

Town Hall Transcript

July 29, 2020

Moderator: Sir, We'll start with you with some opening comments.

Bunch: So to all the Airmen out there and Air Force Materiel Command, thank you for joining us today. And the most important thing I'm going to tell you today is just thank you for what you're doing. Each and every day you have fully embraced the mantra that I've used that we execute our wartime mission each and every day. And, I am extremely proud of how you have continued to execute that mission in the face of the COVID-19 Pandemic. We have continued to do our research. We have continued to do our depot and our supply chain management. We continue to do all of our acquisition programs. We're continuing to execute key tests in a variety of different areas. And, we've provided unparalleled support to the installations and in many ways, in new and unusual ways that we never thought of. So I'm really proud of that

I'm just going to give you one real quick example of why I'm so proud. I got an email on a Friday night wanting a methodology to transport COVID-19 positive service members from wherever they were ill to wherever they needed to go to get the proper medical treatment. Within three weeks, we developed and fielded. We didn't develop, but we cleared an interim solution to operate on C-17 so that we could transport those COVID-19 positive service members to where they get the proper care. In less than three months, we had developed a new, entirely new system to be able to transport Airmen in C-17 and C-130s that took Airmen from the Life Cycle Management Center in the Agile Combat Support and the Engineering Directorate and the mobility program Executive Officer office, all working together with members of the Air Force Research Laboratory, members of Air Force Test Center and members of the of the Sustainment Center. And we did all that in less than three months and put a new capability out in the field. That's the power that we as an as an Air Force Materiel Command bring to the fight. And that's why you all are most important in our most valuable resource.

As we go forward, thank you for doing all those great things and representing us in such a positive way. We're in the middle of our return to full capacity. We've already taken briefings from everyone on how to go do that? That's going to vary for all Airmen within the command. And, I can talk more about that. If we get questions, please follow the rule sets that you've been given by your folks to make sure we get everybody back. And our number one priority out of this is the safety of our Airmen and their families. That is our number one priority. We can't lose track of that as we do this. There are multiple other things that are going on in the command right now, with diversity and inclusion, with where we're going with the AFMC. We need with a lot of other initiatives. And I look forward to talking about any and all those that you want to discuss. So thank you again for being here with us today.

Cadell: Hey, good afternoon. Happy to be with you again. Thanks for the opportunity to attend and kind of hear what's going on around the command. We really look forward to hearing your questions and your comments, and so as Gen Bunch said, with COVID-19, we have kind of changed. How we do work, and I am just overwhelmed with the initiatives and the innovation

that you have done to be able to create to continue to do our mission. We do our wartime mission each and every day. And you absolutely have taken on this COVID-19 challenge and made opportunities out of out of that. You haven't – it hasn't slowed you down a bit. You figured out ways to still continue to do our mission, and that's what I'm so proud of you for and so proud to be part of this great team. So, I look forward to hearing your questions and hearing what you have for us.

Moderator: Okay, sir, you alluded to how obviously, these past few months have been extremely challenging due to COVID-19. I know, that's an understatement. And as you said before, there's no play book for this. We've been figuring this out. As we go, the pandemic is impacted. Our mission has changed the way we do business today and into the future. You talked a little bit about the command's response and one of the examples that made you proud. But, what did we take away from this, and where do we go from here?

Bunch: Yes, so we learned a lot of lessons out of this, and there are going to be a lot of things that we don't go back ever again to where we were. Let me talk about some of the unique things that we did first, and we'll talk about how we're going to go forward. So some of the unique things that I'm really proud of that the team has accomplished. So, our epidemiology lab over at the Air Force Research Laboratory is part of the 711th Human Performance Wing. They're executing over 50% of the Department of Defense's tests for COVID-19. They have been running extended hours and working extremely hard, and soon will go to 24/7 ops to make sure that they can meet those requirements.

We have a lot of Airmen that have exercised innovation in the way that they have built face masks and built plastic shields. We even had one Airman who cleared it with his leadership and took a 3-D adaptive printer home with materials and printed masks that we could then distribute into the work force so that we could utilize those. We found new ways to get our business done by opening up new apertures for how we could do telework. The team up at Hanscom AFB has done a phenomenal job working with Air Combat Command headquarters to open up CVR teams to increase the number of VPN lines. Telework has gone to a whole new level from where we were before. I could go on and on. One other example, we needed critical testing done on the F-35 canopy. Because we have a shortage in the sustainment area, we found a way to work with the local officials and do the right things to get the testing done so that we could provide a second source. Remarkable things that everybody's done in the face of this... won't get headlines. Nowhere near as big, but how have you, as leaders, used the technologies that we've got in a way to continue to communicate and ensure the resiliency of our Airmen.

As we shifted to telework and I'd already talked before about resilience and how important it was, you found ways to communicate and use these in an innovative way so that we are physically distanced but socially connected, and that is so important during this time because you can very easily feel isolated and you can very easily not know what's going on. And that connectivity and that social connection and knowing how important you are is really, really important. So I'm really proud of that.

A couple things that are going to change that I believe we're going to change for the good in AFMC. In many ways we had not been as embracing of telework, and some alternative work schedules and things like that as we probably could have been. We have clearly demonstrated that we can telework as we have. We're not going back to the way that we were before. We're right now working on how we open up telework to additional people. We're now looking at how we do our job advertisements for the future to include telework. We're looking at facilities to see how we reconfigure facilities where more people are permanently teleworking and only coming in at limited times. So those were just a few of the examples of things that we're not going to go back to.

Moderator: Chief. You know, we've seen a lot in the news right now about spikes in our communities of COVID, in positive cases, and it's bleeding over into bases. And, Chief, what advice you give to all of our Airmen when they are out in the communities. And what should they be doing?

