



# AF EPME Mandatory Prerequisite Reading Noncommissioned Officer Academy

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BARNES CENTER FOR ENLISTED EDUCATION

**BY ORDER OF THE  
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE**



**AIR FORCE INSTRUCTION 1-1**

**7 AUGUST 2012**

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*Air Force Culture*

**AIR FORCE STANDARDS**

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This Air Force Instruction (AFI) implements Air Force Policy Directive 1, *Air Force Culture*. The importance of the Air Force's mission and inherent responsibility to the Nation requires its members to adhere to higher standards than those expected in civilian life. As Airmen, we are proud of our high standards. Through self-discipline, we adhere to them, and we hold our fellow Airmen accountable to follow our standards. This instruction applies to all Air Force uniformed personnel (Active Duty, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard) and provides specific guidance on required standards of conduct, performance, and discipline. Where appropriate, this instruction makes reference to other instructions where more detailed standards may be found.

This instruction is directive in nature and failure to adhere to the standards set out in this instruction can form the basis for adverse action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). An example would be a dereliction of duty offense under Article 92.

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**SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

This interim change clarifies religious and social media sections of this instruction. An margin bar (|) indicates newly revised material.

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## Chapter 1

### THE AIR FORCE ENVIRONMENT

**1.1. Overview.** The Air Force environment, whether at home station or forward deployed, encompasses the actions, values and standards we live by each and every day, whether on or off-duty. From defined missions to force structure, each of us must understand not only where we fit, but why.

**1.2. Mission.** The mission of the United States Air Force is to *fly, fight, and win...in air, space, and cyberspace*. To achieve that mission, the Air Force has a vision:

1.2.1. The United States Air Force will be a trusted and reliable Joint partner with our sister Services known for integrity in all of our activities, including supporting the Joint mission first and foremost. We will provide compelling air, space, and cyber capabilities for use by the combatant commanders. We will excel as stewards of all Air Force resources in service to the American people, while providing precise and reliable *Global Vigilance, Reach, and Power* for the Nation.

**1.3. Core Values.** The Air Force Core Values are *Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence In All We Do*. *Integrity* is a character trait. It is the willingness to do what is right even when no one is looking. It is the “moral compass”—the inner voice; the voice of self-control; the basis for the trust that is essential in today’s military. *Service Before Self* tells us that professional duties take precedence over personal desires. *Excellence In All We Do* directs us to develop a sustained passion for the continuous improvement and innovation that will propel the Air Force into a long-term, upward vector of accomplishment and performance. Our core values define our standards of conduct. Our standards of conduct define how Airmen should behave when interacting with others and when confronting challenges in the environment in which we live and work. (United States Air Force Core Values, 1 January 1997).

**1.4. Oath.** Upon entering the Air Force, all Airmen voluntarily took an oath. Each time one accepts continued service or reenlists, you reaffirm your belief in and commitment to that oath. You promise to protect and defend our American freedoms, and agree to live by a set of military rules and standards. Your oath is consistent with and encompasses our core values...*Integrity, Service, and Excellence*. Your actions must always be consistent with the oath you took and our core values. (10 U.S.C. § 502; 5 U.S.C. § 3331; AFI 36-2606, *Reenlistment in the United States Air Force*; AFI 36-2501, *Officer Promotions and Selective Continuation*).

1.4.1. Enlistment Oath.

“I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. So help me God.”

1.4.2. Oath of Office (Commissioning Oath):

“I, \_\_\_\_\_, having been appointed a (grade in which appointed) in the United States Air Force, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance

to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.”

1.4.3. The Airman’s Creed:

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.  
I AM A WARRIOR.  
I HAVE ANSWERED MY NATION’S CALL.

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.  
MY MISSION IS TO FLY, FIGHT, AND WIN.  
I AM FAITHFUL TO A PROUD HERITAGE,  
A TRADITION OF HONOR,  
AND A LEGACY OF VALOR.

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN,  
GUARDIAN OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE,  
MY NATION’S SWORD AND SHIELD,  
ITS SENTRY AND AVENGER.  
I DEFEND MY COUNTRY WITH MY LIFE.

I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN:  
WINGMAN, LEADER, WARRIOR.  
I WILL NEVER LEAVE AN AIRMAN BEHIND,  
I WILL NEVER FALTER,  
AND I WILL NOT FAIL.

**1.5. A Way of Life.** The mission must be accomplished, even at great risk and personal sacrifice. Airmen are always subject to duty, including weekends, holidays, and while on leave. If ordered, you must report for duty at any hour, at any location and remain as long as necessary to get the job done. In order for the mission to succeed, you must always give your best. You must strive to be resilient: physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually prepared to meet the challenges inherent to being a member of a fighting force, both in the deployed environment and at home station. You must live by rules and standards that are often more restrictive than those found in civilian life. For example, general orders are often published to provide clear and concise guidance specifically tailored to maintaining good order and discipline in the deployed setting. Our current operations place us in areas where local laws and customs or mission requirements prohibit or restrict certain activities that are generally permissible in our society. Airmen must respect and abide by these restrictions to preserve relations with our host nation and to support military operations with friendly forces. No mission, particularly a combat mission, can succeed without the discipline and resilience produced by strict compliance with these rules. Consequently, members who will not do their best to meet these high standards detract from the mission and, in compliance with the UCMJ and Air Force instructions, will not be retained in the Air Force.

**1.6. Customs and Courtesies.** Our customs and courtesies reflect the unique nature of our profession and guide significant aspects of our behavior. They emphasize our strong bond with

other military members as well as our mutual respect for one another and our civilian leadership. (AFI 34-1201, *Protocol*; AFPAM 34-1202, *Guide to Protocol*).

1.6.1. Saluting. Saluting is a courtesy exchanged between members of the Armed Forces as both a greeting and a symbol of mutual respect. The basic rules regarding saluting are:

1.6.1.1. You salute the President, Vice President, Secretary of Defense, Service Secretaries, all superior commissioned and warrant officers, all Medal of Honor recipients, and superior officers of friendly foreign nations.

1.6.1.2. You do not, typically, salute indoors. However, it is appropriate to salute when formally reporting to a superior officer and during promotion ceremonies and decoration ceremonies.

1.6.1.3. You salute outdoors when in uniform, both on and off base, unless:

1.6.1.3.1. Precluded by duties, safety, injury, carrying objects which cannot be transferred to the left hand, or other legitimate reason. In this case, a respectful oral greeting is appropriate. If the senior member's right arm is incapacitated, you will still salute.

1.6.1.3.2. You are in a designated "no salute" area.

1.6.1.3.3. You are a member of a military formation or work detail, in which case, only the senior member of the formation or detail salutes.

1.6.1.3.4. Saluting due to grade while in PT gear is authorized, but not required.

1.6.1.3.5. Salutes between individuals are not required in public gatherings, such as sporting events, meetings, or when a salute would be inappropriate or impractical.

1.6.1.4. You salute the President, the Vice President, Secretary of Defense, Service Secretaries, and senior officers in vehicles when distinguished by vehicle plates and/or flags.

1.6.2. Respect for the Flag. The Flag of the United States is one of the most enduring and sacred symbols of our country. It represents the principles and ideals you have pledged to defend and for which many have made the ultimate sacrifice. Airmen shall treat it with the same respect due to the highest military and public officials. Airmen will never burn (except for reverent disposition of an unserviceable Flag), deface, mutilate, or treat with contempt or any other form of disrespect. (18 U.S.C. § 700; AFI 34-1201).

1.6.2.1. When in uniform, you salute the Flag as it passes in front of you in a procession or parade. Salute six paces before the Flag passes before you, and hold your salute until the Flag has passed six paces beyond your position.

1.6.2.2. National Anthem. You must show respect for the National Anthem and Flag both indoors and outdoors, in uniform and in civilian clothing. (36 U.S.C. § 301).

1.6.2.2.1. Indoor Ceremonies. When in uniform, face the Flag (if visible) or music. Stand at attention at the first note and maintain that position until the last note without rendering a salute. If in civilian clothing, stand at attention and place your right hand over your heart.

1.6.2.2.2. Outdoor Ceremonies. When in uniform, face the Flag (if visible) or music. Stand at attention and salute at the first note of the National Anthem and hold until completion of the last note. If in civilian clothing you should either stand at attention and place your right hand over your heart or render a salute. Civilian hats will be removed.

1.6.2.3. During the playing of the national anthems of friendly nations, render the same customs and courtesies as those given during the playing of the United States National Anthem.

1.6.2.4. Reveille and Retreat. Flags on stationary flag staffs are only saluted during reveille, retreat, or special ceremonies. In these cases, when outside and in uniform, consistent with safety and mission requirements, stop what you are doing, face the direction of the Flag (if visible) or the music. Stand at parade rest during the sounding of retreat (which precedes the lowering of the Flag), then come to attention and salute during the playing of the National Anthem or "To the Color." If you are driving a vehicle, stop if consistent with safety and mission requirements. You and your passengers should sit quietly until the music ends.

1.6.2.5. Taps. Many installations across the Air Force play "Taps" to signify "lights out" at the end of the day. For these purposes, there are no formal protocol procedures required. However, upon hearing "Taps" at a military ceremony (military funeral/memorial ceremony), proper protocol dictates Airmen in uniform render appropriate honors, indoor and outdoor, until the music is complete.

1.6.2.6. Pledge of Allegiance. When in uniform and outdoors, stand at attention, face the Flag, remain silent, and salute. If indoors, stand at attention, face the Flag, and remain silent (where the participants are primarily civilians or in civilian attire, reciting the "Pledge of Allegiance" is optional for those in uniform). When not in uniform, stand at attention, face the Flag, place your right hand over your heart, and recite the "Pledge of Allegiance." Civilian hats will be removed.

1.6.3. Respect for Retirees. Retirees are entitled to the same respect and courtesies as active military members. They will be addressed by their retired grade on all official records and official correspondence, except for correspondence and other matters relating to a retiree's civilian employment. (AFI 36-3106, *Retiree Activities Program*).

1.6.4. Respect for Authority. Junior personnel shall employ a courteous and respectful bearing and mode of speech toward senior personnel. When addressed by an officer senior to them, junior personnel shall stand (unless seated at mess or unless circumstances make such action impracticable or inappropriate). Junior personnel shall walk or ride to the left of senior personnel whom they are accompanying. Senior personnel enter an aircraft or automobile last and leave first.

1.6.5. Titles of Address. Military personnel are addressed by their grade or title. Pay grade terms (e.g., E-9, O-6) are not to be used to address or identify military personnel. Officers are addressed by their grade (e.g., captain, major, general, etc.) or "sir" or "ma'am." Physicians and dental officers may be addressed as "doctor." Chaplains may be addressed as "chaplain" or by their ecclesiastical title. Enlisted personnel are addressed as follows:

TITLE

TERM OF ADDRESS

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force	Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force or Chief
Chief Master Sergeant	Chief Master Sergeant or Chief
Senior Master Sergeant	Senior Master Sergeant or Sergeant
Master Sergeant	Master Sergeant or Sergeant
Technical Sergeant	Technical Sergeant or Sergeant
Staff Sergeant	Staff Sergeant or Sergeant
Senior Airman	Senior Airman or Airman
Airman First Class	Airman First Class or Airman
Airman	Airman
Airman Basic	Airman

**1.7. Structure.** To perform effectively in the Air Force, you must understand the structure and some of the systems that govern its operation.

1.7.1. Chain of Command. The chain of command provides the command, control and communication necessary to accomplish the mission. Each “link” in the chain is a level of responsibility and authority extending from the President of the United States—as Commander in Chief—through the Secretary of Defense, to Combatant Commanders, and then through each commander at every level, including your command. Different levels within the chain have different responsibilities and authority; however, all levels have some things in common. Each level in the chain is responsible for all lower levels, and accountable to all higher levels. The chain cannot work without loyalty to every level. Loyalty up and down the chain makes a system efficient and effective. Everyone is a part of, and subject to, the chain of command and must use it properly. The key principle is to resolve problems and seek answers at the lowest possible level. If it becomes necessary for you to continue up the chain, you should, if practicable, request assistance at each level before going to the higher level and advise that you are doing so. (There are qualifications to this guidance covered in subparagraphs 1.7.4.5 and 1.7.4.6 below).

1.7.2. First Sergeant. The United States Air Force First Sergeant is an expeditionary leader serving in a time honored special duty position, rich in custom and tradition. The position is critical to the execution of the unit mission. Although the first sergeant does not typically have a specific operational or technical expertise requirement, he or she must thoroughly understand how decisions affect unit performance. The first sergeant primarily supports the mission through interaction, support, and management of Airmen and families. The first sergeant works directly for and derives authority from the unit commander, and serves as the commander’s critical link within the unit for all matters concerning its members. The first sergeant must ensure that the force understands the commander’s policies, goals, and objectives, and must also ensure support agencies, i.e., security forces, civil engineer, medical facilities, services, etc., are responsive to the needs of unit personnel and their families. (AFI 36-2113, *The First Sergeant*).

1.7.3. Command Chief Master Sergeant (CCM). The CCM advises, carries out, and monitors the commander’s and organizational policies, programs, and standards applicable to the assigned enlisted force. CCMs are the commander’s key enlisted advocate and advisor on operational effectiveness, readiness, training, professional development, utilization of the force, operations tempo, standards, conduct, and quality of life. The CCM gives advice and

initiates recommendations to the commander and staff in matters pertaining to all assigned enlisted personnel. CCMs establish a senior non-commissioned officer (SNCO) support channel made up of other key assigned enlisted leaders such as, but not limited to, other CCMs, career field managers (CFM), functional area managers (FAM), group superintendents, commandants, and first sergeants. This support channel does not supersede the set chain of command, but is utilized to efficiently augment and support the in-place chain of command. As the senior enlisted leader of the command, the CCM is charged with overseeing and being the driving force behind enlisted training and professional development programs. The CCM and the commander jointly coordinate and ensure all assigned Airmen are ready for all in garrison and deployed missions. (AFI 36-2109, *Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force and Command Chief Master Sergeant Programs*).

1.7.4. Staff Agencies. Other agencies support and strengthen the chain of command. These include the different staff functions (Chaplain, Staff Judge Advocate, Equal Opportunity, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program, Inspector General, etc.). These agencies are sources of professional advice or assistance in particular areas. These agencies are not a substitute for the chain of command, but instead, support the chain and make it more efficient and effective.

1.7.4.1. Chaplain. The Chaplain Corps provides spiritual care and the opportunity for Air Force members and their families to exercise their constitutional right to the free exercise of religion. This is accomplished through religious observances, pastoral care, and confidential counseling, and advising leadership on spiritual, ethical, moral, morale, core values, and religious accommodation issues. (AFI 52-101, *Planning and Organizing*).

1.7.4.2. Staff Judge Advocate (SJA). The SJA provides legal services required by commanders and staff agencies. The SJA advises commanders on a broad spectrum of legal and policy issues (including disciplinary matters), provides personal legal assistance to Airmen and their dependents, and reviews actions for legal sufficiency in a wide variety of areas.

