THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE
CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC

FEB 25 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES

SUBJECT: A Difficult Time for Civilian Airmen

The United States Air Force would not be the best in the world without your daily contributions as vital members of the Air Force family and the joint team. You are integral to nearly every part of the mission, from processing recruits and running family programs, to managing budgets and developing strategy. You fix airplanes, sustain infrastructure, design and develop future systems, and deploy to support combatant commanders. You serve with integrity, selflessness, and excellence. You are Airmen and we thank you for all you do.

On February 20, 2013, the Secretary of Defense advised Congress that if sequestration is not averted, the Department of Defense (DoD) intends to implement a civilian furlough of up to 22 days, likely beginning in late April and spread over the remainder of the fiscal year. A furlough of any part of our civilian force would undermine our mission and break faith with our people. Your Air Force is still vigorously engaged alongside the rest of the Administration to avoid sequestration, which is the triggering mechanism that would make a furlough necessary. Unfortunately, if Congress does not act, virtually all of our active duty, Guard, Reserve, and civilian Airmen would feel the impact on their personal finances, and the entire Air Force would experience a degradation of readiness and capability.

The leadership throughout the Air Force will work hard to guide us all through this turbulent time, but we are concerned about you and your families. Each Air Force base has an Employee Assistance Program with capacity to help, as does each Airmen and Family Readiness Center. Although the Air Force Aid Society (AFAS) is limited by its charter, if you are retired military, a widow or widower of a uniformed member, or serving on Reserve component orders for 15 days or more, AFAS (www.afas.org) can help. Otherwise, federal civilians may receive assistance from the Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund (www.feea.org). As we discover more resources which may be available to you, we will be sure to share that information quickly. None of these organizations will be able to compensate completely for the lost income from 22 days of non-duty, non-pay status in a furlough, so we encourage you to plan now as best as possible for the potential reduction of income. Official notification of any furloughs will come through your chain of command.

Air Force people are our strongest asset, and we know you work alongside your uniformed partners every day for the security of our Nation. Without a doubt, we could not be the world's greatest Air Force without you. Thank you for your unrelenting dedication to the mission despite the challenges before us.

Michael B. Donley
Secretary of the Air Force

Mark A. Welsh III
General, USAF
Chief of Staff

Attachment:
SECDEF Memo, February 20, 2013