Cadell: Yeah, that's a great question. And we work this every day. We kind of hear this. We get updates on what the cases are, both on our installations and around our communities. We know that as we return to full capacity, this becomes more important that our workforce stays safe, stays healthy out there. I need you to listen to your local leadership. They have the best advice on what they're hearing strictly from their medical community. They're at the local installation. The bottom line is wearing a mask. Wearing a mask is important. It protects you, it protects those around you. The social distancing rules that we've heard. If you're sick, if you're not feeling well, don't come to work. Talk to your supervisor. Reach out to them. If you go somewhere and you're in contact with someone else who's who potentially is positive or believe they are positive, then make sure you self-isolate yourself. Work that with your local leadership and with your first line supervisor so that they're aware. But the reality is, in order to get through this COVID-19 safely and to make sure that we all stay healthy, we need everybody on board. We need you to listen to your local leaders. We need you to be plugged in with them to provide them feedback on how it's working for you at your local level. But the reality is, we got to be in this together and we all got to work through this. We have got to lead through it. And that's what we're asking you to do -- to be smart about it. To socially distance, to use all those techniques have been that you're learning from our medical professionals out there.

Moderator: Thanks. Sir, we've heard you say to we can't let up on our diligence, especially in the workplace. What should we be doing in the workplace to help prevent this and make sure our mission continues?

Bunch: The number one thing we have as we've begun our return to full capacity, as the Chief alluded to, we actually brought our public health folks in and we've done surveys. We've done reviews of what we need to do. We established different spacing, shift work, looking at everything else so that we could minimize and lower the risk of spread of infection. That is the desire of what we're doing. So the number one thing is, if you're coming back into the workplace, make sure you understand what the rule sets are, ask the right set of questions and follow those guidelines, that's number one.

Number two, as Chief said, wear your mask. Okay, wear your mask. I know they're uncomfortable. I don't like wearing mine either, but the reality is each and every one of you are our most valuable resource. You are critical to how we get the mission done. I need you to wear your mask. You're going to walk in, there are going to be guidelines. Follow them. Use your mask. Practice good hygiene. Use your hand sanitizer. Wash your hands regularly. Make sure you're keeping the proper distancing. Take care of yourself if you're sick. Many of us over our times and service have always wanted to tough it out and show how big and tough we were by continuing to come to work. I need you to get out of that mindset. If you are sick or you do not feel well, I need you to stay home and talk to your supervisors.

One thing I want to add one of the Chief's questions there-- we are talking in some of the local communities about what they're doing and some of the guidelines they're putting in place. Our installation commanders we are in constant contact with local communities and making sure they understand the impacts. So if you have concerns, raise it up to your leadership team. Follow the rules, wear your mask, practice safe hygiene, and we'll be okay. We're showing that if you follow our rule sets, the spread is not happening in the workplace. It's usually when we haven't followed the rule sets we put in place is when we're finding out we have issues.

Moderator: Sir, Thank you. You talked a little bit about telework, clearly, that is a silver lining that has come out of COVID-19. We have had a lot of interest on the topic on telework and in particularly people are concerned as school begins. You know that we're looking at a lot of schools. We're going to continue to be virtual so that still impacts parents from being able to come back into the workplace. And, you know, obviously child care concerns. I mean, these things have not gone away. So what advice do you have on the telework with relating to school and caring for your family?

Bunch: It's a great question. It's one that we as the MAJCOM commanders--we have every week or every other week, a COVID-19 group, where we're all sitting in and talking about it and schools and the Child Development Center. We just talked about two days ago. It's one that's on the mind of all the senior leaders of the Air Force. We know that getting the full capacity back up for how we're going to do our mission is going to play into when the schools open up. How many of the kids can go back to school? How are child development centers being handled? Are they all going to be able to open back up? What's happened in the local communities with child development and childcare? Those are all ones that we're watching.

Here is the best thing I can ask you to do. Talk to your supervisors. They should be constantly aware of the state that you're in. We are working some different hours with some people so they can get their work done. Those are all things that we've got to consider and work. One of the things, though, that I need you to watch out for and one of the things that it's kind of easy to fall into here as we do telework, because we are going to continue to do this for an extended period of time. And I don't need to let your guard up on that. You have to watch your hours. It is very easy at times to get up in the morning at 5:30 or six o'clock and immediately plug in and then plug out. Check out when you get ready to go to bed. You got to make sure you're taking care of yourself in this you've got to make sure that you're getting a little me time there so that you don't drain the batteries and you work yourself into the ground. So I encourage you make sure you're

taking the right time. I'm not asking you to not work. That's not what I'm doing. I don't think you believe that's what I'm doing, but I don't expect you to be on the computer and teleworking 16 hours a day as many of you may be doing. I need you to exercise the right discipline so you're taking care of yourself.

Moderator: Related to that, we did get a question online that talked about, fitness leave during telework, which, in a lot of areas that has gone away right now because you are a home and the hours are a little bit different. So can you address that for me? Is it some point we're going to get fitness leave back?

Bunch: I don't know the answer to that one right now, I can tell you that we talked about it at the leadership of the command just last week, so I can't give you a great answer on that one. I would encourage you to talk to your supervisor. What I will tell you is it's one that our A1 is looking at and working across the board to see how we go forward.

Moderator: Sir, thank you. In addition to COVID-19, our county is facing another pandemic. After the recent death of Mr. George Floyd, his death and others have obviously forced a conversation on diversity, equality, inclusion and racism within the Air Force and within our society. Can you both talk a little bit about what the Air Force is doing and your expectations for the command?

Bunch: So Chief, I'll go first if that's okay, and then I'll let you clean up.