1.7.4.2.1. Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ). Because military discipline enhances combat capability, because the military environment and duties are unique, and because military personnel serve throughout the world, a special system of laws and courts are required to maintain good order and military discipline. The UCMJ is the system of criminal justice that helps protect your constitutional rights while in the Air Force, and it safeguards the Air Force's state of military discipline and, thus, combat effectiveness by holding UCMJ offenders accountable. It is a federal law enacted by Congress to allow military commanders to carry out authority expressly granted in the U.S. Constitution. The UCMJ contains specific articles that enforce good order and discipline in the military. The UCMJ and the rules and regulations used to administer it not only contain laws you must obey, but also provide procedures for court-martial and nonjudicial punishment. The fact that you are required to obey military laws does not excuse you from your duty as a citizen to comply with the civil laws of the community where you live or work (*UCMJ; Manual For Courts-Martial, United States (2012 edition)*; AFI 51-201, *Administration of Military Justice*; AFI 51-202, *Nonjudicial Punishment*).

- 1.7.4.2.2. Personal Legal Assistance. Legal offices provide confidential legal assistance in connection with personal civil legal matters, which in turn support and sustain command effectiveness and readiness. Assistance is provided in a number of areas, such as wills and estate planning, consumer and financial affairs, family law, the Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act, veterans' reemployment rights, and taxes. Assistance is subject to the availability of legal staff resources and expertise and gives priority to mobilization and deployment-related issues. (AFI 51-504, *Legal Assistance, Notary, and Preventive Law Programs*).
- 1.7.4.3. Public Affairs (PA). The purpose of PA operations is to communicate timely, accurate, and useful information about Air Force activities to Department of Defense (DoD), the Air Force, and domestic and international audiences. The PA representative is the commander's principal spokesperson, advisor, and member of the personal staff. PA advises the commander on the implications of command decisions, actions, and operations on foreign and domestic public perceptions and plans, executes, and evaluates PA activities and events to support overall operational success. The PA representative must have the resources to provide information and imagery to the staff, public, media and subordinate units in near real time. PA should be involved in planning, decision making, training, equipping, and executing operations as well as integrating PA activities into all levels of command. (AFI 35-101, *Public Affairs Management*)
- 1.7.4.4. Equal Opportunity (EO). The purpose of the EO program is to enhance unit cohesion, mission readiness, and mission accomplishment by ensuring equal treatment and employment opportunity for all members. The Air Force has a zero-tolerance policy towards unlawful discrimination of any kind, including sexual harassment. This zero-tolerance policy means that once unlawful discrimination is alleged, appropriate action will be taken to investigate/resolve allegations and stop unlawful behavior. Air Force members must not unlawfully discriminate against, harass, intimidate, or threaten another person on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, reprisal, or genetic information. The EO office can assist with these issues by providing subject matter expertise, assessing EO barriers, providing complaint resolution services, and advising commanders. Additionally, although not an EO matter, the Air Force's goal of maintaining a harassment-free environment for its members also includes taking action to prevent harassment based on sexual orientation. Allegations of sexual orientation harassment should be addressed through command channels or the Inspector General. (AFI 36-2706, *Equal Opportunity Program Military and Civilian*).
- 1.7.4.5. Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program. The United States Air Force will not tolerate sexual assault. Sexual assault undermines our mission readiness, directly contradicts our core values, and erodes the trust and confidence upon which our institution is built. All Airmen have the enduring responsibility to foster a climate of dignity and respect and to promote and ensure a culture that will not tolerate sexual assault or behaviors that support it. (AFI 36-6001, *Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program*)
- 1.7.4.6. The Inspector General (IG). The IG acts as an extension of the commander by serving as his/her eyes and ears to be alert to issues affecting the organization. The IG's responsibilities are categorized into two distinct and separate systems: The Air Force Inspection System and the Air Force Complaints Resolution Program.

1.7.4.6.1. The Air Force Inspection System. The purpose of the Air Force Inspection System is to assess unit efficiency, effectiveness, operational readiness, compliance with applicable guidance and nuclear surety (as applicable). It extends to all aspects of the Air Force environment, including all organizations and all levels of command. (AFI 90-201, *Inspector General Activities*).

1.7.4.6.2. The Air Force Complaints System. Under the Air Force Complaints Resolution Program, a member has the right to present a complaint without fear of reprisal. This right is ensured in Public Law and codified in DoD and Air Force guidance directives and instructions. Complaints may be submitted in person, by phone, through electronic means or in writing to supervisors, first sergeants, commanders, members of any level of the IG system, someone higher in the chain of command or members of congress. Use of the Air Force Complaints Resolution Program is always available; Public Law states that no person may restrict a member from making a lawful communication to an IG or member of congress. However, a member should attempt to resolve complaints at the lowest possible level using supervisory channels before addressing them to higher level command or the IG. In addition to having the right to present personal complaints, a member has the responsibility to report fraud, waste, abuse, or gross mismanagement; a violation of law, policy, procedures, instructions, or regulations; an injustice; and any abuse of authority, inappropriate conduct or misconduct through appropriate supervisory channels or the IG. (AFI 90-301, *Inspector General Complaints Resolution*).

**1.8. Diversity.** Diversity is a military necessity. Air Force capabilities and warfighting skills are enhanced by diversity among its personnel. At its core, such diversity provides our Total Force an aggregation of strengths, perspectives, and capabilities that transcends individual contributions. Air Force personnel who work in a diverse environment learn to maximize individual strengths and to combine individual abilities and perspectives for the good of the mission. Our ability to attract a larger, highly talented, diverse pool of applicants for service with the Air Force, both military and civilian, and develop and retain our current personnel will impact our future Total Force. Diversity is about strengthening our force and ensuring our long-term viability to support our mission to *fly, fight, and win...in air, space, and cyberspace*. (AFPD 36-70, *Diversity*).

**1.9. Air Force Instructions.** The Secretary of the Air Force approves the promulgation of all Air Force Instructions (AFIs). Unless expressly stated otherwise in a particular instruction, or a waiver has been granted by the appropriate authority, all Airmen must follow AFIs. AFIs do not provide optional guidance, and failure to comply with AFIs can result in disciplinary action.

## Chapter 2

### CONDUCT

**2.1. Overview.** The Air Force has a very important national defense mission; and you, as a member of the Air Force, have serious responsibilities for carrying out that mission. You are responsible for following orders, performing specific daily tasks related to your duties, and living up to the high standards of the Air Force. Maintaining good order and discipline is paramount for mission accomplishment. Our core values demand that Airmen treat others with genuine dignity, fairness, and respect at all times. Each Airman is entitled to fair, scrupulous, and unbiased treatment, and each Airman has the obligation to care for, teach, and lead others. We must also maintain loyalty to the Air Force's core values and standards and maintain professionalism and respect for others regardless of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, or sexual orientation. This respect for others not only involves personal interaction, but also extends to communications and interactions in social media and cyberspace. You must never degrade the public's trust and confidence in the United States Air Force and in you.

**2.2. Professional Relationships.** While personal relationships between Air Force members are normally matters of individual choice and judgment, they become matters of official concern when they adversely affect or have the reasonable potential to adversely affect the Air Force by eroding morale, good order, discipline, respect for authority, unit cohesion, or mission accomplishment. (AFI 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships*).

2.2.1. Professional relationships are those interpersonal relationships consistent with the Air Force core values: *Integrity First*, *Service Before Self*, and *Excellence In All We Do*. They occur and can be developed face-to-face, by telephone, or by social media such as e-mail, blogs, and websites. Appropriate professional relationships with all Air Force personnel are vital to the effective operation of the Air Force and to maintain good order and discipline. Professional relationships among your subordinates, co-workers, and superiors must be maintained at all times, regardless of the forum in which they occur. The mere fact that maintaining professional relationships may be more difficult under certain circumstances does not relieve you from the responsibility to maintain Air Force standards.

2.2.2. With respect to relationships between superiors and subordinates, whether they are other military members or civilian employees, there is a balance that recognizes the appropriateness of a relationship. Social interaction that contributes appropriately to unit cohesiveness and effectiveness is encouraged. Relationships are unprofessional, whether pursued and conducted on or off-duty, when they detract from the superior-to-subordinate authority, or reasonably create the appearance of favoritism, misuse of an office or position, or the abandonment of organizational goals for personal interests.

2.2.3. Unprofessional relationships can exist between officers, between enlisted members, between officers and enlisted members, and between military personnel and civilian employees or contractor personnel. There is a long-standing and well-recognized custom in the military service, as well as set forth in the UCMJ and Air Force Instructions, that officers and enlisted personnel shall not fraternize or associate with each other under circumstances that prejudice the good order and discipline of the Armed Forces of the United States.

Officers and enlisted members will not form personal relationships with each other on terms of military equality, whether on or off-duty, and regardless of the forum in which such relationships are formed or carried out (e.g., face-to-face, over the telephone, in correspondence, or in cyberspace). Unprofessional relationships conducted via electronic means (e.g., by telephone, computer social networks, or websites) are no less corrosive to good order and discipline, and abuse by members in these forums shall result in the same degree of accountability. Indeed, the advent and proliferation of such communications networks only heightens the need for vigilance in avoiding unprofessional relationships. This includes avoiding inappropriate electronic friendships that compromise and degrade the officer/enlisted command and supervisory relationships.

2.2.4. Fraternalization is a crime under the UCMJ. Fraternalization is an offense committed by an officer, who develops a personal relationship of inappropriate familiarity with an enlisted member, it can occur between males, between females, and between males and females. Excessive socialization and undue familiarity, real or perceived, degrades leadership and interferes with command authority and mission effectiveness. For example, if an officer consistently and frequently attends enlisted personnel parties or events other than those that are officially sponsored, or an enlisted member refers to an officer, to whom he/she is not related, by his/her first name or nickname, it may create situations that negatively affect unit cohesiveness. With the proliferation of modern computer and telephonic means of communications (e.g., computer social networks, e-mail, twitter, texting), the task of maintaining professionalism requires a heightened awareness to ensure full compliance regardless of the forums used. If this standard is not strictly adhered to, positions of authority may be weakened; peer group relationships may become jeopardized over concerns of equal, impartial treatment by superiors; job performance may erode; and unit morale and *esprit de corps* may suffer.

2.2.5. Relationships in which one member exercises supervisory or command authority over another can become unprofessional. Similarly, differences in grade increase the risk that a relationship will be, or will be perceived to be, unprofessional because senior members in military organizations exercise authority, or have some direct or indirect organizational influence, over the duties and careers of junior members. The danger for abuse of authority, or the perception of such abuse, is always present. The ability of the senior member to influence, directly or indirectly, assignments, promotion recommendations, duties, awards, and other privileges and benefits, places both the senior member and the junior member in vulnerable positions. Once established, unprofessional relationships, such as inappropriate personal relationships and favoritism, do not go unnoticed by other members of a unit and call into question the superior's impartiality toward the subordinate and his or her peers. Failure to maintain relationships between members, and between members and other members' family members, in a strictly professional manner undermines morale, good order, and discipline and corrodes the indispensable respect for the chain of command and unit cohesion.

2.2.6. Unprofessional relationships in Joint Service operations must also be avoided. They can have as adverse an impact on morale, discipline, and respect for authority and unit cohesion as unprofessional relationships occurring between members assigned to the same Service.

2.2.7. Civilian employees and contractor personnel are an integral part of the Air Force. They contribute directly to readiness and mission accomplishment. Consequently, military members of all grades must maintain professional relationships with civilian employees and government contractor personnel they work with, supervise or direct, and must avoid relationships that adversely affect or are perceived to adversely affect morale, discipline, respect for authority, and unit cohesion, or that violate law or regulation.

2.2.8. Airmen do not tolerate bullying, hazing, or any instance where an Airman inflicts any form of physical or psychological abuse that degrades, insults, dehumanizes, or injures another Airman (unless it is part of an approved formal training program). It is the obligation of each Airman in the chain of command to prevent such conduct.

**2.3. Military Ethics.** As a member of the Air Force, you must practice the highest standards of conduct and integrity, not only in your job, but also in your relationships with other people, in your personal financial dealings, and in your interaction with the civilian community. Your code of ethics must be such that your behavior and motives do not create even the appearance of impropriety. Your commitment to integrity will lead the way for others to follow.

2.3.1. Federal Regulations (5 C.F.R. 2635.101) establish the basic ethical principles that must be followed by every government employee:

2.3.1.1. Public service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above private gain.

2.3.1.2. Employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.

2.3.1.3. Employees shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic government information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.

2.3.1.4. An employee shall not solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by the employee's agency, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the employee's duties.

2.3.1.5. Employees shall put forth honest effort in the performance of their duties.

2.3.1.6. Employees shall not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the government.

2.3.1.7. Employees shall not use public office for private gain.

2.3.1.8. Employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.

2.3.1.9. Employees shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.

2.3.1.10. Employees shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official government duties and responsibilities.

2.3.1.11. Employees shall disclose fraud, waste, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.

2.3.1.12. Employees shall satisfy, in good faith, their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those—such as federal, state, or local taxes—that are imposed by law.

2.3.1.13. Employees shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.

2.3.1.14. Employees shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that they are violating the law or ethical standards. Whether particular circumstances create an appearance that the law or ethical standards have been violated shall be determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts.

2.3.2. Federal Regulations (5 C.F.R. 2635.202, *et seq.*) provide guidance on gifts from outside sources:

2.3.2.1. Employees may generally not accept gifts given to them from a prohibited source or given to them because of their official position. A prohibited source is an entity or company that: (i) seeks to do business with DoD; (ii) does business with DoD; or (iii) is regulated by DoD.

2.3.2.2. Items that may be accepted include: (i) modest food and refreshment not offered as part of a meal; (ii) items intended solely for presentation that have little intrinsic value, such as plaques, certificates, and trophies; (iii) discounts and favorable rates offered to all government or all military personnel; (iv) items with a value of \$20 or less (not to exceed \$50 per calendar year from a single source); and (v) gifts based on outside personal or business relationships.

2.3.3. Federal Regulations (5 C.F.R. 2635.302, *et seq.*) provide guidance on gifts between employees:

2.3.3.1. Employees may generally not accept gifts from subordinates or employees that make less pay than themselves.

2.3.3.2. Employees may not solicit a donation or a contribution from other personnel for a gift to a superior, make a donation for a gift to a superior official, or accept a gift from subordinate personnel, except for voluntary gifts or contributions of nominal value (not to exceed \$10), on occasions of special personal significance (such as marriage, birth of a child, etc.), or occasions that terminate the superior-subordinate relationship (such as retirement, permanent change of station or assignment, etc.).

2.3.4. Joint Ethics Regulation (JER), DoD 5500.07-R, provides additional guidance concerning acceptable ethical conduct by DoD personnel:

2.3.4.1. Employees may not engage in any personal commercial solicitation or sale to any military personnel junior in rank or grade at any time—on or off-duty, in or out of uniform. This does not apply to the one-time sale of personal property, such as a home, boat or car, where the junior buyer approaches the senior seller to engage in the transaction and the junior buyer receives fair market value for any purchase made. It also does not apply to off-duty DoD personnel employed—with appropriate supervisor

permission—in retail stores or other situations that do not include solicited sales. (JER 2-205).

2.3.4.2. Employees may not gamble or bet while on government-owned or leased property or while in a duty status, unless specifically authorized. (JER 2-302).

