



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
ARMSTRONG LABORATORY (AFMC)
BROOKS AIR FORCE BASE, TEXAS

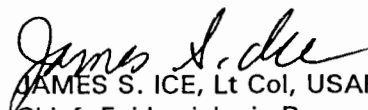
23 Oct 97

MEMORANDUM FOR AL/HR
ATTENTION: COLONEL ZANK

FROM: AL/AOE

SUBJECT: Importance of the Human Resources Research Database (HRRD)

1. Epidemiology is the application of the scientific method to finding the answers to any health-related question. A vital aspect of this discipline is the population view it takes; we cannot do good epidemiology without accurate population figures. Over the years, your directorate has been our primary source for this information. We rely on the data your organization provides not only for the level of detail, which we find is unavailable elsewhere, but for the extended timespan your database covers. Any future disruptions in data flow may seriously hamper our mission.
2. I can cite many instances where the data we have obtained from the HRRD has been a key element in the success of major projects. The Air Force Health Study, a \$150 million prospective study, has relied extensively on HRRD data in the past. More recently, the Air Force Aircrew Cancer Study, the Air Force Brain Cancer Study, and other major projects have relied extensively on HRRD data. The Air Force Women's Natality Study, a congressionally funded review of the fertility of active duty women, would have been impossible to begin without HRRD data. The Air Force Mortality Registry, a current major initiative under development for the Air Force Surgeon General, would not have been feasible without the data your organization provides us. In addition to major projects, HRRD data is invaluable for our day-to-day activities such as disease outbreak investigations. The success of occupational illness and cancer cluster investigations is particularly dependent on the data we obtain from the HRRD.
3. I have already raised these concerns with the staff of the Air Force Medical Operations Agency, Bolling AFB, who are looking into the situation. Please let me know if there is anything else my office can do to help preserve this vital Air Force resource.


JAMES S. ICE, Lt Col, USAF, MC
Chief, Epidemiologic Research Division