So what are we doing as an Air Force? Right now we've got a task force stood up and it is multiple tasks that they're looking at. A couple of the first ones that are really big. I've got until the end of this month to complete a look at our discipline for Black Airman, particularly in the E2-E5 category. That is historically running about double the rate of all other ethnicities. When you look at those grades, it's running about double, and we've got a team that's working for Lieutenant General Sami Said, our IG. They're pulling together all the data and they are going to come back and look at what is driving that. What do we need to change? What are factors that we need to consider. So that work is already underway.

The other one that we're looking at or what are the barriers that we're facing that are not allowing Airman to get the opportunities to get the training they need or precluding them from being able to serve in higher roles? So the team is looking at both of those will get feedback on those. That's a big focus area.

A couple of other areas there is that are big focus areas and how we're addressing it as an Air Force and as a MAJCOM. We're owning this. We have an issue, and we got to go work it as a team. The numbers I gave you for I've gone out and done. Some are sensing sessions. The numbers are right, folks, we got a problem. We have to own it. We've got to go work it. We don't have the right diversity at senior levels. We got to go work it.

The second thing is we need to talk to Airmen. What that really means is we need to listen. We need to talk to start the conversation. But we need to listen. That's why the Chief and I have gone out, we've done sensing sessions at every one of the locations we've gone to over the last few

months. I think we've hit eight installations now. That may not be exactly the right number, but everywhere we go we've set aside time to talk to Airman.

And then the last one is we've got to start taking action. It's got to be tenacious. Get at it with tenacity to show the commitment and then do it with perseverance. This is not something we're going to be able to do a one-time hit at and it's done, this is going to take time. My expectations are we as the commanders, create an environment where every Airman has the opportunity to serve and succeed to their full potential. I do not want anyone to not have the chance to succeed. And we've got to create the right work environment. That was in the email that I sent out to the workforce, and that was also part of what I captured in the video that we shot that we made available to everybody . Those are my expectations. That is where we have to go as a command. We are the most diverse command in the Air Force. We must get this right. It is a war fighting imperative that we get this right to make sure that we can be successful. And as I've told you before, if we're not successful, the Air Force can't be successful in driving to the Air Force we need. And the Department of Defense cannot be successful in achieving the National Defense Strategy. Chief, over to you.

Cadell: I'll just tell you as we've gone out and listened to Airmen and kind of heard them and listened to their stories. Some of them are actually very surprising. And there some of them actually hurt. When I listen to them, when I hear some of the experiences of our Airman have had, I just was surprised. When I listen to that, it really shocked me. This is really what I think a lot about. It's learning, learning the experiences of other Airmen, what they've experienced, how they how they've been treated, how they view stuff. It's about dignity and respect for everyone that we work with. So part of this is going out and learning. It's been a learning process for me. I think General Bunch would agree it's been a learning process for him. So part of this is, to us, is reading, trying to get smarter on some of these topics. I'm going to be honest with you, I wasn't the smart one on this. I had to learn to reach out to some of my friends, some who had different experiences, who come from different backgrounds and kind of get and asked them, "Hey-- help me, help me get smart here," and that's what has been key. It's been listening, It's been learning. It's been finding out some of the barriers that have been out there for folks that maybe we don't even realize. There are some institutional things that have been out there and that are causing frustration for some of our Airmen.

We, as leaders, are responsible, and are taking a look of those and trying to remove those types of barriers, and look for that, as General Bunch said, so that every Airman can serve their full potential. That's really what this is all about. It's about our teammates that are out there, and some of them have different experiences, aren't being treated as well as they should be. So that's where we have to look at it and learn. If we can do that, we can learn how to hear and listen to their experiences. I think we can all be a better and will be a better force, and reality will be, we will be able to get our mission done better because when everyone's part of this, is part of the solution, we're all better for it. Bottom line: I think it's is listening and learning.

Bunch: Chief, let me let me play off that for just a minute. There is something else that that's in my emails, but I need to stress it with everybody. Once again, we need to be comfortable having some uncomfortable conversations right now. I called five Airmen before I sent those emails out-

- that email went out to everybody-- and I explained to them, "Hey, I'm not general. But right now, I'm Arnie Bunch, and I need to talk to you, and I need to learn." And I learned a lot. I learned about driving while black. I learned about being followed around stores because you were being watched because of the color of your skin. I learned about a lot of different things that I didn't understand. I also read. I've read "White Fragility." I've read an article about white privilege and what that means and how you talk about it. I am right now in the middle of reading "Conversations in Black." So, there's a lot you can do there.

The other piece is that I need you to be willing to engage. I have asked squadron leaders to have conversations at their level. They're uncomfortable having those conversations, but they're doing a great job, and I ask you to have a little patience as they have those dialogues. There's a chance they're going to say something that may not be 100% right, but as long as their hearts are in the right place and they got the right intent, I have told them I have their back. I need them to have those dialogues because if we can't raise our awareness than we don't know where to put our emphasis and how to go at this. So I ask you have those conversations, talk to people, take a little time, and read and learn. We'll all be better for it.

Moderator: Thank you. Staying on the topic of AFMC culture for a minute, you said before that you don't want to have bystanders in our command. Can you explain what you mean by that? How that relates to diversity as well as SAPR initiatives?

Bunch: I'm using this is one of the. When I sent the email out on diversity and inclusion, I got hundreds of responses. I think I finally answered the last of those. I apologize for how long it took me to get some of those out, but I wanted to give you a reasonable answer. One of the stories that I got out of this was an individual who had something happened to them in the workplace that they were uncomfortable with. And they were the minority in the group, and they were afraid to say something because they were afraid that they would be ostracized, and the reality of that is that the individual who is offended is not the only one that should speak up when something inappropriate goes on. The others in the workplace need to step up and say, "Hey, we don't do that in this workplace. Hey, that's wrong. Hey, change that," and have a conversation to make sure. So that's what I really mean by this for the majority of the workforce.