2.3.4.3. Employees may not endorse, or appear to endorse, fundraising for any charitable purpose. However, there are limited exceptions to this prohibition including endorsement or the appearance of endorsement of fundraising for the Combined Federal Campaign, the Air Force Assistance Fund, and other organizations composed primarily of DoD employees or their dependents when fundraising among their own members for the benefit of welfare funds for their own members or their dependents. (JER 3-210).

2.3.4.4. As members of private non-profit and professional organizations, employees must avoid using, or appearing to use, their title, position, or Air Force organization in a way that might suggest Air Force or DoD endorsement of the private organization. Employees may participate in the management of such an organization so long as those duties do not interfere with their official Air Force duties and the position of responsibility was not offered to them because of their official Air Force position. (JER 3-300).

2.3.5. Air Force acquisition personnel have special challenges and responsibilities. The Air Force conducts operations in many countries where bribery and graft are commonplace in dealings with commercial and governmental entities. When we contract with host nation companies for goods and services, Air Force acquisition personnel must safeguard the American concepts of free and open competition, support for small and disadvantaged businesses, and good fiscal stewardship of public funds. Air Force acquisition personnel must perform their duties with integrity beyond reproach.

2.3.6. Air Force personnel must not engage in any conduct that is improper (including conduct which gives the appearance of impropriety), illegal, dishonest, or otherwise brings discredit to the Air Force.

**2.4. Duty Performance.** Your primary responsibility is to do your part to accomplish the mission; however, accomplishing the mission requires more than just technical proficiency. You must be a team member. You must be responsive and accomplish your duties in a timely and efficient manner. You must be dependable and responsible for your own actions and avoid the need for supervisors and commanders to constantly monitor or follow up on your activities. You must be a good Wingman for your fellow Airmen and other co-workers. Quality and quantity of work are both important since they are the primary measures of efficiency and productivity. Your conduct and performance must be guided by the Air Force core values, and be consistent with the safe and proper fulfillment of instructions, directives, technical orders, and other lawful orders.

**2.5. Wingmen.** Airmen at all levels of command have a role as wingmen. The Air Force culture is centered on the idea that a wingman will always safeguard his or her lead, and it adheres to the belief that a lead never lets his or her wingman stray into danger. All Airmen are encouraged to be good wingmen. Being a good wingman means taking care of fellow Airmen—and taking action when signs of trouble are observed, especially in situations where Airmen appear as if they are about to make a poor decision, are in despair or show signs of hurting

themselves or others. Commanders also must recognize when their people need help and know where to send them to get it. Supervisors are the first line of defense for the well-being of the people they supervise. Often they are in a position to spot the first signs of trouble and are in the best position to listen and provide, or arrange for, needed assistance.

**2.6. Drug Abuse.** The illegal use of drugs, or improper use of legal drugs, is prohibited and will not be tolerated.

2.6.1. The knowing use of any intoxicating substance (other than the lawful use of alcohol, tobacco products, or prescription drugs), which is inhaled, injected, consumed, or introduced into the body in any manner to alter mood or function is prohibited and will not be tolerated. These substances include, but are not limited to: designer drugs, such as “spice;” inhalants, propellants, solvents, household chemicals, and other substances used for “huffing;” prescription or over-the-counter medications when used in a manner contrary to their intended medical purpose or in excess of the prescribed dosage; and naturally occurring intoxicating substances, such as salvia divinorum. The possession of any intoxicating substance, with the intent to use the substance in a manner that would alter mood or function without legal authorization, is also prohibited and will not be tolerated. Drug abuse is absolutely incompatible with Air Force core values and standards of behavior, performance, and discipline necessary to accomplish the Air Force mission. Drug abuse can seriously damage your physical and mental health, jeopardize your safety and the safety of others, and adversely affect the success of the Air Force mission and national security. It can result in a less than honorable discharge from military service and criminal prosecution, to include prison, and loss of rank and pay under the UCMJ and local and state criminal laws. (Article 112a, UCMJ; AFI 44-120, *Military Drug Demand Reduction Program*).

2.6.2. Air Force members with substance abuse problems are encouraged to seek assistance from the unit commander, first sergeant, substance abuse counselor, or a military medical professional through the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment (ADAPT) Program. The primary objectives of the program are to promote readiness, health, and wellness through the prevention and treatment of substance misuse and abuse; to minimize the negative consequences of substance misuse and abuse to the individual, family, and organization; to provide comprehensive education and treatment to individuals who experience problems attributed to substance misuse or abuse; and to restore function and return identified substance abusers to unrestricted duty status or to assist them in their transition to civilian life, as appropriate. (AFI 44-121, *Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment (ADAPT) Program*).

**2.7. Alcohol Abuse.** Air Force policy is to prevent alcohol abuse and alcoholism among its personnel and their dependents; to assist Air Force personnel in resolving alcohol-related problems; and to ensure humane management and administrative disposition of those who are unable or unwilling to be restored to full, effective functioning. Alcohol abuse, such as driving while intoxicated, can also lead to disciplinary action, including criminal prosecution under the UCMJ and local and state criminal laws. You are responsible for exercising good judgment in the use of alcohol. State and foreign country drinking age laws, including those in a deployed environment, must be obeyed both on and off-duty. Your use of alcohol must not adversely affect your duty performance or your conduct on or off-duty, to include your ability to be recalled, if specifically required, (e.g., when serving in an on-call status) to your duty station during scheduled off-duty time.

**2.8. Financial Responsibility.** Just like regular physical fitness is important for your health, “fiscal fitness” is equally important to your overall well-being as an Air Force member. You are expected to review your leave and earnings statement on a regular basis to ensure the accuracy of your pay and allowances, file travel vouchers on a timely basis, and use the government travel card for authorized purchases only. You are expected to pay your debts on time. Failure to satisfy just financial obligations is not consistent with the standards of conduct expected of Air Force members. Two of the key tools to individual financial responsibility are the development and maintenance of a personal budget and effective management of one’s debt. Members must be prudent in the use of credit cards and other forms of revolving credit. High-interest, short-term credit agreements, such as vehicle title loans, should be avoided. Additionally, you are expected to provide regular and adequate support for your dependents, including payments required by court order. To assist you with your financial affairs, the Air Force provides financial management information and personal counseling, as well as legal assistance.

**2.9. Dependent Care.** The Air Force must have people in the right place at the right time, unencumbered and ready to perform the jobs for which they have been trained. Unless specifically deferred or exempted, all members of the Air Force must be available at all times to perform a full range of military duties and assignments, including but not limited to, permanent change of station or assignment, unaccompanied tours, temporary duty including short or no-notice deployments, alerts, recalls, extended hours, or shift work. (AFI 36-2908, *Family Care Plans*).

2.9.1. Each Air Force member must make and maintain dependent care arrangements that will allow the member to be world-wide deployable at all times. Advance planning is the key to dependent care arrangements. Every Air Force member with dependents must take the initiative to use all available military and civilian resources at his or her disposal, including other-than-immediate family members, to ensure dependents receive adequate care, support, and supervision in a manner that is compatible with the member’s military duties.

2.9.2. Dependent care plans must cover all possible situations in both the short and long-term, and must be sufficiently detailed and systematic to provide for a smooth, rapid transfer of responsibilities to another individual during the absence of the military sponsor.

2.9.3. Single parents and military couples with dependents face additional challenges. Nevertheless, these parents must be worldwide deployable on short notice. Suitable arrangements must be planned in advance for a nonmilitary member to assume custody of dependent(s) in the event the military member(s) is/are unavailable to provide dependent care due to military obligations.

**2.10. Self Reporting Criminal Conviction.** If you are above the pay grade of E-6, on active duty, or in an active status in a Reserve Component and are convicted of any violation of a criminal law, you must report, in writing, the conviction to your first-line military supervisor within 15 days of the date of conviction. Depending on the level of your security clearance, there may be additional, more specific reporting requirements (e.g., reporting arrests, in addition to convictions) which must be met. (AFPD 36-29, *Military Standards*).

**2.11. Free Exercise of Religion and Religious Accommodation.** Every Airman is free to practice the religion of their choice or subscribe to no religious belief at all. You should confidently practice your own beliefs while respecting others whose viewpoints differ from your own. Every Airman also has the right to individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs, to

include conscience, moral principles or religious beliefs, unless those expressions would have an adverse impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety, or mission accomplishment.

2.11.1. Your right to practice your religious beliefs does not excuse you from complying with directives, instructions and lawful orders; however, you may request religious accommodation. Commanders and supervisors at all levels must fairly consider requests for religious accommodation. Airmen requesting accommodation will continue to comply with directives, instructions and lawful orders from which they are requesting accommodation unless and until the request is approved.

2.11.2. If it is necessary to deny free exercise of religion or an accommodation request, the decision must be based on the facts presented, must directly relate to the compelling government interest of military readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health and safety, or mission accomplishment, and must be by the least restrictive means necessary to avoid the cited adverse impact.

**2.12. Balance of Free Exercise of Religion and Establishment Clause.** Leaders at all levels must balance constitutional protections for their own free exercise of religion, including individual expressions of religious beliefs, and the constitutional prohibition against governmental establishment of religion. They must ensure their words and actions cannot reasonably be construed to be officially endorsing or disapproving of, or extending preferential treatment for any faith, belief, or absence of belief.

**2.13. Political Activities.** Generally, as an individual, you enjoy the same rights and have the same responsibilities as other citizens. However, because you are a member of the United States Air Force, the manner in which you exercise your rights is limited in some cases. Under our democratic system, the military, as a group, must remain politically neutral and divorced from partisan politics (AFI 51-902, *Political Activities by Members of the US Air Force*). There are some general rules that you should remember:

2.13.1. You have the right and duty as an American citizen to vote and to voice your opinions concerning political matters; however, you must be careful that your personal opinions and activities are not directly, or by implication, represented as those of the Air Force. Further, Article 88, UCMJ, prohibits commissioned officers from using contemptuous words against the President, the Vice President, Congress, the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of a Military Department, the Secretary of Homeland Security, or the governor or legislature of any state, territory, commonwealth, or possession in which he or she is on duty or present. Enlisted personnel who make derogatory or disrespectful statements about political leaders may violate Article 134, UCMJ, when their military status is associated with the statements (such as making these comments on a social networking site where the member's employment with the Air Force is also listed).

2.13.2. You may attend partisan political rallies or speeches when not in uniform, not on duty, and when solely acting as a spectator. You may not speak before a partisan political event, ride, or march in a partisan political parade, or engage in partisan political fundraising activities, regardless of whether or not you are in uniform.

2.13.3. You may make a monetary contribution to a political organization, party, or committee favoring a political candidate or slate of candidates.

2.13.4. You may support or endorse a particular political candidate, party, cause, or issue through displaying a bumper sticker on your personally owned vehicles. No larger vehicle signs are permitted. You may not display any type of political sign, banner, poster, or similar device in your office or work area or at your on-base residence, even if that residence is part of a privatized housing development.

2.13.5. You may not attend or participate in any demonstration or other political activity on a military installation, unless that event has been approved by the installation commander. You may not sign or circulate a petition on a military installation, unless the petition has been approved by the installation commander. Political discussions are generally not appropriate in the Federal workplace. You may not attempt to influence the view, position or vote of any subordinate except to generally encourage participation in the voting process.

**2.14. Public Statements.** The issuance of public statements on official Air Force matters is the responsibility of cognizant unit or installation commanders and their public affairs representatives. Ensuring that official statements are properly worded and approved avoids statements that do not reflect official Air Force policy or that, if taken out of context, could be misleading to the public. Public statements should be fully coordinated with the appropriate public affairs office before release. (AFI 35-101, *Public Affairs Policies and Procedures*).

2.14.1. To ensure that Air Force official information is presented professionally, personnel should: make certain that it is accurate, prompt, and factual; is confined to their particular areas of expertise; avoids the hypothetical and speculative; accurately reflects Air Force policy; is presented simply and honestly; and complies with the spirit and letter of the Secretary of Defense's principles for public information.

2.14.2. The Air Force is committed to making our operations as transparent as possible to the American public. To that end, requests for information should be forwarded to the public affairs office or other appropriate Air Force offices. Those offices include the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) office, legal office (for litigation matters), Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI) or Security Forces (SF) (for law enforcement information), etc. Air Force policy provides for clearance by the public affairs officer at the lowest level where competent authority exists to judge the security and policy aspects of the information submitted for review. The FOIA statute, implemented through Air Force instruction, directs maximum disclosure of Air Force records, subject to the exemptions from release contained within the FOIA law. All personnel are responsible for safeguarding classified and for official use only (FOUO) information, personally identifiable information (PII) and the identities of deployed service members and their families. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

**2.15. Use of Social Media.** Airmen interact with individuals through many forms of communication, including face-to-face, telephone, letter, e-mail, text messages, social networking services, and social media. Social networking services include weblogs, message boards, video sharing, and social networking sites, (e.g., YouTube, Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, Google Apps) which are web-based services that allow individuals and communities of people to stay in touch. Compliance with the standards discussed in this instruction does not vary, and is not otherwise dependent on the method of communication used. You are personally responsible for what you say and post on social networking services and any other medium. Regardless of the method of communication used, Air Force standards must be observed at all times, both on

and off-duty. (AFI 31-401, *Information Security Program Management*; AFI 33-129, *Web Management and Internet Use*; AFH 33-337, *Tongue and Quill*; AFI 35-101, *Public Affairs Policies and Procedures*; AFI 35-107, *Public Web Communications*; AFI 35-113, *Internal Information*; [www.defense.gov/socialmedia/education-and-training.aspx](http://www.defense.gov/socialmedia/education-and-training.aspx)).

2.15.1. Operational security is vital to the accomplishment of the Air Force mission. The use of social media and other forms of communication that allow you to communicate with a large number of people brings with it the increased risk of magnifying operational security lapses. Classified, FOUO, and other official DoD information and documents are prohibited from being posted on social networking services or transmitted via non-DoD e-mail accounts without proper authority.

2.15.2. Your obligation to maintain appropriate communication and conduct with officer and enlisted personnel, peers, superiors, and subordinates (to include civilian superiors and subordinates) is applicable whether you communicate via a social networking service or other forms of communication, such as e-mail, instant messaging, or texting.

2.15.3. You must avoid offensive and/or inappropriate behavior on social networking platforms and through other forms of communication that could bring discredit upon on the Air Force or you as a member of the Air Force, or that would otherwise be harmful to good order and discipline, respect for authority, unit cohesion, morale, mission accomplishment, or the trust and confidence that the public has in the United States Air Force.

2.15.4. Airmen who provide commentary and opinions on internet blogs that they host or on others' internet blogs, may not place comments on those blog sites, which reasonably can be anticipated, or are intended, to degrade morale, good order, and discipline of any members or units in the U.S. Armed Forces, are Service-discrediting, or would degrade the trust and confidence of the public in the United States Air Force.

2.15.5. When you are expressing personal opinions on social media sites and can be identified as an Airman, you should make clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the Air Force. While service members may generally use their rank and service even when acting in their personal capacity, they should not do so in situations where the context may imply official sanction or endorsement of their personal opinions.

2.15.6. You should recognize that social network "friends" and "followers" may potentially constitute relationships that could affect determinations in background investigations and periodic reinvestigations associated with security clearances.

2.15.7. If you violate federal or state laws and regulations and policies through inappropriate personal online activity, or any other form of communication, you are subject to disciplinary action.

