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Wurster assumes AFSOC command Challenges loom in fight against terrorism, he says [Mladen](#)

Tuesday November 27th, 2007

HURLBURT FIELD — The outgoing commander of Air Force Special Operations Command thanked airmen for the privilege of serving with them.

The incoming leader praised their hard work but said more would be needed. Lt. Gen. Michael A. Wooley relinquished command Tuesday to Lt. Gen. Donald Wurster.

Wurster made his priorities clear to the hundreds of troops and civilians gathered at Hurlburt Field's Freedom Hangar.

"I expect each of you to do things right and to do the right thing," he said. "We have come a long way quickly as we adapted to this fight, but there remains much to do."



The fight is against terrorists. Wurster left no doubt that he had a plan for the way it should be fought.

Buying CV-22s must be speeded up. Fielding a new airborne helicopter refueler can't been done fast enough.

And AFSOC's maintainers will have to work hard to keep AC-130Us and MC-130Hs in the overseas deployment rotation, although their center wing boxes will need repair.

His ground pounders — combat controllers, combat weathermen and pararescuemen — were acknowledged for their low-key but large roles in the Middle East as part of America's special operations force.

Air Force Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Duncan McNabb presided at the ceremony. He spoke glowingly about Wurster and Wooley.

"This command is among the most heavily (used) and relied on at the Department of Defense," said the general. "I have two great friends here and I wanted to be a part of this ceremony."



DEBI HAUSSERMANN | Daily News

Lt. Gen. Donald Wurster (center) accepts command of the Air Force Special Operations <http://www.nwfdailynews.com/Command at Hurlburt Field on Tuesday from Gen. Duncan McNabb, the Air Force vice chief of staff>.

He characterized Wurster as instrumental in transforming Air Force special operations.

McNabb described Wooley as a “visionary,” who laid the foundation for ongoing AFSOC modernization.

Wooley received the Distinguished Service Medal during the ceremony. His wife, Kathy, also was recognized for her community service and volunteer work, including tackling quality-of-life issues on the base.

Wooley imagined no better successor than Wurster, who was AFSOC’s vice commander for about a year before the promotion.

The retiring lieutenant general told the audience he was leaving with no regrets, although he would miss what had become a valuable piece of his life.

“This is a family. It’s a family affair. It’s a team. A marvelous team,” he said of AFSOC. “I look at today as a celebration. A victory in a sense. One that I can call complete.”

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