The other one that I mean out of that is if you're a leader and you're a supervisor, you set the tone. If you walk by something, that becomes the new standard. I need supervisors and leaders being leaders and supervisors. You have to call out people who are not doing things that are appropriate. And you got to make sure they're following the rule set and they're living up to our core values. They're living up to that, creating the right work environment and that they're treating everyone with dignity and respect, as the Chief talked about. That's what I mean by the bystanders. This was one of the key areas we went into during SAPR training, to make sure we increased everybody's awareness. And that's what this is. But let me make sure it's clear to everyone what we're going to do in diversity. Inclusion is not green dot; we're going to have to take a lot more proactive actions to get at that. I've already had some feedback that a lot of people are saying, "Oh, this is green dot again." That is not what we're trying to do. We have a lot of other initiatives were going after in this area, but that's what I mean by bystanders.

Moderator: Thank you. One of the questions that came in online was asking about the recent memos put out by the SECDEF with regard to operational security. Can you just talk to that? As we understand, there was no one incident that caused these memos to be put back out, but what's your perspective on that?

Bunch: Operational Security is something we all know is mandatory training. We have to get it done within the next 45 days. But it's also something that the vast majority of us have always considered as we've worn the uniform, particularly as an operational aircrew. You're always looking at, "What am I giving away that an adversary or a competitor may glean something out of that might give them an advantage, if we were to try to go do our mission?" That's really the genesis of what SECDEF is after. And I think Secretary Esper is right on the mark. By continuing to reemphasize this, we do some amazing things in this command. We're dealing with cutting edge technology. As you know, if we want our Airmen to continue to be the world's greatest Air Force, we have to get technology into the field at the speed of relevance. We have to give them a competitive edge. And if we're not careful about what we share and what we talk about, we may give away things that the adversary may be able to glean. And we will have invested a lot of money into building capabilities that they can then find a way to counter before we can achieve full effect of what we're trying to do. So it's really about trying to make sure we do our mission of supporting the war fighter, trying to make sure we keep that technology advantage, trying to protect those capabilities that we're trying to put out in the field, trying to make sure we think with everything that we do from an operational perspective of what can someone glean out of this that they may be able to use back against us. That's why it's so important that we keep it in the forefront of our mind.

Basic research. We're doing our research. Who do we talk to about it? It may be game changing. We have to think about how we communicate in all these areas. That's where my focus is, Wendy.

Moderator: It's hard to believe that you've just been in the job a little over a year. It's been an extremely busy first year for you. One of the main things that you worked on was a new strategic plan for the command and an update to the mission vision, which we've previously talked about. Can you elaborate on your vision for the command and how we execute this strategy and what you expect from our Airmen?

Bunch: We've already started a lot of issues and I'm not going to give you the mission vision. We've already given that to you. And we've already pushed the strategic plan out for a bite. Look, what I really want is for you understand is just how important what you do each and every day is to the warfighter and how important what you do each and every day is to this nation's defense. We're going to drive to improve. We're going to drive to become more digital. We're going to continue to work on the AFMC we need initiatives that we've already started. We're going to continue to do things like try to hire people faster, fill our needs faster, be more agile, and get technology into the field at speed of relevance. Make sure we're doing cutting edge technology. Work in AFRL, make sure we're doing all the sustainment work we need to do to drive efficiencies while still being effective at what we're doing. So we're really going to be continuing along the path we're on and no major c-state changes. No, go hard left hard or hard

right. You're already doing a lot of these things. We're just going to continue to work on those areas and keep pushing forward to continue to be the trusted partner as a MAJCOM that we are for all the commands that are out there and for everybody else within the Air Force.

Moderator: Related to that. You launched the AFMC we need. That was one of the first initiatives that you did, which really focused on listening across the command. Can you provide an update on where that effort is today and some of the successes as well as ongoing efforts?

Bunch: We have had quite the string, and I actually wrote down a few things just to make sure that I didn't completely go numb here. We've already removed tiering within pay bans for ACQDEMO. That was one we got asked. We've developed an acculturation timeline so that as we bring Airmen in, we can get them acculturated into what we're doing within the command. We want that all done within four days. That's in place. I will tell you, COVID has impacted that. So we're going to be looking at that a little bit more as we go forward. But we're there. We have made investments in one of the key areas. You talked to us about facilities. We're making some key areas investments there. And we're continuing to push for the installation investment strategy funds that the MAJCOM commanders push for so that we can improve our facilities everywhere. But we've made investments. We've made investments in IT. We've got teams that are right now at our installations. And they're surveying where problems are and we put money at those problems as they're identified to try to improve performance immediately. We have worked on our hiring timelines. We've established the facilities deficit team to make sure that we're providing the right facilities and the right place for our workforce to be done. We've established the CC team talk. That's an opportunity for the squadron director, squadron commanders, materiel leaders at that level, to communicate directly with me so that I can share directly with them. We've developed supervisor and leader training so that we can get after one of the big areas that was identified in the AFMC We need that we don't have the right training for supervisors. We've rolled that out. We're continuing improve on it. The Chief is building a training program that we're working and I can't remember. Give me the name

Cadell: Agile Patriot.

Bunch: Agile Patriot. Apologize. We're actually doing things with midlevel folks so that they're more aware of what we're doing within AFMC. We have signed a memorandum of agreement with Air Combat Command so that we have a partnering relationship between our senior materiel leaders and our program offices with that MAJCOM so that we're sharing the importance of what each of us are doing with each other, and we can better communicate. We have built a comm plan. You've seen us push out a lot more videos and things so that you, our most valuable resource, understand how important what you're doing is and how much of a difference you're making. Those are a few of the things that we're doing, and we're going to continue to press forward. Also, the installations have taken on a lot of this, and they've done a lot of things, and they're really helping us out a great deal. And we're just going to keep pressing forward to get after the items that you've raised.