2.15.8. If the communication involves the expression of sincerely held beliefs (conscience, moral principles, or religious beliefs) paragraphs 2.11 and 2.12 also apply.

## Chapter 3

### APPEARANCE

**3.1. Overview.** First impressions are often drawn based upon appearance. That is why your appearance matters as much as your attitude about being a military member. Projecting a good military image reflects not only on you personally, but also on the Air Force. Appearance matters both on- and off-duty and involves more than just the clothes you wear. Projecting a professional image is paramount. (AFI 36-2903, *Dress and Personal Appearance of Air Force Personnel*).

**3.2. Dress and Personal Appearance.** Pride in one's personal appearance and wearing of the uniform correctly enhances the *esprit de corps* and the professional image essential to an effective military force. All Air Force members must maintain a high standard of dress and personal appearance. This standard consists of five elements: neatness, cleanliness, safety, uniformity, and military image. The first four elements are absolute, objective criteria needed for the efficiency and well-being of the Air Force. Although the fifth element—military image—is subjective, it is critical because other people, both military and civilian, draw certain conclusions about individual Airmen and the Air Force based on what they see. When in uniform or civilian clothes in an official capacity, members must present a professional image:

3.2.1. Members, while in uniform, will not stand or walk with hands in pockets except to insert or remove an item.

3.2.2. Members, while in uniform or in civilian clothes in an official capacity, will not engage in public displays of affection. However, brief displays of affection may be permitted in situations where physical contact is commonly accepted etiquette such as one's wedding, graduation, promotion, or retirement ceremony, or upon departure for or return from deployment.

3.2.3. Members, while in uniform, will not smoke or use smokeless tobacco products except in designated smoking areas.

3.2.4. Members will not consume food or beverages while walking in uniform. Beverages may be authorized during wear of physical training (PT) uniform and commanders may authorize food and/or beverage consumption during special functions.

3.2.5. Members will not use personal electronic media devices while walking in uniform except in emergencies or when official notifications are necessary. However, ear pieces may be authorized during individual PT when wearing the PT uniform. Military customs and courtesies always take precedence.

**3.3. Personal Grooming.** While every Air Force member may, within limits, express individuality through his or her appearance, the Air Force has defined what is and is not an acceptable professional military image in terms of personal grooming. Except for minor variations based on gender differences, all Air Force personnel must comply with the same personal grooming standards found in AFI 36-2903. Commanders have the responsibility to determine whether an individual's personal grooming is within standards. Supervisors also have the responsibility to determine compliance and to correct violations regardless of whether the particular situation is addressed in AFI 36-2903.

3.3.1. Tattoos/Brands/Body Markings. Members may not have or obtain tattoos, brands, or other markings anywhere on the body that are: obscene; commonly associated with gangs, extremist, and/or supremacist organizations; or that advocate sexual, racial, ethnic, or religious discrimination. Members who have or obtain unauthorized content tattoos, brands, or markings are required to initiate removal or alteration. Members must not display excessive tattoos, brands, or other markings while wearing any uniform combination except the PT uniform. AFI 36-2903 defines “excessive” as any tattoo, brand, or marking that exceeds 25 percent of the exposed body part and is visible when wearing the uniform. Members with excessive tattoos, brands, or other markings must initiate removal/alteration to bring the tattoo into compliance. Commanders are authorized to grant a waiver allowing complete coverage of the excessive tattoo. The member must maintain complete coverage using available uniform items (e.g., long-sleeved shirt, pants, dark hosiery, etc.) or initiate removal or alteration.

### 3.3.2. Body Piercings.

3.3.2.1. While in uniform on or off a military installation, with the exception of earrings for women, all members are prohibited from attaching, affixing, or displaying objects, articles, jewelry, or ornamentation to or through the ear, nose, tongue, eye brows, lips, or any exposed body part.

3.3.2.2. While in civilian attire on official duty on or off a military installation, with the exception of earrings for women, all members are prohibited from attaching, affixing, or displaying objects, articles, jewelry, or ornamentation to or through the ear, nose, tongue, eye brows, lips, or any exposed body part.

3.3.2.3. While in civilian attire off-duty on a military installation, with the exception of wear in areas in and around military family and privatized housing or earrings for women, all members are prohibited from attaching, affixing, or displaying objects, articles, jewelry or ornamentation to or through the ear, nose, tongue, eye brows, lips, or any exposed body part.

Note: Women may wear small (not exceeding 6mm in diameter), spherical, conservative white diamond, gold, white pearl, or silver earrings as a set with any uniform combination. If the member has multiple holes in her ear, she is authorized to wear only one set of earrings in the lower earlobes.

**3.4. Uniforms.** Wearing the Air Force uniform means carrying on a tradition—one that identifies the person as a member of the profession of arms. The Air Force uniform is plain yet distinctive, and presents the appearance of a military professional. While in uniform, Air Force members must adhere to standards of neatness, cleanliness, safety, uniformity, and military image. Members will: procure and maintain all mandatory uniform items; follow local supplements and procedures regarding wear of the uniform; and keep their uniforms neat, clean, buttoned, and properly maintained. Members are responsible for knowing the authorized uniform combinations and the correct placement of ribbons, insignia, and other uniform items.

### 3.4.1. Authorized Wear of the Uniform:

3.4.1.1. Military Duties. Members wear the appropriate uniform while performing military duties unless authorized to wear civilian clothes. Members assigned to non-Air Force organizations wear the Air Force equivalent uniform to the dress observed in the

assigned organization. If authorized to wear civilian clothes on duty, members must still comply with Air Force appearance and grooming standards unless the member has obtained a proper waiver for operational necessity.

3.4.1.2. Travel. If departing from or arriving at commercial airports in the continental United States, any authorized combination of uniform, except the flight duty uniform, may be worn. If departing from and arriving at a military airfield via United States government aircraft or contracted United States government commercial flights, any authorized combination of the uniform is appropriate. When traveling in an official capacity on commercial air overseas, members should consult the DoD foreign clearance guide for authorized and expected uniform wear. Members who wear civilian clothes during official travel must ensure that their clothing is neat, clean, and appropriate for the mode of travel and destination.

3.4.1.3. Social Functions. Air Force members attending a military event must wear the appropriate uniform or civilian attire as requested by the host or hostess or directed by the commander. If the uniform is worn to civilian social functions, members should wear the service dress uniform, semiformal uniform, mess dress uniform, or formal uniform.

3.4.2. Prohibitions on Wear of Uniform. Air Force members will not wear any uniform combination or any uniform items in the following situations:

3.4.2.1. When attending a meeting of, or sponsored by, an organization, association, movement, or group that: the Attorney General of the United States has named as totalitarian, fascist, communist, or subversive; advocates or approves acts of force or violence to deny others their rights under the United States Constitution; or seeks to change the United States government by unconstitutional means.

3.4.2.2. When participating in or attending public political speeches, interviews, picket lines, marches, or rallies, or in any public demonstration when participation might imply Air Force sanction of the cause or if the purpose may be to advocate, express, or approve opposition to the Armed Forces.

3.4.2.3. When it would discredit the Armed Forces.

3.4.2.4. When furthering political activities, private employment, or commercial interests.

3.4.2.5. When engaged in off-duty, civilian employment.

3.4.2.6. When participating as a defendant in civilian court proceedings if a conviction would bring discredit to the Air Force.

3.4.2.7. Air Force members may not wear distinctive uniform items with civilian clothes. Distinctive uniform items are those items that are unique to the uniform, such as grade insignia, ribbons, cap devices, badges, uniform jackets (not to include the PT jacket), and other United States or Air Force insignia.

3.4.2.8. When eating at off-base restaurants where most diners wear business attire, or at establishments that operate primarily to serve alcohol, Air Force members will not wear the Airman battle uniform (ABU) or flight duty uniform.

3.4.2.9. When using frequent flyer miles to upgrade to business or first class, Air Force members may not wear military uniforms. Even when an upgrade is legitimate, wearing of the uniform may create the public perception of the misuse of government travel resources; therefore, wear of the uniform should be avoided under these circumstances.

**3.5. Physical Fitness.** Air Force members must be physically fit to support the Air Force mission. An active lifestyle increases productivity, optimizes health, and decreases absenteeism, which helps maintain a higher level of readiness. Also, by maintaining a lean and fit appearance, Air Force members project the proper military image. The fitness assessment provides commanders with a tool to assist them in determining the overall fitness of their military personnel. The Air Force fitness assessment uses a composite fitness score based on aerobic fitness, muscular strength, and body composition. Age and gender-specific fitness assessment score charts are provided in AFI 36-2905, *Fitness Program*. Commanders and supervisors should incorporate fitness into their organizational culture to encourage members to maintain physical fitness and good health in order to meet expeditionary mission requirements. However, each Air Force member is ultimately responsible for keeping himself or herself in good physical condition. (AFI 36-2905, *Fitness Program*).

**3.6. Housing.** Air Force members and their families may live in private sector housing, government-owned housing on a military installation, or military privatized housing on or off a military installation. In government-owned or privatized housing on a military installation, Airmen will ensure that their homes are maintained in a clean and orderly fashion. Regardless of the type of housing, all Air Force members are responsible for the proper care and use of their home, and for the conduct of their dependents, guests, and pets. However, as specific rules may differ for private sector housing, government quarters, and military privatized housing, members should be familiar with the regulations and restrictions particular to their lease or homeowners agreement.

MARK A. WELSH III, General, USAF  
Chief of Staff

**Attachment 1****GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION*****References***

AFPD 1, *Air Force Culture*

AFPD 36-29, *Military Standards*

AFPD 36-70, *Diversity*

AFI 31-401, *Information Security and Program Management*

AFI 33-129, *Web Management and Internet Use*

AFH 33-337, *Tongue and Quill*

AFMAN 33-363, *Management of Records*

AFI 34-1201, *Protocol*

AFPAM 34-1202, *Guide to Protocol*

AFI 35-101, *Public Affairs Policies and Procedures*

AFI 35-107, *Public Web Communications*

AFI 35-113, *Internal Information*

AFI 36-2109, *Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force and Command Chief Master Sergeant Programs*

AFI 36-2113, *The First Sergeant*

AFMAN 36-2203, *Drill and Ceremonies*

AFI 36-2501, *Officer Promotions and Selective Continuation*

AFI 36-2606, *Reenlistment in the United States Air Force;*

AFI 36-2706, *Equal Opportunity Program Military and Civilian*

AFI 36-2903, *Dress and Personal Appearance of Air Force Personnel*

AFI 36-2905, *Fitness Program*

AFI 36-2908, *Family Care Plans*

AFI 36-2909, *Professional and Unprofessional Relationships*

AFI 36-3106, *Retiree Activities Program*

AFI 36-6001, *Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program*

AFI 44-120, *Military Drug Demand Reduction Program*

AFI 44-121, *Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment (ADAPT) Program*

AFI 52-101, *Planning and Organizing*

AFI 51-201, *Administration of Military Justice;*

*AFI 51-202, Nonjudicial Punishment*

*AFI 51-504, Legal Assistance, Notary, and Preventive Law Programs*

*AFI 51-902, Political Activities by Members of the US Air Force*

*AFI 90-201, Inspector General Inspection System*

*AFI 90-301, Inspector General Complaints Resolution*

*DoD 5500.07-R, Joint Ethics Regulation*

# AMERICA'S AIR FORCE

## A PROFESSION OF ARMS



A HIGHER CALLING.

A HIGHER STANDARD.

JULY 2015

# AMERICA'S AIR FORCE: A PROFESSION OF ARMS

## "THE LITTLE BLUE BOOK"

First, we must understand that our chosen profession is that of a higher calling, in which we hold ourselves to higher standards. To serve proudly and capably, our commitment to our cause must be unbreakable; it must be bonded in our mutual respect for each other. Throughout our service we are guided and reminded of this awesome responsibility to our nation. The oaths we take remind us that we serve freely in support and defense of our Constitution. Our Air Force Core Values serve as our compass and provide the fortified foundation of our service. We abide by a Code of Conduct that captures our resolve, while our Airman's Creed highlights the strength of our diverse Airmen who fly, fight and win as one Air Force.

We are the world's greatest Air Force...powered by Airmen, fueled by innovation; this book serves as a guide to the principles that make us so strong. Wherever you are in your Air Force career, it is a reminder to the meaning of service in our profession...The Profession of Arms.

*"They knew not the day or hour nor the manner of their passing when far from home they were called to join that great band of heroic Airmen that went before."*

Quotation from Air Force Memorial  
in Washington D.C.

# A PROFESSION OF ARMS



No profession asks more of its members than the Profession of Arms. As we state in our Airman's Creed, we have answered our nation's call. It is a higher calling, and it comes with a higher standard.

General Ronald Fogleman, our 15th Chief of Staff once said, "We are not engaged in just another job; we are practitioners of the Profession of Arms. We are entrusted with the security of our nation, the protection of our citizens and the preservation of its way of life. In this capacity, we serve as guardians of America's future. By its very nature, this responsibility requires us to place the needs of our service and our country before personal concerns."

That responsibility was given to each and every one of us when we raised our right hand and swore to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. When we joined our Air Force with a sacred oath, we accepted a sacred trust from the American people, one that goes beyond anything else in society. As members of a joint team, our profession is distinguished from others because of our expertise in the justified application of lethal military force and the willingness of those who serve to pay the ultimate sacrifice for our nation. No other profession expects its members to lay down their lives for their friends, families or freedoms...but it's what our profession readily expects.

And make no mistake, this is a profession. We are professionals. As volunteers, our sworn obligation is to the Constitution. Fighting America's wars is an ugly business - there is nothing pretty about it, cool about it or glorious about it - but it must be done, and somebody must be good at it. We're good at it. Our status as the world's greatest Air Force was earned by the men and women who have gone before us, and is carried on by every Airman who wears the uniform today.

All service men and women belong to the Profession of Arms, from the most junior enlisted to our most senior leaders. We are all accountable for meeting ethical and performance standards in our actions and similarly accountable for our failure to take action, when appropriate. The distinction between ranks lies solely in our level of responsibility and the degree of accountability...not in our level of commitment to the Profession of Arms. We share the common attributes of character, courage and competence. We qualify as professionals through intensive training, education and practical experience. As professionals, we are defined by our strength of character, a life-long commitment to core values and a dedication to maintain our professional abilities through continuous improvement, individually and institutionally.

We must remember above all else, we are patriots first. As service men and women we, more than anyone else, understand the price paid for freedom. We, more than anyone else, understand the sacrifices that come from willingly serving our country. We, more than anyone else, understand what it means to serve in the Profession of Arms.

# RESPECT



Respect is at the root of the Profession of Arms and bonds every Airman who voluntarily serves. Respect is the feeling of esteem or deference for a person or other entity, but in the Air Force it takes on a greater meaning and importance. Respect is the lifeblood of our profession. Without it, we simply cannot stand strong in the defense of our nation. Mutual respect strengthens our team and eliminates seams that reveal a weakness in the force.

Respect in the Profession of Arms goes beyond professional courtesy. It means accepting others for who they are, embracing a heightened personal sense of humility and fostering an environment of inclusiveness in which every Airman is able and eager to offer their skills, abilities and ideas. It means treating the equipment and resources in our possession with care, understanding and embracing the power of diversity and holding those who mistreat others accountable. More than anything, we must respect the humbling mission placed in our hands by the American people, and the impact our weapons and our actions can have around the globe.

