



NEWS RELEASE

United States Air Force

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[19th Air Force Commander steps down](#)

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas -- General Robin Rand, Air Education and Training Command commander, accepted a letter of resignation from Maj. Gen. Michael Keltz, 19th Air Force commander, effective April 30.

Keltz's decision to step down came following an inappropriate comment he made in a public Air Force forum. Keltz has also requested to retire after 34 years of distinguished service.

“After communicating directly with Major General Michael Keltz, I have accepted his letter of resignation and moved to process appropriate administrative actions and his request to retire,” Rand said. “Mike Keltz is an extraordinarily dedicated Airman and commander with a highly distinguished service career. He realizes the impact of his actions and has expressed his genuine regret to me, which he extends to all Airmen. As a senior leader, Major General Keltz understands he must be held accountable for this inappropriate comment.”

The 19th Air Force oversees flying training for more than 30,000 U.S. and allied students annually. The training ranges from entry-level undergraduate flying training through advanced combat crew training, and ultimately provides fully qualified aircrew personnel to the warfighting commands.

Keltz received his commission from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1981. He is a highly decorated combat veteran with three Defense Superior Service medals and two Bronze Star medals. He has flown combat and contingency operations on AC-130H, MC-130E, MC-130H and AC-130U gunships and Combat Talons in Grenada, El Salvador, Panama, Sierra Leone and in Operations Desert Storm, Provide Comfort, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

During Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, he was the Air Component Commander for several classified joint task forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. He also commanded a special operations squadron; a special mission group in Iraq and Afghanistan; and the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing in Southwest Asia. He also served as the Commander of the 607th Air and Space Operations Center and Vice Commander of 7th Air Force at Osan Air Base, South Korea. He served on the headquarters staff of the Office of the Secretary of Defense and Air Staff, U.S. Special Operations Command, and U.S. Pacific Command. Prior to his current command position, he was the Director of Intelligence, Operations and Nuclear Integration at Headquarters Air Education and Training Command, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph.

The general is a command pilot with more than 4,000 hours, including more than 300 combat and contingency sorties.