Moderator: Thank you. One of the things that is pushing out of the AFMC we need this year that's new is the AFMC Spark Tank, which will kind of be a lead-in to the Air Force program.

So, Chief, can you just give us kind of an update on Spark Tank? And how do you encourage the Airmen out there to actually participate?

Cadell: Yeah, that's a great one. If COVID has taught us anything, it's taught us that we've got to be innovative, and you've absolutely responded to that. The other piece is when Gen Bunch and I were traveling around talking at the installations, we're finding there a lot of things going on out there in AFMC where supervisors, Airmen, uniform and non-uniform Airmen, are being innovative. They're doing things, and really, what Spark Tank is--it's really just an opportunity for you to kind of raise some of those things that you're already doing. Or maybe some of those great ideas that you've had, and kind of get them up to a higher level so we can take a look at them. Then kind of look at, you know, if there are ideas that you have to save money or ways to do your mission better, smarter, faster--there's easier ways to do something. We want to know that, and we want to help you with that. We want to be there to remove those barriers that are preventing you from being able to do your job--we want to know what those are. We want to be able to help you, so, Spark Tank is actually absolutely that.

Up to 3 August, if you got ideas, and I think that they'll put a link out there for you if you can see that. Go to that site. Give us your ideas. Give us your thoughts. We'll hold a competition. We'll take a look and select a couple of them to up to the Air Force Spark Tank and then the rest of what kind of take a look and see if they make sense here. The headquarters here or down at your installation level. But the bottom line is, we want to get your ideas. We want to hear from you.

What I like to say is we got a lot of great Americans who work up in the headquarters building who do great things each and every day. And we are looking to help you. We believe that we're helping you do your mission better, faster, smarter. But sometimes when I get out there and talk to you, you actually say, "Chief, really what you're doing up there is not helping me. It's sometimes hindering me from being able to do my mission more effectively." So that's the kind of things we want to know. Help us to be able to help you. And that's what Spark Tank is really all about. So hopefully you'll click on that link and give us your ideas.

Bunch: So one item here that reminds me of something I once said, "Please stop helping me." As the Chief said, I wouldn't use those terms. That doesn't always go over the best with your supervisor when you tell them that--I tell you from experience. I haven't had a full yell at for that once upon a time in my career. But I had someone bring to my attention yesterday that they could not put their idea in because they were in telework. So what I would ask you to do is, if you're having problems trying to submit an idea, please let your supervisors know or let your installation commanders know, so that they can work with us, so that we make sure you have an opportunity to put your good idea.

Moderator: Thanks, sir. So I want to circle back on COVID-19. We've actually had a lot of questions come in online during the broadcast here. I'm going to start with the first. What's the plan for people who test positive and why are we not identifying them in a more public fashion so that people in those workplaces in those areas have information? Can you address that?

Bunch: it's a great question. What we have established the protocols that if someone tests positive, we have established the means to do the proper tracing in a very timely manner that is

within HIPPA. If you've tested positive, there's protective things there for people with medical. But what we also do is, we have to notify the leadership team so that we can do the public tracing and that we can make sure we provide the right protections and we make sure we quarantine the right people and we take care of them. So we have someone pop positive. Then what we will do is, we will notify the public health or the team that we have stood up to do that public health tracing because some of our locations are so large. We've actually established teams, and we've trained those teams to follow the proper protocols about what they can release and not release, so that we can do the tracing and identify the people that we need to test, get them the tests, and protect the workforce the way that we can. So we've got that down pretty good. We've got procedures in place. Those procedures, I will be honest with you, we have had to refine over time, and we're in a much better place now as we've looked at our buildings. And where do we let people walk, or do we not let people walk? How open is everything? Do we limit people's transfer travel in traversing through our workplaces so that we don't have one person popped positive and we have to quarantine 700 people? So we've taken steps to protect as many as we can. We have got the tracing down. We're taking those steps to minimize the risk to each and every one

Moderator: One question came in is that many installations are starting to reinstate Monday Blues, which has been particularly challenging through telework environment, but certainly for the medical folks. What advice do you give on that?

Bunch: So at the commander level, I'm not telling the installations how to do their business. I am a very big believer to give broad general guidance and you push that out, and you let everybody go do what they have to go do to take care of the mission. Every commander is going to have a different situation. And me sitting up here is not going to be the right person to tell someone at that squadron commander level how they ought to be doing business. So I'm not going to go there. Let me give you my expectation. I'm running. I'm doing my pushups. I'm doing my ab work. I've got my bands out. I did nine miles Sunday training for the half marathon. I expect our Airmen to be fit. You have got to take care of yourself, okay? That is one of our duties. Okay. We never know when we're going to have to deploy. We never know when we're going to get put into a stressful situation. And a large portion of that is taking care of yourself and staying fit. My expectation is you're going to be fit. You're going to match what we need for the uniform. It is easy to hide 20 or 30 pounds in these OCPs. Okay, so some commanders go about that a different way. What I need you doing is a mirror check to make sure you're ready and you're meeting the image and living up to our core values and what we represent. So I am not going to get into how they do it. Broad expectation. Let the local commanders handle it.

Moderator: A question relating to something you said earlier--it's how AFMC will hold supervisors accountable when they don't uphold the standard that you've set.