Our Air Force is a critical part of the greatest fighting force the world has ever known; it's powered by the greatest Airmen the world has ever seen. Through respect for each other, our resources and our mission, we will continue to provide Global Vigilance, Global Reach and Global Power for America.

# AIR FORCE OATHS



Every uniformed Airman began their service in our Air Force by reciting the Oath of Enlistment or the Oath of Office. They are a humbling reminder of the seriousness of the profession of arms. Throughout our careers we must continually reflect on the meaning of the words, and the gravity of our commitment.

## OATH OF ENLISTMENT

"I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to regulations and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. (So help me God.)"

## OATH OF OFFICE

"I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. (So help me God.)"

# AIR FORCE CORE VALUES



Values represent enduring, guiding principles for which we as individuals or organizations stand. “Core” values are so fundamental that they define our very identity. The United States Air Force has clearly defined its identity by these three simple values: Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence In All We Do.

For those of us who join this proud community of Airmen - whether officer, enlisted, civilian, Active, Guard, or Reserve - being a part of the Air Force family requires we commit to living these values, on and off duty. This is the expectation of our profession, and is the standard against which our fellow service members and the American public hold us. The Air Force Professional is a trusted servant of our Nation who adheres to the highest standards of character, courage and competence. How we act represents to countless others the collective identity of the United States Air Force.

## THE CHALLENGE: LIVING THE CORE VALUES

Understanding the Core Values is relatively easy. The true challenge is to live them. It’s a commitment that never ends, and one that always matters.

We all have the ability to display integrity, both professionally and personally. We have all placed ourselves in a position to serve a greater purpose. And we all have the innate desire to achieve excellence. Yet there will be moments where living and acting by the Core Values will be challenging.

These moments are also opportunities to prove, through our actions, that we truly embody these Core Values. In doing so, we honor the heritage and continue the legacy of those who served before us and sacrificed so much. It is through this alignment of our actions with these values that we, as an Air Force, earn the public’s trust, strengthen our Service, and accomplish our mission. These are the Core Values of our Air Force.

Each of these Core Values is further defined by virtues (desired behaviors and characteristics) we must practice and demonstrate in our daily lives, showing we truly do value Integrity, Service and Excellence. Consistently practicing these virtues results in habits of honorable thought and action, producing an Air Force Professional. Air Force Professionalism is a shared belief in, and a commitment to, honorable service based on our Air Force Core Values.

## INTEGRITY FIRST

Integrity is simply doing the right thing, all the time, whether everyone is watching or no one is watching. It is the compass that keeps us on the right path when we are confronted with ethical challenges and personal temptations, and it is the foundation upon which trust is built. An individual realizes integrity when thoughts and actions align with what he or she knows to be right. The virtues that demonstrate one truly values integrity include:

**HONESTY:** Honesty is the hallmark of integrity. As public servants, we are trusted agents. Honesty requires us to evaluate our performance against standards, and to conscientiously and accurately report findings. It drives us to advance our skills and credentials through our own effort. The service member's word must be unquestionable. This is the only way to preserve the trust we hold so dear with each other and with the population we serve.

**COURAGE:** Courage is not the absence of fear, but doing the right thing despite the fear. Courage empowers us to take necessary personal or professional risks, make decisions that may be unpopular, and admit to our mistakes; having the courage to take these actions is crucial for the mission, the Air Force, and the Nation.

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** Accountability is responsibility with an audience. That audience may be the American people, our units, our supervisors, our fellow Airmen, our families, our loved ones, and even ourselves. Accountable individuals maintain transparency, seek honest and constructive feedback, and take ownership of the outcomes of their actions and decisions. They are responsible to themselves and others and refrain from actions which discredit themselves or our service.

*"Starting on day one, every uniformed and civilian Airman learns about our Air Force Core Values. They are our first principles, and they guide everything we do - on and off duty, at home, in the office and on the battlefield. As the world's finest Airmen, we must trust each other, and we must never stop working to earn the trust and respect of the Americans we serve."*

Honorable Deborah Lee James  
Secretary of the Air Force

## SERVICE BEFORE SELF

Service Before Self tells us that professional duties take precedence over personal desires. The call to serve is a call to live according to a higher standard. It is not just a job; it is a commitment that takes energy, dedication, and sacrifice. We do not “work” in the Air Force; we serve in the Air Force. A heart and mindset for service allows us to embrace expectations and requirements not levied on the American public or other professions. The virtues that demonstrate one truly values service include:

**DUTY:** Duty is the obligation to perform what is required for the mission. While our responsibilities are determined by the law, the Department of Defense, and Air Force instructions, directives, and guidance, our sense of duty is a personal one and bound by the oath of service we took as individuals. Duty sometimes calls for sacrifice in ways no other profession has or will. Airmen who truly embody Service Before Self consistently choose to make necessary sacrifices to accomplish the mission, and in doing so, we honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

**LOYALTY:** Loyalty is an internal commitment to the success and preservation of something bigger than ourselves. Our loyalty is to the Nation first, the values and commitments of our Air Force second, and finally to the men and women with whom we serve. Loyalty to our leaders requires us to trust, follow, and execute their decisions, even when we disagree. We offer alternative solutions and innovative ideas most effectively through the chain of command. Ultimately, loyalty is demonstrated by helping each other act with honor.

**RESPECT:** Respect is treating others with dignity and valuing them as individuals. We must always act knowing that all Airmen possess fundamental worth as human beings. We must treat others with the utmost dignity and respect, understanding that our diversity is a great source of strength.

*“Treating EVERY Airman with dignity and respect must be at the heart of who we are and how we operate. It isn’t a “tag” line; it’s the core of everything we stand for as a service. Everyone in our Air Force should feel respected. Everyone should feel valued. Every single person around you brings something to the fight that you don’t. Each of them is critically important to mission success, and they deserve to be treated that way.”*

General Mark A. Welsh III  
Air Force Chief of Staff

## EXCELLENCE IN ALL WE DO

Excellence In All We Do does not mean that we demand perfection in everything from everyone. Instead, this value directs us to continuously advance our craft and increase our knowledge as Airmen. We must have a passion for continuous improvement and innovation that propels America's Air Force in quantum leaps towards accomplishment and performance.

**MISSION:** Mission focus encompasses operations, product and resources excellence. The complex undertaking of the Air Force mission requires us to harness the ingenuity, expertise, and elbow grease of all Airmen. We approach it with the mindset of stewardship, initiative, improvement, pride, and a continued commitment to anticipate and embrace change. Our work areas, our processes, and our interpersonal interactions must be undeniably professional and positive. Our people are the platform for delivering innovative ideas, strategies, and technologies to the fight.

**DISCIPLINE:** Discipline is an individual commitment to uphold the highest of personal and professional standards. Airmen commit to a life of discipline and self-control. We demonstrate it in attitude, work ethic, and effort directed at continuous improvement, whether it be pursuing professional military education or nurturing ourselves physically, intellectually, emotionally, or spiritually. Each Airman represents the entire Air Force. Our appearance, actions, and words shape the culture of the Air Force and the reputation of the entire military profession.

**TEAMWORK:** Teamwork is essential to triumph at every level. Airmen recognize the interdependency of every member's contributions towards the mission and strive for organizational excellence. We not only give our personal best, but also challenge and motivate each other. We carry our own weight, and whenever necessary, help our wingmen carry theirs. We serve in the greatest Air Force in the world, and we embrace the idea that our part of the Air Force meets that world-class standard.

*"As Airmen we step to a higher calling and hold ourselves to the highest standards. We have certain beliefs and truths that strengthen our organization and our nation. At the very heart of this is our Core Values; they are a clear illustration of the price of admission to our Air Force, and the common bond by which we win the fight, strengthen the team, and shape the future. Our values must be much more than words...they must guide us and point us to what is universal and unchanging in our profession of arms. They are the very fabric that bonds our commitment and dedication to duty, honor, country, fidelity and competence."*

CMSAF James A. Cody  
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

# CODE OF CONDUCT



The Code of Conduct outlines basic responsibilities and obligations of members of the U.S. Armed Forces. All members are expected to measure up to the standards described in the Code of Conduct. Although developed for POWs, the spirit and intent are applicable to service members subject to other hostile detention. Such service members should consistently conduct themselves in a manner that brings credit to them and their country. The six articles of the Code of Conduct address situations and decision areas that any member could encounter to some degree. The Code of Conduct includes basic information useful to POWs to help them survive honorably while resisting captors' efforts to exploit them. Such survival and resistance requires knowledge, understanding and a commitment to the articles.

## ARTICLE 1

I am an American, fighting in the forces which guard my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense.

## ARTICLE 2

I will never surrender of my own free will. If in command, I will never surrender the members of my command while they still have the means to resist.

## ARTICLE 3

If I am captured I will continue to resist by all means available. I will make every effort to escape and to aid others to escape. I will accept neither parole nor special favors from the enemy.

## ARTICLE 4

If I become a prisoner of war, I will keep faith with my fellow prisoners. I will give no information or take part in any action which might be harmful to my comrades. If I am senior, I will take command. If not, I will obey the lawful orders of those appointed over me and will back them up in every way.

## ARTICLE 5

When questioned, should I become a prisoner of war, I am required to give name, rank, service number, and date of birth. I will evade answering further questions to the utmost of my ability. I will make no oral or written statements disloyal to my country and its allies or harmful to their cause.

## ARTICLE 6

I will never forget that I am an American, fighting for freedom, responsible for my actions, and dedicated to the principles which made my country free. I will trust in my God and in the United States of America.

# THE AIRMAN'S CREED



The Airman's Creed is intended to remind all Airmen that we are not just a conglomeration of diverse specialties, skill sets, or jobs, but we are brothers and sisters in the Profession of Arms. It allows Airmen to think and act with one mind, and with a commitment to fundamental war fighting beliefs. Airmen are warriors, and are dedicated to flying, fighting and winning.

**I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.  
I AM A WARRIOR.  
I HAVE ANSWERED MY NATION'S CALL.**

**I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.  
MY MISSION IS TO FLY, FIGHT, AND WIN.  
I AM FAITHFUL TO A PROUD HERITAGE,  
A TRADITION OF HONOR,  
AND A LEGACY OF VALOR.**

**I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.  
GUARDIAN OF FREEDOM AND JUSTICE,  
MY NATION'S SWORD AND SHIELD,  
ITS SENTRY AND AVENGER.  
I DEFEND MY COUNTRY WITH MY LIFE.**

**I AM AN AMERICAN AIRMAN.  
WINGMAN, LEADER, WARRIOR.  
I WILL NEVER LEAVE AN AIRMAN BEHIND,  
I WILL NEVER FALTER,  
AND I WILL NOT FAIL.**



*“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”*

Theodore Roosevelt  
26th President of the United States

# AIR FORCE CORE VALUES



INTEGRITY FIRST

SERVICE BEFORE SELF

EXCELLENCE IN ALL WE DO

**BY ORDER OF THE  
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE**

**AIR FORCE HANDBOOK 36-2618**

**5 JULY 2018**



**Personnel**

**THE ENLISTED FORCE STRUCTURE**

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This handbook defines the Air Force enlisted force structure and implements Air Force Policy Directive 36-26, *Total Force Development and Management*. It has been developed in collaboration between the Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel and Services (AF/A1), the Chief of the Air Force Reserve (AF/RE) and the Director of the Air National Guard (NGB/CF), and applies to all Regular Air Force members, members of Air Force Reserve Command, and members of the Air National Guard. Ensure that all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with Air Force Manual 33-363, *Management of Records*, and disposed of in accordance with Air Force Records Information Management System Records Disposition Schedule. Refer recommended changes and questions about this publication to AF/A1DI using Air Force Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*. Route Air Force Form 847 from the field through the appropriate functional chain of command. This publication may be supplemented at any level, but all supplements that directly implement this publication must be routed to the Office of Primary Responsibility for coordination, and all Major Command-level supplements must be approved by the Human Resource Management Strategic Board prior to certification and approval. The use of the name or mark of any specific manufacturer, commercial product, commodity, or service in this publication does not imply endorsement by the Air Force.

**SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

This handbook replaces Air Force Instruction 36-2618, 27 February 2009.

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. The Enlisted Force Structure.

1.1.1. The Air Force is a diverse group of functionally and operationally specialized Airmen in the profession of arms. Despite the differences across functional and operational lines, there is a compelling need for a deliberate and common approach to force development, career progression, and the assumption of increased supervisory and leadership responsibilities. To best leverage our resources, we must have a consistent, well-defined set of expectations, standards, and opportunities for the growth for *all* Airmen, regardless of rank or specialty. This is accomplished through the enlisted force structure and force development constructs which rely on Air Force institutional competencies.

1.1.2. Force Development. All elements of force development—education, training and experience—are tethered to the enlisted force structure and institutional competencies. The institutional competencies are the leadership, management, and readiness qualities Airmen require to lead and operate in the profession of arms. Every force development action, from Basic Military Training, to professional military education to strategic engagement opportunities, is linked to the institutional competencies. These competencies provide a common language, set of priorities, and proficiency expectation based on an Airman's rank, experience and/or position. The enlisted force structure and institutional competencies describe what makes us *Airmen*, not just functional specialists. We are Airmen first, specialists second.

1.1.3. Airmanship. Airmanship represents the commitment to a culture of pride and professionalism by all Airmen. The Airmanship mindset reflects Airmen committed to the Air Force family values, motivated by our Airman's Creed, Warrior Ethos, inspired by our heritage, and is built upon the Air Force Core Values.

1.1.4. Core Values. The enlisted force structure, force development, and institutional competencies are grounded in the Air Force core values (*Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do*). These values are the thread that weaves through Air Force policies, guidance, and focus areas. Simply put, they influence Air Force activities and Airmen's actions.

#### 1.2. Purpose of the Enlisted Force Structure.

1.2.1. This instruction provides the general framework for the enlisted force structure that best meets mission requirements, while developing institutional and occupational competencies.

1.2.2. Additionally, it defines the leadership levels, tiers, ranks, roles, terms of address, general responsibilities, duty titles and special positions for the enlisted forces.

1.2.3. The enlisted force structure provides a framework for supervisors as they set standards during initial feedback sessions, evaluate progress during mid-term feedback sessions, and document performance on annual reports.

## Chapter 2

### AIR FORCE LEADERSHIP LEVELS

**2.1. Air Force Leadership Levels.** The Air Force operates in a dynamic global context across multiple domains requiring leadership skills at three distinct levels: tactical expertise, operational competence, and strategic vision. These levels emphasize a different mix of qualities and experience. The leadership level at which an Airman operates determines the institutional competencies required to lead Airmen in mission accomplishment. As Airmen progress from the tactical expertise to strategic vision leadership levels, emphasis on the use of institutional competencies shifts from personal to organizational, with a generally consistent focus on people/team competencies. The nature and scope of leadership challenges as well as preferred leadership methods differ based on the level of leadership and duties. These levels apply across the entire spectrum of the enlisted force structure.

