



## FALCON Act Rep. Blake Moore (UT-01)

**Representatives Blake Moore, Jill Tokuda (D-HI), and Ronny Jackson (R-TX) introduced the *Forward Air Logistics Complex Operation Nodes (FALCON) Act* to strengthen U.S. Air Force depot-level maintenance partnerships with key foreign allies in the Indo-Pacific, such as Australia and the Republic of Korea.**

### **Key Provisions:**

This bill requires the Secretary of the Air Force to incorporate depot-level maintenance, repair, and sustainment as planning priorities for at least one multinational military exercise in the Indo-Pacific each year, such as Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) or Resolute Force Pacific (REFORPAC). This could come in the form of binational or multinational planning sessions with key allies on munitions stock levels and resupply routes, mutual recognition of airworthiness and maintenance certifications, or emergency tabletop exercises for managing contested logistics environments.

The bill also directs the Secretary of the Air Force to conduct a department-level study on the action steps and timelines necessary to establish more formal aircraft co-sustainment partnerships with the Commonwealth of Australia and the Republic of Korea. The report would investigate the creation of emergency forward air logistics complex operations nodes (FALCONs) for the repair of fixed-wing aircraft on Korean and Australian soil. These partnerships would be designed to operate in a contested logistics scenario where returning broken aircraft back to the continental U.S. may not be possible.

### **Context:**

The “tyranny of distance” in the Pacific poses unique logistical and operational challenges for U.S. armed forces in the event of a conflict scenario with a peer adversary. In a contested logistics environment event, U.S. supply routes back to the homeland would be disrupted, putting the Air Force’s ability to send aircraft back to the U.S. for depot-level repair and overhaul under severe threat. Additionally, the Pentagon has not adequately planned for where the U.S. could partner with key allies on aircraft sustainment in order to develop forward sustainment positions for U.S. Air Force hardware in the Pacific Theater.

### **Why Is The FALCON Act Necessary?**

- **Poor interoperability with allies:** The Department of the Air Force and its allied counterparts in the Indo-Pacific are not adequately exploring co-sustainment opportunities that create dispersed, redundant, and survivable maintenance options to keep aircraft in service and combat.
- **Gaps in regional sustainment framework:** DoD’s 2024 Regional Sustainment Framework focuses primarily on resupply and agile combat employment with allies rather than building up industrial capacity from a forward position in the Indo-Pacific Theater.

- **Lack of scale:** Some early Air Force pilot programs and geographically separated units (GSUs) have provided a blueprint to work with allies on depot-level maintenance, repair, and overhaul. But overall workload remains small due to ITAR and ACSA bureaucratic challenges.
- **Poor prioritization:** Annual multinational military exercises with allies in the Pacific, like RIMPAC and REFORPAC, do not focus on sustainment as the central theme, choosing instead to focus on interoperability, rapid deployment, and enforcing freedom of navigation in international waters.

### What Will The FALCON Act Accomplish?

- **Forward positioning in the Pacific:** Establishing depot-level maintenance and repair capabilities with allies like Australia and South Korea will reduce reliance on continental U.S. depots, enabling faster aircraft turnaround times in-theater and reducing logistical vulnerabilities over long supply lines.
- **Resilience in a contested environment:** In a high-end Indo-Pacific conflict, the U.S.'s main operating bases and logistics routes may be disrupted. Regional co-sustainment allows dispersed, redundant, and survivable maintenance options to keep aircraft mission-ready despite A2/AD (Anti-Access/Area Denial) threats.
- **Allied cooperation:** Australia and South Korea hold natural synergies within the existing U.S. force structure and industry partnerships, particularly on systems like F-16 and C-130.
- **Industrial base integration:** Encouraging the Department of the Air Force to partner with Australian and Korean defense industries will expand the overall maintenance ecosystem, strengthen regional supply chains, and allow for surge capacity that the U.S. alone may not be able to generate quickly in wartime.
- **Reduced Costs:** Sharing maintenance burdens across allied nations will have the potential to lower overall lifecycle sustainment costs for both sides and enhance the readiness of high-demand fixed-wing platforms like F-16, C-130, and eventually the F-35.

### Background on Support Center Pacific (SCP)

- Support Center Pacific at Kadena AFB (Japan) serves as a **geographically separated unit (GSU)** of the **309th Electronics Maintenance Group**, one of six maintenance groups underneath the Ogden Air Logistics Complex at Hill AFB, Utah.
- SCP performs **in-theater depot-level maintenance, repair, and overhaul** across a wide range of fixed-wing and rotary-wing platforms, including F-15s, KC-135s, MQ-9s, E-3s, HH-60s, and more.
- **SCP gives the Air Force crucial, albeit limited, forward-positioned maintenance operations.** Having a depot-level hub in Okinawa reduces logistical delays caused by time zone differences, supply chain transit, and date line crossings.
- **The SCP model is a potential model** for the Air Force to develop future FALCONs elsewhere in the Indo-Pacific Theater.