Bunch: Wendy that is a fabulous question and one that has come up in about every sensing session that the Chief and I have done as we've gone about. One of the things that I have actually asked our teams to look at is our overall discipline process. How we communicate, how we document and what steps we take. That is one that I cannot give you a perfect answer on right now. I have pushed that out to everybody for what we want. I've told our commanders I need

them out there. I need to see them. What's going on? I need them holding people accountable. I need to hold people accountable for not following the protocol guidelines for COVID. I need them accountable for when people aren't doing the right things from a diversity and inclusion perspective. It's part of our job is supervisors. Part of our job is commanders, so we're communicating it out. We're looking at it. And there if people are not following it, particularly in the diversity and inclusion area, and you don't believe you're being treated fairly, the EO offices or my reps, they are my conduit. If you don't feel comfortable going to them because of whatever it is and you need a point of contact, I'm in the global. I'm getting people contacting me today that weren't comfortable reaching out, and I'm finding them at some of our installations. I got an email today asking for that, and I'm out trying to find that for everybody. So we need you to feel comfortable going forward with your concerns, and that's what we got to do.

Moderator: Chief, over to you. As our senior enlisted leader, what are you seeing as kind of the big issues across the command? What steps are we talking to address these and how are we preparing our Airmen for future leadership roles? And then, in particular, a question came in again on the results of the senior leader enlisted commissioning program.

Cadell: First of all, let me just start off by saying that I believe that we recruit Airmen, both our military and civilian, and we recruit them. But we retain families. So a bigger part of this piece, we have to look at that from a broad perspective. So there are some things going on in the specifically on the military side things that we're looking at just this past week. About a week and 1/2 ago, we got the release of the first Master Sergeant Promotion Board. This is the first time ever we've done this where we've said to be promoted from an NCO to a senior NCO it's just performance based and supervisor and commander recommendation. Their commander's assessment and that performance assessment of that individual. It's no longer that they are required to take a promotion test as part of that process. So this really gets about the performance of the individual and their potential to perform with that next level as a senior NCO. That's something totally new that we haven't done in the past. That's something significant from the enlisted force that we're seeing now in the future. We're also working on the DSD. Developmental Special Duties for our enlisted forces and our NCOs and senior NCOs in key positions across our force. All of these first year supervisors that are doing these incredible jobs around our Air Force-- these are specific ones that are happening right now. So I'm asking those individual first sergeants, those individual chiefs or senior enlisted leaders and commanders out there to take a look at those folks that you have that may be able to fill these key roles in our Air Force. This is happening right now and for spring, our spring DST cycle. The other things that are going on within our within the enlisted forces and really, the bigger, broader piece from there, from our officer corps too, is something that we're looking at on how do we take care of our families? We're looking at what's called the emergency leave of absence process that something like non-chargeable leave. In the past, it's always been something that was only able to be approved at the Secretary Air Force level. That that is being looked at-- is that something that we can now push down to unit commanders to approve -chargeable leave for an emergent situation, very limited in the scope? But there is some movement. We're taking a look at that right now. The other is shared child custody. In the past, we've had where military married to military, are able to get a joint assignment. It's a process we're looking at. Does that make sense

for an individual who is one of two military members who have a shared child? Maybe they're not married, but they have a shared child. Is there a potential to get them to be stationed together? So we're looking through that process where in the future, to kind of look at, you know, what does that mean for that? The last piece I'll leave you with is as General Bunch talked about -- Agile Patriot professional development. That's something that we're working through right now. We heard you loud and clear in the AFMC we need. We heard that there is a need for training for our supervisors, for those key individuals who are first line and mid-level supervisors. Training that we're missing. So we're working on that right now. You'll see more to come out that the next couple of weeks, but that is absolutely something that we're laser focused on. We've heard you loud and clear. So those are just a few efforts that we're looking at from across the force. There are others, and you know, in the diversity inclusion realm we're talking about. What are we doing for, you know, there was recently on the female hair standard. There was some conflicting verbiage in the AFI for dress and appearance. Talked about what faddish means, and different supervisors interprets that different. We've clarified some of that language to kind of remove that piece out there. The piece to provide better guidance for our Airmen and better guides for supervisors. Also, we've recently approved, you know, in the diversity inclusion standpoint, mess dress pants for females. In the past, females in mess dress were only allowed to wear skirts. Now they have the option if they would like to wear pants there, so we're working through that process, and it's currently been approved for them to do it. Working on implementing and acquiring the actual female garments so they can actually have a female pant. Right now they have an option to modify the male pants if they wanted to do that. But those are just a few pieces that we've worked through. There's a lot more going on. But those are a few efforts that we've got going on both the enlisted and really in the broader military uniforms side.

Moderator: Speaking of uniforms, PT Gear. When do we think that's going to hit the streets?

Bunch: It's going through the review process. Mr. Paul Wertz's team down in Agile Combat Support. Their uniform office did a great job accelerating that, trying to push it through. We did a great job getting tested. But, I had to get a waiver. They wanted high performing athletic Airmen. They put a waiver in so that I could actually be a test subject and got to wear it.

Cadell: Sure, but you just ran nine miles this weekend!

Bunch: But it was very, very slow, Chief. Anyway, the reality of it is that it's very nice that we got the decision. Pipe work went to the the Pentagon early this month, and right now it's going through the coordination process, hopefully to get a decision soon.

Moderator: One of the questions that came in for you is, what changes are occurring to address mental health concerns?