2.1.1. Tactical Expertise. This level is predominantly direct and face-to-face and focused on personal competencies. At the tactical expertise level, Airmen gain a general understanding of team leadership and an appreciation for organization leadership. They master their core duty skills, develop experiences in applying those skills, and begin to acquire the knowledge and experience that will produce the qualities essential to effective leadership. Airmen at the tactical expertise level gain the training, education and experience to become the Air Force's primary technicians and specialists. They learn about themselves as leaders and how their leadership acumen can affect others through the use of ethical leadership. They assimilate into the Air Force culture and adopt the Air Force core values. Airmen at this level focus on honing followership abilities, motivating subordinates and influencing peers to accomplish the mission while developing a warrior ethos. They learn about themselves and their impact on others in roles as both follower and leader in addition to developing their communication skills. The primary focus at the tactical expertise level is accomplishing the mission as effectively and efficiently as possible using available personnel and resources.

2.1.2. Operational Competence. The full-spectrum of institutional competencies is balanced across the operational competence leadership level. At this level, Airmen understand the broader Air Force perspective and the integration of diverse people and capabilities in operational execution. They transition from specialists to leaders with a broader enterprise perspective who understand Air Force operational capabilities. Based on a thorough understanding of themselves as leaders and followers, Airmen apply an understanding of organizational and team dynamics. They lead teams by developing and inspiring others, taking care of people, and taking advantage of diversity. They foster collaborative relationships through building teams and coalitions, especially within large organizations, and negotiate with others, often external to the organization. Airmen operating at this leadership level normally work below the major command or Headquarters Air Force levels.

2.1.3. Strategic Vision. At this level, Airmen combine highly developed personal and people/team institutional competencies to apply broad organizational competencies. They develop a deep understanding of Air Force capabilities and how Airmen achieve synergistic results and desired effects with their operational capabilities. They also understand how the Air Force operates within joint, multinational, and interagency relationships. At the strategic vision level, an Airman employs military capabilities, applying the operational and strategic

arts with a thorough understanding of unit capabilities, the Air Force at large, and joint and coalition forces. They have an enterprise perspective with a thorough understanding of the structure and relationships needed to accomplish strategic objectives. The strategic vision level focuses on the effects an Airman can have across a major command, a theater, the Air Force, or even other services or the Department of Defense.

## Chapter 3

### THE ENLISTED FORCE STRUCTURE

**3.1. Tiers, Ranks, and Roles.** The enlisted force structure is comprised of three distinct and separate tiers, each correlating to increased levels of education, training, and experience, which build increasing levels of proficiency. The three tiers correlate to increased leadership and managerial responsibilities, with each tier building on the responsibilities of the previous one. The tiers are junior enlisted Airmen, Noncommissioned Officer, and Senior Noncommissioned Officer, with multiple ranks in each tier. Each rank includes an official abbreviation and term of address, however Airmen senior or equivalent to the member may use first names and/or call signs. Senior Noncommissioned Officers are expected to have mastered Noncommissioned Officer responsibilities. Likewise, Noncommissioned Officers are expected to have mastered junior enlisted Airmen responsibilities. The primary goal in each tier is mission accomplishment. The Enlisted Career Path Pyramid (Attachment 3) is a guide for all enlisted Airmen to outline developmental opportunities as they progress through the tiers during a career, both within and outside their primary Air Force Specialty Code.

3.1.1. Junior Enlisted Airmen Tier. This tier consists of Airman Basic, Airman, Airman First Class, and Senior Airman. Initial enlisted accessions enter the Air Force in this tier (Airman Basic, Airman, or Airman First Class), and focus on adapting to military requirements, being part of the profession of arms, achieving occupational proficiency, and learning how to be highly productive members of the Air Force. In this tier, Airmen prepare for increased responsibilities and ensure they are trained, qualified, and ready to operate, both at home station and in an expeditionary environment. Junior enlisted Airmen are introduced to the institutional competencies and continue to broaden their technical skills.

3.1.1.1. Airman Basic and newly enlisted Airmen. Airmen Basics, as well as Airmen who initially enlist into the Air Force at the Airman or Airman First Class rank, are primarily adapting to the requirements of the military profession, acquiring knowledge of military customs, courtesies, and Air Force standards, as well as striving to attain occupational proficiency. At their first duty station, they perform basic tasks under close supervision. The written abbreviation for Airman Basic is “AB” and the official term of address is “Airman Basic” or “Airman.”

3.1.1.2. Airman. Airmen are still learning and adapting to the military profession, and are expected to understand and conform to military standards, customs, and courtesies. Airmen begin to show occupational proficiency at basic tasks and still require significant supervision and support. The written abbreviation is “Amn” and the official term of address is “Airman.”

3.1.1.3. Airman First Class. Airmen First Class fully comply with Air Force standards and devote time to increasing their skills in their career fields and the military profession, while becoming effective team members. After a short time at their first duty station, they are often skilled on numerous tasks. Continued supervision is essential to ongoing occupational and professional growth. Typically, the 5-skill level is earned at this grade. The written abbreviation is “A1C” and the official term of address is “Airman First Class” or “Airman.”

3.1.1.4. Senior Airman. Senior Airmen commonly perform as skilled technicians and trainers. They begin developing supervisory and leadership skills through progressive responsibility, completion of Airman Leadership School, individual study, and mentoring. Senior Airmen strive to establish themselves as effective trainers through the maximum use of guidance and assistance from officer and enlisted leaders. They may serve as first-line supervisors upon completion of Airman Leadership School. The written abbreviation is “SrA” and the official term of address is “Senior Airman” or “Airman.”

3.1.2. Noncommissioned Officer Tier. This tier consists of Staff Sergeant and Technical Sergeant. Noncommissioned Officers continue occupational growth and become expert technicians while developing as leaders, supervisors, managers, and mentors in the profession of arms. Additionally, Noncommissioned Officers ensure they keep themselves and subordinates trained, qualified, and ready to deploy and operate at home station and in an expeditionary environment. In this tier, Noncommissioned Officers understand and internalize institutional competencies in preparation for increased responsibilities, while pursuing professional development through a variety of means, including Enlisted Professional Military Education.

3.1.2.1. Staff Sergeant. Staff Sergeants are primarily highly skilled technicians with supervisory and training responsibilities. Typically, at this rank they earn the 7-skill level. They must continuously strive to further their development as technicians, supervisors, and leaders through professional development opportunities, including Air Force and Joint Enlisted Professional Military Education. They are responsible for their subordinates’ development and the effective accomplishment of all assigned tasks. They must ensure proper and effective use of all resources under their control to ensure the mission is effectively and efficiently accomplished. They should consider broadening opportunities through special duties and the Development Special Duty selection process. The written abbreviation is “SSgt” and the official term of address is “Staff Sergeant” or “Sergeant.”

3.1.2.2. Technical Sergeant. Technical Sergeants are often their organizations’ technical experts. They continuously strive to further their development as technicians, supervisors, leaders and mentors through professional development opportunities, including Air Force and Joint Enlisted Professional Military Education. They should consider broadening opportunities through special duties and the Development Special Duty selection process. The written abbreviation is “TSgt” and the official term of address is “Technical Sergeant” or “Sergeant.” Technical Sergeants must complete Noncommissioned Officer Academy prior to assuming the rank of Master Sergeant.

3.1.3. Senior Noncommissioned Officer Tier. This tier consists of Master Sergeant (MSgt), Senior Master Sergeant (SMSgt), and Chief Master Sergeant (CMSgt). Senior Noncommissioned Officers serve as leaders in the profession of arms. They advise, supervise and mentor others to further grow and develop junior enlisted Airmen and Noncommissioned Officers under their charge. In this tier, Senior Noncommissioned Officers continue professional development through a variety of means, including Enlisted Professional Military Education. They have a great deal of leadership experience they use to leverage resources and personnel against a variety of mission requirements. Senior Noncommissioned Officers participate in decision-making processes on a variety of technical, operational, and organizational issues.

3.1.3.1. Master Sergeant. MSgts are technical experts, transitioning from first-line supervisors to leaders of operational competence. This rank carries significantly increased responsibilities and requires a broad perspective and greater leadership and management skills. MSgts are expected to accomplish the mission through the employment of teams by merging subordinates' talents, skills, and resources with other teams' functions. MSgts must complete an associate degree or higher from a nationally or regionally accredited academic institution, if not already earned, to become eligible for promotion to SMSgt. MSgts continue their professional development through functional opportunities, as well as Air Force and Joint Enlisted Professional Military Education. They are also eligible to attend sister-service or International Senior Noncommissioned Officer Professional Military Education. They should consider broadening opportunities through special duties and the Development Special Duty selection process. Air Reserve Component MSgts must complete the Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy before assuming the grade of SMSgt. The written abbreviation is "MSgt" and the official term of address is "Master Sergeant" or "Sergeant."

3.1.3.2. Senior Master Sergeant. SMSgts are experienced, operational leaders skilled at merging teams' talents, skills, and resources with other organizations. SMSgts continue to develop their leadership and management skills and earn their 9-skill level. SMSgts continue their professional development through Air Force and Joint Enlisted Professional Military Education. They are also eligible to attend sister-service or International Senior Noncommissioned Officer Professional Military Education. The written abbreviation is "SMSgt," and the official term of address is "Senior Master Sergeant", "Senior" or "Sergeant." Senior master sergeants must complete Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy prior to assuming the grade of CMSgt.

3.1.3.3. Chief Master Sergeant. CMSgts serve in the highest enlisted rank and hold strategic leadership positions with tremendous influence at all levels of the Air Force. They continue to develop personal leadership and management skills to prepare for ever increasing positions of responsibility. They are charged with mentoring and developing junior enlisted personnel and strongly influence the professional development of Company Grade Officers. They bring substantial operational and occupational experience as well as strong institutional skills to their organizations and assigned tasks. All newly selected Regular Air Force CMSgts will attend the Chief Leadership Course. Newly selected Air Reserve Component CMSgts attend either the Chief Leadership Course or their Chief Orientation Course. In this tier, CMSgts continue professional development through senior leader developmental opportunities and career-broadening assignments. CMSgts serve in key leadership positions such as Combatant Command Senior Enlisted Leader, Command Chief Master Sergeant, Group Superintendent, Professional Military Education Commandants, Functional and Career Field Managers. The written abbreviation is "CMSgt" and the official term of address is "Chief Master Sergeant" or "Chief."

## Chapter 4

### RESPONSIBILITIES

**4.1. Commanders and Directors.** Commanders and directors foster a professional military culture by ensuring supervisors, wingmen and enlisted Air Force members each do their part to follow this guidance.

**4.2. Supervisors.** Supervisors of enlisted Air Force members, whether officer, civilian or enlisted have a specific responsibility to ensure assigned enlisted members comply with standards explained in this guidance and correct them when they deviate.

**4.3. Wingmen.** The term wingmen, in this instance, refers to all Air Force members, officer, civilian or enlisted. Wingmen bear an inherent responsibility to understand this guidance and assist all enlisted Air Force members in meeting expectations explained within.

**4.4. Junior Enlisted Airmen Responsibilities.** Junior enlisted Airmen responsibilities include:

4.4.1. Demonstrate a foundational understanding of what it means to be an Airman in the profession of arms. Understand, accept and embody the Air Force core values and Airman's Creed, and exhibit professional behavior, military bearing, respect for authority and high standards of dress and personal appearance, both on- and off-duty, at home and abroad. Correct other Airmen who violate standards.

4.4.2. Accept, execute, and complete all duties, instructions, responsibilities, and lawful orders in a timely and efficient manner. Place the requirements of official duties and responsibilities ahead of personal desires.

4.4.3. Detect and correct conduct and behavior that may place themselves or others at risk, and issue lawful orders when placed in charge of a work activity or task involving other junior enlisted Airmen.

4.4.4. Begin to learn and demonstrate the institutional and occupational competencies outlined in Air Force Doctrine Document 1-1, *Leadership and Force Development*; Air Force Manual 36-2647, *Institutional Competency Development and Management*; and the appropriate Career Field Education and Training Plan. These competencies are gained through a combination of education (e.g., Professional Military Education and academic programs), training (e.g., basic military training and career development courses), and experience (e.g., primary, special duty and professional organization participation).

4.4.5. Meet all pre-deployment and mission requirements and maintain the highest level of technical readiness. Attain and maintain a skill level commensurate with rank, as well as a high degree of proficiency in duties outlined in the Career Field Education and Training Plan.

4.4.6. Increase personal resilience by understanding and mastering the social, physical, mental and spiritual domains of Comprehensive Airman Fitness, and encouraging others to do the same.

4.4.6.1. Be mentally ready to accomplish the mission. Issues that can affect and detract from mental readiness and quality of life are financial problems, sexual harassment or assault, discrimination, stress, marital problems and substance abuse. These issues can prevent Airmen from focusing on the mission, diminish motivation, erode a positive

attitude and reduce work quality. Be aware of warning signs and seek appropriate assistance through the chain of command, chaplain, medical community and helping agencies, and help others do the same.

- 4.4.6.1.1. Be alert for signs of depression or suicide. If depressed or suicidal, seek immediate assistance. Practice and teach the Department of Defense “Ask, Care and Escort” concept for suicide prevention. Ask - “Are you thinking about harming yourself or others?” Care - calmly take control of the situation, show genuine concern and listen. Escort (not direct) - the person to mental health, the chaplain, or First Sergeant. Call for help but never leave the person alone. Junior enlisted Airmen are critical to suicide prevention efforts.
- 4.4.6.1.2. Be alert for behavioral changes and/or signs of traumatic stress in themselves and others, and seek assistance.
- 4.4.6.2. Be physically ready to accomplish the mission. Actively participate in the Air Force fitness program and always meet Air Force fitness standards by maintaining a year-round physical conditioning program that emphasizes total fitness, to include: aerobic conditioning, muscular fitness training and healthy eating.
- 4.4.6.3. Be socially ready to accomplish the mission. Build relationships and networks that promote well-being and optimal performance. Teamwork, communication, connectedness and social support are key components of social readiness.
- 4.4.6.4. Be spiritually ready to accomplish the mission. Spiritual readiness is the proactive practice of establishing a sense of purpose or personal priorities to develop the skills needed in times of stress, hardship and tragedy. Spiritual readiness may or may not include religious activities.
- 4.4.7. Be a knowledgeable Airman. Stay informed on issues affecting the Air Force using Air Force media sources (e.g., af.mil and my.af.mil). Ensure no discredit to the Air Force or compromise of operational security when using personal and government information systems, including social media.
- 4.4.8. Contribute to a culture and climate of dignity and respect by supporting and enforcing a zero tolerance policy for sexual harassment, sexual assault, and discrimination. Know and understand the wingman concept. Airmen take care of fellow Airmen. A good wingman shares a bond with other Airmen and intervenes to maintain an environment free of any behaviors that hinder an Airman’s ability to maximize their potential and contribution. Positively support one another, both on- and off-duty.
- 4.4.9. Demonstrate effective followership by enthusiastically supporting, explaining and promoting leaders’ decisions. Develop innovative ways to improve processes and provide suggestions up the chain of command that will directly contribute to unit and mission success. Promote a culture of innovation and continuous process improvement to identify and resolve deficiencies.
- 4.4.10. Continue to pursue personal and professional development through education and involvement. Promote camaraderie, embrace esprit de corps and act as an Air Force ambassador (e.g., join professional organizations and/or participate in organization and community events).

