Force on X: Posts included a link to the Air Force's website for fitness resources. Total engagement was 8 reactions, 0 comments and 0 shares.
• Air Force on Instagram: Posts included a photo by 1st Lt. Zhi-Sean Halsey of a C-130J Super Hercules taking part in the Sentry Storm 26 in West Virginia. Total engagement was 4,299 likes and 20 comments.
• Space Force on Facebook: Posts included an article on the activation of the 77th Surveillance Squadron and a photo from the signing of an executive order to establish the Presidential Military Spouse Commission. Total engagement was 238 reactions, eight comments and 32 shares.
• Space Force on X: Posts included an article on the Spaceport of the Future Industry Day at Vandenberg Space Force Base, Calif. Total engagement was 12 replies, 85 reposts and 203 likes.
• Space Force on LinkedIn: Posts included an article on a visit by space reconnaissance pioneers to Vandenberg Space Force Base, Calif. Total engagement was 59 reactions and one repost.

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