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**From:** Can EREL

**Sent:** Wednesday, June 5, 2013 6:18 PM

**Subject:** Değişimin Düşündürdükleri (Gençliğimizde Savaş Uçağı Pilotluğu Hayalimizdi; şimdi?..)

Saygıdeğer Büyüklerim ve Arkadaşlarım;

Selamlar. Sizlerle 18 Mayıs 2013 günü paylaştığım "Değişimin Düşündürdükleri (Küresel Hava Ulaştırması Ağırlık Merkezi Ülkemize Yaklaşıyor..)" konulu bir önceki e-posta analize konu olan gelişme ile elde edilen avantajı "Gerçekten de hem ekonomik gelişim ve hem de küresel dinamikler çok az ülkeye bu kadar bonkör davranabilir... " şeklinde değerlendirerek sormuştum:

***"Bu değişimden daha fazla yararlanmak için bireysel, mesleki, sektörel ve milli ölçekte sistematik hazırlıklarımızı / faaliyetlerimizi yapıyor muyuz?"***

Geçen hafta Airbus Military'nin daveti ile MSI adına katıldığım çalışmalar sırasında bir arkadaşım söz etmişti; paylaşınca okudum ekte bulunan Jane's Defence Weekly'de David Radcliffe imzası ile 6 Mart 2013 günü yayınlanan "Who wouldn't want to be a US Air Force fighter pilot?" başlıklı yazıyı...

Aklıma Boeing'in her yıl yayınlanan ve gelecek 20 yıllık projeksiyonda Pazar analizlerini kapsayan "Current Market Outlook 20XX" raporlarında pilot ihtiyacı belirlemeleri geldi o an:

- 2010-2029 yılları içinde 466 650 adet,
- 2011-2030 yılları içinde 460 000 adet,
- 2012-2031 yılları içinde 466 650 adet, eğitilmiş yeni pilota ihtiyaç var.

Şimdi de bu tespitleri birleştirerek ve -özellikle de- gelecekteki mesleğini belirleyecek gençlerimizin değerlendirme ve karar verme sürecinin bugünlerde başlayacağını dikkate alarak sormak istedim:

***"Ticari havacılık değişiminin mevcut kritik değer, kaynak ve mesleki dinamiklere olumsuz etkisini azaltmak için hazırlıklarımız / faaliyetlerimiz var mı ?"***

Sevgi ve saygılarımla,  
Can EREL

## **Who wouldn't want to be a US Air Force fighter pilot? by David Radcliffe**

Jane's Defense Weekly, 6 March 2013.

The notion of being a fighter pilot has always been the stuff of childhood dreams, but within the USAF the appeal is fading, argues David Radcliffe.

Who wants to be a fighter pilot? If you asked the question 20 years ago, almost everyone would raise their hand, but today this is no longer the case. The state of the US Air Force's (USAF's) fighter force and the morale of its airmen and women have been in a steady spiral of decline since Chief of Staff General Michael Moseley and Secretary of the Air Force Michael Wynne resigned at the behest of then Secretary of Defense Robert Gates in 2008.

So, who wouldn't want to be a fighter pilot? Apparently at least 900 people as judged by the current training and retention shortage within the air force. The problem is so severe that there are currently 50 open pilot slots at the Air Force Academy and the USAF's flying training syllabus is being cut by 18% to expedite candidates through the system. Further compounding this is the fact that just 45% of academy students are pilot qualified, down from the previous low of 70%.

While the USAF is not feeding the pipeline with enough new pilots, an even worse problem exists in that the service has fighter pilots leaving in large numbers, either exiting active-duty posts for the Air National Guard (ANG) or Reserves or just getting out completely. Many fighter pilots opt out of the cockpit role due to back-to-back operational cycles and are actually asking for a staff job to build résumés for their next career. There are currently 100 Air Mobility Command pilots in fighter staff jobs due to the shortage of qualified fighter pilots to fill these posts.

'Pilots are getting little flying time .... This is not what they signed up for'

Indeed, more than 50% of US pilot training candidates do not want fighter assignments; they want transport or cargo assignments to prepare them for a career in the airlines. There is a definite shift away from anything that has long-service commitments, demanding training, or regular deployments. This is made even worse by the airlines facing the "most acute short-age of pilots since the 1960s", as recently reported in the Wall Street Journal. A high-ranking friend of mine recently told me this situation is now "scary".

That the Federal Aviation Administration is considering a rule allowing commercial pilots at 1,500 hours flight time but military pilots at 750 hours only exacerbates the problem.

So why are trainee pilots shunning the fast jet community? The post-2008 'Qweep', or career-broadening requirements, are a huge cause. This requires pilots to get their master's degree, have community involvement, etc, on top of deployment, training, and platform-centric requirements. The USAF has even instituted the Director of Operations Screening Boards and openly says that those not being promoted early are not considered for further enhancement. Thus, in the active-duty air force career broadening needs to be complete in order to compete. Those not selected are, in many cases, simply headed in the direction of the ANG or out of the active-duty air force between the 8- to 11-year mark. A friend of mine in the ANG calls active-duty career broadening the best recruiting tool he has to get pilots to join the guard, as the premium is placed on that and not how capable and proficient the pilot is.

A recent deployment had one fighter squadron augmenting another with 10 pilots. It is hard to believe that one squadron could be that many pilots short. The augmenting squadron had just returned from its own deployment and one of the three pilots who spoke to me said that he is to leave as soon as possible and that the fighter community is a mess. Pilots are getting little flying time: eight to nine sorties a month, although in Europe, with poor weather and no ranges, it is down to two to three sorties with four to five simulator rides. This is not what they signed up for.

This low flight time and the impacts of sequestration, which could further cut flight hours and training, could put the force at risk and contribute to future incidents similar to the Aviano Air Base F-16 crash on 28 January that resulted in the death of the pilot.

So what has happened to every kid's dream job? No matter what anyone says about the new career-broadening activities and other such 'opportunities', the fact is that the trend as it relates to pilot retention is headed the wrong way. Even the 'Home Of The Fighter Pilot' sign on the front gate at Nellis Air Force Base has been removed, damaging pilot morale even further.

The job of the fighter pilot is to defend the country, and it is not clear how that mission is being served by the current situation. As long as we have a volunteer force, the feelings of those volunteers matter. The USAF's greatest strength is its people. Many nations have the same or newer variants of the aircraft flown by the United States, but none can come close to employing them in the same integrated manner. It is time to take care of our greatest resource and to address its concerns and needs.