**4.5. Noncommissioned Officer Responsibilities.** In addition to all junior enlisted Airmen responsibilities, Noncommissioned Officers responsibilities include:

4.5.1. Lead and develop subordinates and exercise effective followership in mission accomplishment. Noncommissioned Officers have the authority to issue lawful orders to complete assigned tasks in accordance with Article 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

4.5.2. Increase knowledge and understanding of, and mentor junior enlisted Airmen on the institutional and occupational competencies required to accomplish the mission. These competencies are gained through a combination of education (e.g., academic programs and Professional Military Education), training (e.g., on-the-job training), and experience (e.g., mentoring and/or participating in professional organizations).

4.5.3. Increase personal and subordinate resilience by championing the social, physical, mental and spiritual domains of Comprehensive Airman Fitness and encouraging others to do the same.

4.5.3.1. Champion social readiness. Develop and lead team-building or networking activities in the unit and encourage subordinates to participate in outside social engagements.

4.5.3.2. Champion physical readiness. Lead the way by promoting, supporting, and participating in unit physical training activities and the Air Force fitness program. Incorporate physical training into the team's duty schedules as the mission allows.

4.5.3.3. Champion mental readiness. Be actively aware of issues in subordinates that can impact mental readiness and mission effectiveness. Address issues negatively impacting mental readiness, and take positive steps to resolve them in a responsible manner.

4.5.3.4. Champion spiritual readiness to help accomplish the mission. Allow for and encourage subordinates to develop spiritual skills needed in times of stress, hardship and tragedy. This may or may not include religious activities.

4.5.4. Demonstrate and facilitate a climate of effective followership by willingly owning, explaining and promoting leaders' decisions. Develop innovative ways to improve processes, reduce costs and improve efficiency and provide suggestions up the chain of command that will directly contribute to unit and mission success.

4.5.5. If senior in grade, accept responsibility for assuming the role of leader. Responsibility and accountability increase commensurate with grade. Within enlisted grades, Noncommissioned Officers precedence over all junior enlisted Airmen and other Noncommissioned Officers according to rank. Within the same grade, use: date of rank, total active federal military service date, pay date, and date of birth, in this order, to determine seniority. **NOTE:** In some circumstances Noncommissioned Officers who are lower in rank may be placed in charge of other Noncommissioned Officers of the same grade (i.e., a TSgt, with a date of rank of 1 Apr 08, is placed in charge of a another TSgt, with a date of rank of 1 Apr 07). When placed in charge, these Noncommissioned Officers have the authority to issue lawful orders appropriate for mission accomplishment.

4.5.6. Actively lead and supervise subordinates. Stay professionally engaged with subordinates on a daily basis both on and off-duty. Understand a subordinate's environment by visiting living spaces and installation support facilities (e.g., dining facilities, chapel centers,

recreation centers, dormitories, and enlisted clubs) to be familiar with off-duty opportunities and living conditions. Mentorship is a critical component of leadership; Noncommissioned Officers must use professional and personal experiences to positively mentor others.

4.5.7. Guide, train, instruct and develop subordinates so they are technically ready to accomplish the mission and ensure they are prepared to accept increased levels of authority and responsibility.

4.5.8. Remain keenly aware of individual and group dynamics affecting readiness and safety. Identify those exhibiting high-risk behaviors, intervene, and deter further unsafe practices.

4.5.9. Appropriately recognize and reward individuals whose military conduct and duty performance clearly exceed established standards. Ensure subordinates are held accountable when they do not meet established standards.

4.5.10. Provide feedback and counseling to subordinates on performance, career opportunities, promotions, benefits, and entitlements. Feedback and counseling are required utilizing the Airman Comprehensive Assessment. However, continuous informal and formal feedback, mentorship, and counseling opportunities exist to optimize a subordinate's potential and performance. On an annual basis, Noncommissioned Officers must discuss and provide a copy of the Air Force Benefits Fact Sheet to subordinates during feedback.

4.5.11. Promote a culture of Airmen who are flexible and capable of mastering multiple tasks and mission requirements. Pursue opportunities outside primary Air Force Specialty Code, encourage retraining as needed to balance the force and meet mission requirements. Promote a culture of innovation and continuous process improvement to identify and resolve deficiencies.

4.5.12. Complete and promote Professional Military Education and professional enhancement courses to develop and cultivate leadership skills and military professionalism. Continue personal and subordinate development.

**4.6. Senior Noncommissioned Officer Responsibilities.** In addition to meeting all junior enlisted Airmen and Noncommissioned Officer responsibilities, Senior Noncommissioned Officers responsibilities include:

4.6.1. Epitomize excellence, professionalism, pride, and competence, serving as a role model for all Airmen to emulate. Reflect the highest qualities of a leader and professional and provide highly effective leadership. A Senior Noncommissioned Officer's primary purpose is mission accomplishment. Senior Noncommissioned Officers must lead people and manage programs while maintaining the highest level of readiness to ensure mission success.

4.6.2. Translate leaders' direction into specific tasks and responsibilities their teams understand and execute. Senior Noncommissioned Officers must study leaders' decisions to understand their rationale and goals. They then must fully leverage their personal experience and knowledge to more effectively accomplish the mission.

4.6.3. Help leaders make informed decisions. Senior Noncommissioned Officers draw upon their knowledge and experience to provide constructive input to best meet the challenges facing their organizations.

4.6.4. Be an active, visible leader. Deliberately develop junior enlisted Airmen, Noncommissioned Officers, fellow Senior Noncommissioned Officers and Company Grade Officers into better followers, leaders, and supervisors.

4.6.5. Secure and promote Professional Military Education and professional enhancement courses for themselves and subordinates to develop and cultivate leadership skills and military professionalism. Provide time for subordinates to study Career Development Course and Professional Military Education material during duty time, when appropriate. Complete an associate's degree through a nationally or regionally accredited academic institution, if not already earned, and continue development for self and subordinates through available education, leadership lectures and seminars, and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force Reading List.

4.6.6. Support civilian and officer professional development by sharing knowledge and experience to best meet the organization's mission requirements. Build and maintain professional relationships with both, striving to create effective leadership teams.

4.6.7. Ensure money, facilities and other resources are utilized in an effective and efficient manner and in the best interest of the Air Force. Plan resource utilization, replenishment, and budget allocation to ensure personnel are provided the equipment and resources needed to effectively accomplish the mission. Understand, manage, and explain manning requirements and capabilities. Promote a culture of innovation and continuous process improvement to identify and resolve deficiencies.

4.6.8. Promote responsible behaviors within all Airmen. Readily detect and correct unsafe or irresponsible behaviors that impact unit or individual readiness. Promote peer involvement in detecting and correcting those behaviors, and recognize and reward Airmen who properly employ risk management philosophies.

4.6.9. While every Airman has a duty and obligation to act professionally and meet all Air Force standards at all times, Senior Noncommissioned Officers have a special obligation and responsibility to ensure the Air Force retains a climate and culture of dignity and respect, as outlined in Air Force Policy Directive-1, *Air Force Culture*. Senior Noncommissioned Officers who fail to monitor, correct and advise subordinates and leaders when needed have not executed their responsibility.

## Chapter 5

### ENLISTED DUTY TITLES

**5.1. Enlisted Duty Titles.** When properly applied, duty titles facilitate a quick understanding of a person's role and level of responsibility. Enlisted duty titles are assigned based upon the scope of responsibility and the duties being performed. The following duty titles are the official, authorized duty titles for the enlisted force. Exceptions include special positions listed in Chapter 6 and limited instances when a person's position or duties do not meet the criteria listed below. In such circumstances, enlisted personnel will have a duty title that most accurately reflects their day-to-day duties. When published, duty titles specified in functional directives will be utilized.

5.1.1. Supervisor. Used for junior enlisted Airmen and Noncommissioned Officers who are first line supervisors (e.g., Heavy Equipment Supervisor and Shift Supervisor). Junior enlisted Airmen will not have the duty title "Supervisor" unless they are at least a SrA, an Airman Leadership School graduate, and supervise the work of others.

5.1.2. Noncommissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC). Used only for Noncommissioned Officers and Senior Noncommissioned Officers in charge of a work center or element. Noncommissioned Officers in Charge typically have subordinate supervisors (e.g., NCOIC, Installation Security and Noncommissioned Officer in Charge, Outbound Assignments). Noncommissioned Officer in Charge is also used for those whose primary duty is a unit-wide program or function management (e.g., NCOIC, Unit Training Management and Noncommissioned Officer in Charge, Resource Management) even if they do not directly supervise personnel.

5.1.3. Section Chief. Used for Noncommissioned Officers and Senior Noncommissioned Officers in charge of a section with at least two subordinate work centers or elements (e.g., Section Chief, Network Control Center). Section chiefs are typically Senior Noncommissioned Officers and the rank will vary depending upon the size of the section (number of enlisted personnel, number of work centers, and scope of responsibilities).

5.1.4. Flight Chief. Used for Noncommissioned Officers and Senior Noncommissioned Officers who are the enlisted leaders of a flight (e.g., Flight Chief, Information Systems Flight; and Flight Chief, Operations Flight). Flight chiefs are typically Senior Noncommissioned Officers and the rank will vary depending upon the size of the flight (number of enlisted personnel, number of work centers, and scope of responsibilities).

5.1.5. Superintendent. Used for Senior Noncommissioned Officers in charge of squadron or wing level functions. Superintendents are typically a CMSgt and occasionally a SMSgt or MSgt at squadron level and below (e.g., Aircraft Maintenance Squadron Superintendent and Command Post Superintendent). Only Senior Noncommissioned Officers will hold the duty title of Superintendent.

5.1.6. Manager. In addition to the special Senior Noncommissioned Officer positions of Air Force Career Field Manager and Major Command Functional Manager, the title of manager is used for Noncommissioned Officers and Senior Noncommissioned Officers who are program, project, and policy managers at Numbered Air Force, Major Command, Direct Reporting Unit, Field Operating Agency, Joint Staff, or Air Staff levels. They may or may not have personnel working for them and may be the enlisted leader of the branch, division, or directorate (e.g.,

Manager, Intelligence Systems Integration and Manager, Joint Operations Analysis and Planning).

5.1.7. Chief. Used for CMSgts who are program, project, or policy managers at Numbered Air Force, Major Command, Direct Reporting Unit, Field Operating Agency, Joint Staff, or Air Staff. They may or may not have personnel working for them and may be the enlisted leader of the branch, division, or directorate (e.g., Chief, Air Force Enlisted Force Development; and Chief, Airmen Assignments). **NOTE:** Senior Enlisted Advisor, Senior Enlisted Leader and Chief Enlisted Manager duty titles are only used when holding a designated and approved position. Approved use of the title Senior Enlisted Advisor or Senior Enlisted Leader is not always synonymous with the role of a Command Chief Master Sergeant.

## Chapter 6

### SPECIAL ENLISTED POSITIONS

**6.1. Special Enlisted Positions.** Enlisted Airmen may serve in a variety of special leadership or duty positions inside as well as outside of their functional specialty. These positions include, but are not limited to:

6.1.1. Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force. The Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force is the senior enlisted leader of the Air Force and takes precedence over all enlisted members. The Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force provides leadership to the enlisted force and advises the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Secretary of the Air Force, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Secretary of Defense on enlisted matters. The Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force communicates with the force, serves on boards and committees for numerous organizations affecting Airmen, testifies before Congress, and is the Air Force career field manager for command chief master sergeants and group superintendents. The Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force also consults with the Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman and sister service senior enlisted advisors on issues affecting all enlisted members; engages with foreign military leadership regarding theater security cooperation and partner nation development efforts; represents the Air Force to the American public, professional organizations and the media; and manages the Air Force Order of the Sword Program. The written abbreviation is “CMSAF” and the official term of address is “Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force” or “Chief.”

6.1.2. Command Chief Master Sergeant and Senior Enlisted Leader. The Command Chief Master Sergeant is the senior enlisted leader in a wing, Numbered Air Force, Major Command, Direct Reporting Unit, Field Operating Agency, state or other similar organization. The equivalent to a Command Chief Master Sergeant in a Combatant Command or Joint Task Force is a Combatant Command or Joint Task Force Senior Enlisted Leader. The Command Chief Master Sergeant and/or Senior Enlisted Leader provides general supervision to the command's enlisted force and is responsible for advising commanders and staff on mission effectiveness, professional development, recognition, key enlisted Airmen nominations and hires, accelerated promotions, performance evaluations, military readiness, training, utilization, health, morale, and welfare of the organization's enlisted, and takes action to address shortfalls or challenges. They also regularly visit Airmen, to include traveling to geographically separated units/elements; interact with sister service counterparts; serve as a liaison to and work closely with the local community; actively lead in the organization's fitness program; and ensure the enlisted force is ready to meet deployment requirements. Regular Air Force Command Chief Master Sergeants and/or Senior Enlisted Leaders serve on the enlisted force distribution panel by advising the senior rater and panel on enlisted Airmen's potential to serve in the next higher grade. They assist and advise in the selection and nomination of enlisted Airmen for positions of greater responsibility, to include developmental special duties. The Total Force Command Chief Master Sergeant is the functional manager for group superintendents and first sergeants in their organization. The Command Chief Master Sergeant performs other duties as required/directed by their commander.

6.1.3. Air Force Career Field Manager. Enlisted Air Force Career Field Managers are typically CMSgts. Normally these positions are located at Headquarters Air Force and are responsible

for organizing and managing one or more enlisted career fields. Their responsibilities include establishing career field entry requirements, managing trained personnel requirements, and developing and managing career-long training plans' requirements and programs. They also construct viable career paths, evaluate training effectiveness, monitor health and manning of the career field, and provide input on manning, personnel policies and programs. Air Force Career Field Managers also regularly visit Airmen, to include traveling to geographically separated units/elements. Additionally, through the use of Enlisted Development Teams, they execute the progression and succession planning to ensure there are sufficient personnel and skill sets available to accomplish the mission. As functional experts, they ensure their career fields are responsive to both current and future needs of the Air Force. They rely heavily on collaboration and communicate directly with other Headquarters Air Force offices on issues impacting their career field and with their respective Major Command and Field Operating Agency enlisted career field representatives and Air Education and Training Command Training Managers to disseminate Air Force and career field policies and program requirements.

6.1.4. Major Command Functional Manager. Enlisted Major Command Functional Managers are Senior Noncommissioned Officers who manage designated enlisted career fields and serve as the Major Command liaisons for their respective Air Force Career Field Managers. They regularly visit organizations in the Major Command they oversee and monitor the health and manning of their career fields within their command and elevate concerns to the Air Force Career Field Managers. They manage command training for their career field and coordinate command training and personnel issues across their Major Command staff and with Air Force Career Field Managers. They disseminate Air Force and career field policies and program requirements affecting their career field throughout the Major Command. They coordinate with the Air Force Personnel Center (Regular Air Force only), through their Major Command/A1, to distribute personnel throughout the Major Command to ensure proper command prioritization of allocated/assigned personnel resources. They provide functional and subject matter expertise to Air Education and Training Command Training Managers to develop new or modify/improve existing training programs.