Cadell: That's a great question. What I will tell you is, what we've learned as we've gone into this new, normal—the COVID environment. We're doing a lot of teleworking. We're doing a lot of socially distanced, but socially connected-- physically distanced but socially connected, events and all calls. So how do we, how do we keep connected? How do we stay socially connected? Physically connected with those folks? They're socially connected, I should say, but not physically connected. So that has created some challenges and things that we have to work

through. And not uncommon is on the mental health side –what is the right way? We're asking supervisors to stay connected with their folks. Events like this while teleworking or using CVR teams or using Zoom. We're using a lot of different formats just to kind of stay connected with our folks. And what we're finding is that because there's some folks who are struggling with, how do I balance all this? My work life? How do I balance all of these different things that are going on? And when we start looking at that mental health piece, this is a big part of it. So what we're asking you to do is to stay connected. We have lots of resources out there for our civilian side. The MP, we have for the military side. We have military one source. We have our mental health connect. We have our chaplains. We have a lot of resources out there for folks to be able to stay connected , and this is so , so important right now, that I'm asking you to kind of take a look this and reach out if you need help . If you're someone out there struggling or you know someone is struggling. Be a good Wingman. Reach out , help them, take them out , get them the assistance that they need, because we're all trying to adjust to this new normal, and mental health is one big part of this , as we're all trying to make sense of this new normal world there . So that's a great question, and there's a lot more to that. But the reality is, be a good Wingman. Get out there and help your folks. If you're struggling, there's lots of help out there. Reach out. If you don't know where else to go, reach out to me. We'll figure it out. We'll get you in the right lane. The reality is, you are our most important resource, and we want to make sure that you've got the help that you need. Sir, did you have anything you want to add to that?

Bunch: What Chief hit on is really important. I need you still looking out for each other and having that dialogue over whatever means you can do it. You have been amazingly innovative with how you've stayed connected during this. People have had First Friday over Zoom and shared whatever they were drinking and snacking on while they were celebrating First Friday. We've had people call up and say happy birthday to people, so they understand the connectivity and do those things. I just ask you to continue to do that. It is tragic when we lose an Airman. One of things that not everybody probably realizes is what happens every time we have a suicide in this command. I get a briefing on all the activities and events that led up to that kind of thing. Chief and I say in one of those, probably about an hour and 1/2 ago, and we took 45 minutes to talk about a situation and go through all that. It is gut wrenching , and it just reinforces to both he and I and that's why this one is so raw right now, because we just did this, and it always is troubling . After you have to go to it, you go through it. I hate it but you have to go through it. It's a struggle to go through it, and it's hard on the people that have to brief us. But you just reinvigorate and stress again the importance of reaching out. We need you and will help you. There's no stigma here. We'll work with you to try to get you the help you need. Please take care of each other, and keep checking on each other. That's my big pull.

Moderator: In keeping with family support, one of the questions that came in is, can you give your thoughts on support for families and in particular why are there no AFMC key spouse programs?

Bunch: I did not know we did not have any key spouse programs. That's an action to go do. We'll, go find that out though. I have units that have key spouses in them. We'll go take a look at that. I know that. That is something that my lovely bride Mrs. Bunch talked about with the

squadron leaders during Squadron Leader Orientation, with the spouses that are coming and their role as squadron leaders. So we'll go find out where that's at. I know that the Airman and Family Readiness Center provides resources. I know that we have, in our installations, designated key spouses for units, and they're providing those resources, but to tell me that we have no key spouse programs within AFMC—that's not one I am familiar with, and everybody out there—we'll have a look at it. We'll find out. It's the best answer I can give you. We have, let me rephrase that. That's the answer on that. Here, let me make sure I hit this. How we support families, particularly the families of deployed members, is absolutely critical. As we got into COVID, I started calling spouses in the headquarters who had deployed family members... to find out. Are they getting regular calls? Are they getting welfare checks or people reaching in and talking to them? How's all this working? And I was so impressed by some of the feedback that I got was, which was, they brought groceries. We had to move while my spouse was deployed. The office came over and helped us pack everything up. That's the kind of teammates- - that's the kind of support for Airmen and families that we have to have. That's part of our core culture, as an Air Force looking out for each other. So even if there aren't key spouse programs that are designated--you're already doing those that just to be done, and keep doing what you're doing already.

Moderator: We're starting to run a little late on time. I've got just a couple more questions for you, this relating to kind of civilian career fields. We know civilian career development is critical to AFMC success. One area that could be improved is ensuring that all civilians at AFMC have a current and complete individual development plan as required by AFI. What are we doing to enforce that and how are we helping to develop our people?

Bunch: So, I will tell you that how we develop our non-uniformed Airmen is going to be something we will take a look at, and with diversity and inclusion-- even more of a critical look at that. And it will be one that will be looking at. How do we make sure that we do have those development plans in there, and that those development plans are fair for everyone, and that we can identify where we may have barriers that are precluding certain groups from not getting some of the opportunities? So that is an area that we're going to look at to make sure. How do we do that? And how do we push it down so that we make sure we are looking at that.

Moderator: Sir. Thanks. And we would be remiss if we don't talk to at least a little bit about Space Force. And the role that AFMC is playing in the stand up of this. As you know, we've heard a lot of recent announcements on their structure and certainly the role of AFRL and IMSC in support...if you could just talk a little bit about that.

Bunch: Yes. Great question. Congratulations, Chief Raymond and your team on the milestones. You're moving each and every week. It is a unique time. A unique time in history, a pivot point for how we're looking at space. And it's great that we, at Air Force Materiel Command, get to contribute to that. We are in a very intimately involved, and integral to what's going to go forward with the US Space Force as it is right now. And the plan going forward, until told otherwise, is we will continue to have only one Air Force Research Laboratory that serves the Department of the Air Force and works projects and technologies for both the space and the Air Force together. That there will be Airmen or space professionals now that will be sitting in those

organizations. But they will all report into one AFRL so that we keep our efforts synergized together, and we don't create stovepipes of excellence or cylinders of excellence. So that technology can flow back and forth wherever it needs to be. One of the comments that I've used before is, technology doesn't know its use until we tell it. So there are things that are being developed at Rome , which right now does not have any, and is not expected to have any, U.S. Space Force personnel that could be key to how command and control and communication is done for satellites . What we want to make sure we do is that we don't create barriers, and that's one of the key things that General Pringle and the AFRL team are working to make sure we work all that out. So that's very exciting. I'm very proud of the way the team has worked through this, and we're working to make sure we set the right priorities. And we're doing the right things to support space. Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center is going to still provide all support for those installations. So we're going to have an integral role and making sure those Space Force professionals and their families we're taking care of same way. We're taking care of Air Force Airmen and their families. So we're going to continue to provide that support, and we will do it. We're also working with them on the test community, working on how they're going to do their testing. We're doing a short course for the initial training of some of their test professionals, and we're going to look longer range on how we provide that support. And we're going to continue to look at how we make sure we share ideas and share people so that we don't create seams and we don't create gaps where we're not sharing the right information so that as the Department of the Air Force we're successful. It's an exciting time.

Moderator: Thanks. And related to that, we can't do this alone, so obviously we rely on a lot of partners. Can you talk just briefly on how small business can help and how they factor into our plans?

Bunch: Yes, small businesses are a really key component of where we're trying to go. We have really—Dr. Roper is really pushing up on how we want small business to play. And I think it's a great, and he's doing a great job. He's really trying to energize us, reach out to some new business partners and bring in some new industry partners so that we're not restricted to what we've done before. And we're trying to grow that a lot. The innovative ideas that are being incubated right now in small businesses with our pitch days, what we're doing with AFWORKS, as we set up our fusion events and front door so that ideas can come in and we can get them reviewed within the lab and try to get those transitions . There's a lot of excitement right now about what we're doing in small business area. I think it's all good, and we just continue to do better. So if you've got ideas and you've got people who you know who are doing small business and they got ideas--they need to reach out to the small business offices. They're out there, and they need to make sure they're listening for those ideas. We're putting those calls for pitches and ideas. We're putting out there so they get their ideas in front of us,

Moderator: Sir. Thank you. So we are. We're about out of time. So just one final question for you both, especially given the current environment we're in. How do you find balance? You talked a little bit about the 24/7 ops. When the computer is, you know, just across from your dining room table, how do you provide balance?

Bunch: Find balance? And, Chief, I'll let you go First. After I'll bat cleanup on this.

Cadell: Absolutely, Sir. So, first of all I'm probably not the best example of that. I'll just be honest with you right now, so I just came back today from leave. I went camping with my wife for a couple of days, and my daughter just to get away, it was very relaxing in that. But, I'm not the best example. I've tried to learn as I've gone throughout my career. I'm the guy who was last to leave in the past because I just didn't plan. It was just my fault. I wasn't trying to look at this as long term. And that's really, I think, what I would tell you. You've got to be deliberate in the process. You have to look at this. Whether that's your social connections, you're spiritual, your physical, and your emotional mental health piece--if you're not deliberate in those processes and paying attention to them, they're going to escape. They're going to get away. And I'll tell you what. My family is probably the best reminder, because when I get off balance, or when I get out of out of whack with it, my wife is very quick to remind me that it's time, that we need to take some leave, or we need to go do something you know, with the family when you have a dinner night out and are able to disconnect from the computer and get away. So that's what my advice is to you. Be to be deliberate, you know, plan your leave. Look now for your leave. Don't wait until the last minute to plan. If you do, and you're going to, you're going to be in a pickle trying to kind of work that through. Just be smart about it, you know, use it, utilize it, be connected. Reach out there. Especially in this time when we're working through COVID with a lot of the virtual platforms we're on --they're a great opportunity to connect with family and friends that maybe you haven't talked to in a while. There's resources out there, but, the bottom line is that it's always something you got to continue to work on. You can't just do one look out there for a bit and say I'm done with it. It's something you got to continue to work that process with.

Bunch: So one that I've told you before--anybody that tells me that they've got work, family, spirituality and fitness and health all aligned, perfectly balanced-- I usually call those people liars, because we're all pulling and tugging and stressed with what we're trying to do. I think Chief hit the nail on the head. You've have to be deliberate about it. And you got to communicate with the family that may be around you. I know that leave is not easy right now. A lot of people have not been allowed to get out of the local area. I know that's been very taxing with what's going on in the communities, but you need to get some down time. You need to work with your leadership. You do need to turn the phone off every now and then and have a sit down. My bride of 36 plus years now is the one that kind of gives me the, 'you need to turn that off now.' Or she will let me know that to use a Calvin and Hobbes line, your polling really low right now in the 'husband of the year' polls. The reality of it is you have to listen. You have to have that dialogue, and you got to turn it off. The other one that I would ask -- if you're a supervisor or you're a commander, think about how you're communicating out to your team. You know, because if you work Saturdays and Sundays, everyone that works for you is going to want you to be successful, and they're going to be working Saturdays and Sundays. So one of the rule sets that I've got, and it's my own thing. I'm not directing everybody else. I don't send emails on Saturday or Sunday unless it's something I really have to have. Because I know quickly that if I send out an email on a Saturday or Sunday, it can become 'operation deny weekend' as it goes from the four star to the center commander to the installation commander to the group commander to the squadron commander to the person that knows the answer to the question. So the reality of it is, we as leaders have to be cognizant of what we're really asking for as well as making sure that we're not

driving an inordinate amount of work along the way. So communicate, be deliberate about it and take some down time. Because you got to do that. We need you for the long term.

Moderator: Thank you. We really appreciate your time today. And for everyone, thank you for participating. The session will be reposted in its entirety, and we will answer your questions directly that we didn't have time to get to today with a lot of great questions.