6.1.5. Group Superintendent. Group Superintendents provide leadership, management, and general supervision of the organization's enlisted force; and guidance in organizing, equipping, training, and mobilizing the group to meet home station and expeditionary mission requirements. Regular Air Force superintendents may support and advise the squadron commanders and superintendents prior to the enlisted force distribution panel on promotion eligible Airmen's performance and potential to serve in the next higher grade. They also assist and advise in the selection and nomination of enlisted Airmen for positions of greater responsibility, to include developmental special duties. Total Force superintendents manage and direct resource activities; interpret and enforce policies and applicable directives; establish control procedures to meet mission goals and standards; and actively support and maintain robust recognition programs. They work in concert with other enlisted leaders such as squadron superintendents and first sergeants to oversee the readiness, training, health, morale, welfare, and quality of life of assigned personnel. They represent the commander at various meetings, visit Airmen in the group, participate on advisory councils and boards, interact with sister service counterparts as required, and actively lead in the organization's fitness program. They perform other duties as directed by the group commander.

6.1.6. Commandant. Commandants are assigned at each Airmen Leadership School, Noncommissioned Officer Academy, collocated Professional Military Education Center, Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy, the First Sergeant Academy and the Chief Leadership Course. They implement and enforce policies, procedures, and directives directly related to the accomplishment of the school's course of instruction. They analyze data; provide direction and vision; and ensure effectiveness via curriculum evaluations, faculty mentoring, student achievement/feedback, and contact with senior leaders. Additionally, they coordinate frequent visits from high-ranking military and civilian leadership.

6.1.7. Enlisted Engagement Manager/International Affairs. Enlisted Engagement Managers plan, coordinate, and conduct enlisted engagements with partner nations on behalf of Secretary of the Air Force, International Affairs. They serve at the Major Command and Headquarters Air Force.

6.1.8. Enlisted Legislative Fellows. Enlisted Legislative Fellows are Senior Noncommissioned Officers who receive instruction and hands-on experience on Capitol Hill through education and development activities consisting of an intensive orientation of Congress; a full time assignment to the staff of a member, committee, or support agency of congress in Washington D.C.; and periodic seminars throughout the assignment. They write and develop research for potential legislative issues of immediate or ongoing concern to the Air Force and nation. The Enlisted Legislative Fellows are assigned to the Legislative Liaison, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force.

6.1.9. Command Chief Master Sergeant Executive Assistant. Command Chief Executive Assistants perform assistant duties in support of a Command Chief Master Sergeant or Combatant Command Senior Enlisted Leader at the wing, Numbered Air Force, Direct Reporting Unit/Field Operating Agency, Major Command and Combatant Command levels, as well as the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force. They serve as personal assistants who oversee tasks requiring attention and pass pertinent data, information, and insight from the staff to the Command Chief Master Sergeant and/or Senior Enlisted Leader, as well as other duties as required.

6.1.10. Defense Attaché. Defense attachés serve in US embassies in countries around the world. They manage and maintain Defense Noncommissioned Officer Office budget and fiscal data, maintain Defense Attaché information files; coordinate US Naval ship visits and US military aircraft over-flight and landing clearances with host country officials; coordinate office support requirements with embassy officials; and perform office administrative and support duties according to Defense Intelligence Agency standards.

6.1.11. Inspections Superintendent. The inspections superintendent provides feedback, support, and assistance to the Inspector General and Director of Inspections for implementing the Air Force Inspection System at Field Operating Agencies/Direct Reporting Units, wings and wing equivalents, Major Commands, and Headquarters Air Force. They advise the Inspector General and Director of Inspections on all activities related to the Air Force Inspections Systems.

6.1.12. Language and Culture Advisor. Language and culture advisors serve as key advisors and consultants to commanders and supervisors on issues pertaining to foreign language and regional culture. They prepare written reports, briefs and summaries based on specific requirements, and serve as an interpreter/translator as required.

6.1.13. Enlisted Aide. Enlisted aides perform tasks and details that, if performed by general or flag officers, would be at the expense of the officer's primary military and official duties. Duties relate to the support of military and official responsibilities of the general or flag officer and include assisting with the care, cleanliness, and order of assigned quarters, uniforms and military personal equipment, as well as planning, preparing, arranging, and conducting official social functions and activities, such as receptions, parties, and dinners.

6.1.14. Protocol Specialist. Protocol specialists provide expertise and support for all protocol matters at the installation, wing, Numbered Air Force, Major Command, and Headquarters levels. They perform, manage and direct all administrative and procedural protocol duties and responsibilities, and provide protocol support for distinguished visitors at all levels. Support includes escort duties, and planning and executing program itinerary visits, official ceremonies and special events.

6.1.15. Unit Deployment Manager. Unit Deployment Managers are the principal advisor to the organization commander on all issues related to deployment readiness and execution. They implement and execute commander-directed deployment actions for assigned personnel and cargo; monitor and maintain unit deployment readiness statistics; implement commander, Major Command, and Headquarters Air Force deployment readiness guidance; and exercise general supervision over assigned squadron personnel in all matters related to deployment readiness and execution.

6.1.16. Missile Facility Manager. Missile facility managers supervise daily activities at the missile alert facility. They perform routine equipment inspections and emergency operating procedures, and respond to actions directed by the missile combat crew to ensure proper operations of the facility.

6.1.17. Courier. Couriers safeguard and deliver armed forces courier service material. They provide adequate protection for material from receipt through delivery or to storage, and caution handlers to exercise care in storing material. Couriers verify each item by identification number when receipting for or delivering material, and maintain constant surveillance over material in custody on the courier route.

6.1.18. Technical Training Instructor. Technical training instructors provide initial skills training and education for their Air Force specialty. They are technical experts in their career field and work closely with Air Force career field managers to develop training and education requirements necessary to award the 3-skill level; and plan, organize, and direct the training of all non-prior service Airmen and career Airmen cross training into a new Air Force specialty.

**6.2. Developmental Special Duties.** Enlisted Airmen in the rank of SSgt through MSgt may have the opportunity to serve in one of ten Developmental Special Duty positions. Developmental Special Duties are identified as such due to their unique leadership roles and the Airman's responsibility to mentor and mold future leaders. To ensure the highest quality Airmen are assigned to these positions, the Air Force has implemented a nomination process. The nomination process provides commanders, through their respective major command, an opportunity to nominate the most qualified Airmen to fill these critical positions while providing a developmental career path. The Developmental Special Duties are:

6.2.1. **(8B200)** Academy Military Training Noncommissioned Officer. Academy Military Trainers lead, mentor, instruct, develop, and supervise United States Air Force Academy

cadets. They serve as the principal advisor to the Cadet Squadron Commander on all issues relating to cadets. Academy Military Trainers prepare cadets to support mission requirements, provide military training, and exercise general supervision and leadership to ensure cadet and squadron success.

6.2.2. **(8H000)** Airman Dorm Leader. Airmen Dorm Leaders perform full time as a manager of Air Force unaccompanied housing facilities. They are responsible for daily operations to include mentoring residents and assisting them in their adjustment to military life; ensuring residents comply with directives and military living standards; and assessing good order and discipline. They also manage facilities and bases areas; perform budget and program execution; and maintain supplies, furnishings, and equipment necessary for providing quality facilities.

6.2.3. **(8C000)** Airman and Family Readiness Center Noncommissioned Officer. Airman and Family Readiness Center Noncommissioned Officers are the principal military advisor to the A&FRC director and staff on matters regarding readiness, resilience, and deployment of Airmen and their families. They support the Airmen and Family Readiness Centers overall functional mission to ensure programs and services are responsive, and they develop and provide personal and family readiness services related to pre-deployment, deployment, sustainment, redeployment, reintegration, and post-deployment education and consultation.

6.2.4. **(8G000)** United States Air Force Honor Guard. Honor guard Airmen represent the Air Force at ceremonies where protocol or custom dictate using an honor guard or military escort. They symbolize the United States Air Force to American and foreign dignitaries at public ceremonies; participate in Air Force and joint service arrival and departure ceremonies for the President, foreign heads of state, and other national or international dignitaries; and perform military funeral honors for United States Air Force Regular Air Force, retired personnel, and veterans according to prescribing publication. Honor guard Noncommissioned Officers lead and supervise Airmen serving on the United States Air Force Honor Guard team performing duties described above. **NOTE:** Regular Air Force United States Air Force Honor Guard Noncommissioned Officers are selected through the Developmental Special Duty nomination process.

6.2.5. **(8A100)** Career Assistance Advisor. Career Assistance Advisors serve at the wing level and are responsible for managing Career Assistance Advisors and First Term Airman Center programs, as well as advising commanders and supervisors on force management and professional enhancement. Career Assistance Advisors also advise Airmen on career progression and planning, monitor mandatory pay and benefits briefing programs, and conduct advertising and publicity programs.

6.2.6. **(8F000)** First Sergeant. First sergeants provide a dedicated focal point for all readiness, health, morale, welfare, and quality of life issues within their organizations. At home station and in expeditionary environments, their primary responsibility is to build and maintain a mission-ready force. First sergeants derive their authority from the unit commander and advise the commander, command chief master sergeant, and other enlisted Airmen on morale, discipline, mentoring, well-being, recognition, and professional development. They ensure the enlisted force understands the commander's policies, goals, and objectives, and conduct quality force reviews on all enlisted performance reports, decoration recommendations, and other personnel actions. Working with their fellow Senior Noncommissioned Officers and supervisors, first sergeants ensure equitable and effective discipline, and the highest esprit de

corps. First sergeants work closely with Command Chief Master Sergeants to prepare the organization's enlisted force to best execute all assigned tasks. They actively participate in the First Sergeant Council and other activities that support the needs of the military community.

6.2.7. **(8B000)** Military Training Instructor. Military Training Instructors are responsible for shaping newly enlisted trainees into Airmen ready to serve in the United States Air Force. They must exhibit the highest levels of professional behavior, military bearing, respect for authority, and dress and personal appearance. They plan, organize, and direct basic and initial military training, and determine requirements for training, facilities, space, equipment, visual aids, and supplies. They instruct trainees in dormitory setup, drill, and other training subjects using demonstration-performance and lecture methods, and inspect and evaluate military training activities, personnel, and facilities.

6.2.8. **(8B100)** Military Training Leader. Military Training Leaders supervise all assigned non-prior service Airmen during technical training. They evaluate standards of conduct, performance, military bearing, and discipline while scheduling and conducting military training functions. They establish incoming, outgoing, and student entry briefings; conduct individual and group interviews; motivate personnel to develop military attitudes, effective human relations, and social skills for improving interpersonal and military relations; and assist students in their personal adjustment to military life.

6.2.9. **(8T000)** Professional Military Education Instructor. Professional Military Education Instructors use informal lectures, case studies, teaching interviews, guided discussions, and a variety of other teaching methods to provide the Professional Military Education instruction and education necessary to facilitate knowledge and understanding of the Air Force institutional competencies. They plan, organize, and direct Professional Military Education programs at Airmen Leadership School, Noncommissioned Officer Academy, Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy and the Chief Leadership Course. Professional Military Education Instructors are responsible for developing and delivering Professional Military Education courses that develop the institutional competencies for enlisted Airmen along their career continuum. As role models for other Airmen, Professional Military Education instructors must exhibit the highest levels of professional behavior, military bearing, respect for authority, and dress and personal appearance.

6.2.10. **(8R000)** Recruiter. The Air Force recruiter is the first Airman most potential enlistees will ever meet. They represent the Air Force in communities across America and must exhibit the highest levels of professional behavior, military bearing, respect for authority and dress and personal appearance. They are responsible for interviewing, screening, testing and evaluating applicants from civilian sources; assisting and participating in special events such as state and municipal ceremonies, exhibits, fairs, parades, centennials and sporting events; and performing other duties as required to achieve recruiting goals.

## Chapter 7

### OFFICER AND CIVILIAN FORCE STRUCTURES

**7.1. Enlisted Airmen Responsibilities.** Each day as we execute our missions, we operate with and receive direction from Air Force Officers and Air Force Civil Service personnel. Many enlisted Airmen have officers or civilians as direct supervisors. Similar to enlisted Airmen, there is a compelling need for officer and civilian personnel to have a deliberate and common approach to force development, career progression, and the assumption of increased supervisory and leadership responsibilities. Enlisted Airmen, especially Senior Noncommissioned Officers should be familiar with and understand these force structures. Our force structures and institutional competencies, rooted in our core values describe what makes *all of us Airmen*.

**7.2. Officer Force Structure.** The officer force structure is comprised of three distinct and separate tiers. The tiers are Company Grade Officer and include grades O-1 thru O-3, Field Grade Officer comprising of grades O-4 thru O-6, and General Officer, grades of O-7 thru O-10. Progression through the tiers correlates to increased levels of leadership and managerial responsibilities, with each tier building on the responsibilities of the previous one. The focus of each tier is on developing the appropriate tactical, operational and strategic competencies associated with their rank (tier) and position. These competencies are developed through associated Air Force education, training and professional experiences. Therefore, General Officers are expected to have mastered Field Grade Officer responsibilities. Likewise, Field Grade Officers are expected to have mastered Company Grade Officer responsibilities. Above all, the focus of each tier is professionalism and mission success in the profession of arms. Enlisted Airmen should understand the officer structure, duty titles and corresponding responsibilities within their organizations. Specific information on commanders can be found in Air Force Instruction 1-2, *Commander's Responsibilities*.

**7.3. Civilian Force Structure.** The Air Force Civil Service consists of more than 180,000 professional civilians in over 35 countries. Within 11 personnel systems there are 22 career fields, 472 occupational series, and 27 different pay plans. These individuals serve in critical positions such as scientists, engineers, contract specialists, instructors, intelligence experts, mechanics, human resource professionals, firefighters, aircraft mechanics, childcare providers, and many others. They provide corporate knowledge and stability across the Air Force and deploy to various contingency areas. Civilians are fundamental to the strength of our Air Force and, like the enlisted and officer corps, have a compelling need for a deliberate and common approach to force development, career progression, and the assumption of increased supervisory and leadership responsibilities. Air Force Manual 36-606, *Civilian Career Field Management and Development*, outlines career field governance structure, centrally-managed positions, career paths and career progression models.

DANIEL R. SITTERLY  
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air  
Force  
Manpower and Reserve Affairs

**Attachment 1****GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION*****References***

Air Force Doctrine Document 1-1, *Force Development*, 17 April 2017

Air Force Policy Directive 1, *Air Force Culture*, 15 September 2016

Air Force Policy Directive 36-26, *Total Force Development and Management*, 22 December 2015

Air Force Policy Directive 50-2, *Accommodation of Religious Practices in the Air Force*, 17 February 2016

Air Force Instruction 1-1, *Air Force Standards*, 7 August 2012

Air Force Instruction 1-2, *Commander's Responsibilities*, 8 May 2014

Air Force Instruction 33-360, *Publications and Forms Management*, 1 December 2015

Air Force Instruction 90-505, *Suicide Prevention Program*, 18 May 2017

Air Force Instruction 90-506, *Comprehensive Airman Fitness (CAF)*, 2 April 2014

Air Force Instruction 90-6001, *Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program*, 18 March 2016

Air Force Manual 33-363, *Management of Records*, 1 March 2008

Air Force Manual 36-2647, *Institutional Competency Development and Management*, 25 March 2014

Air Force Instruction 36-2905, *Fitness Program*, 27 August 2015

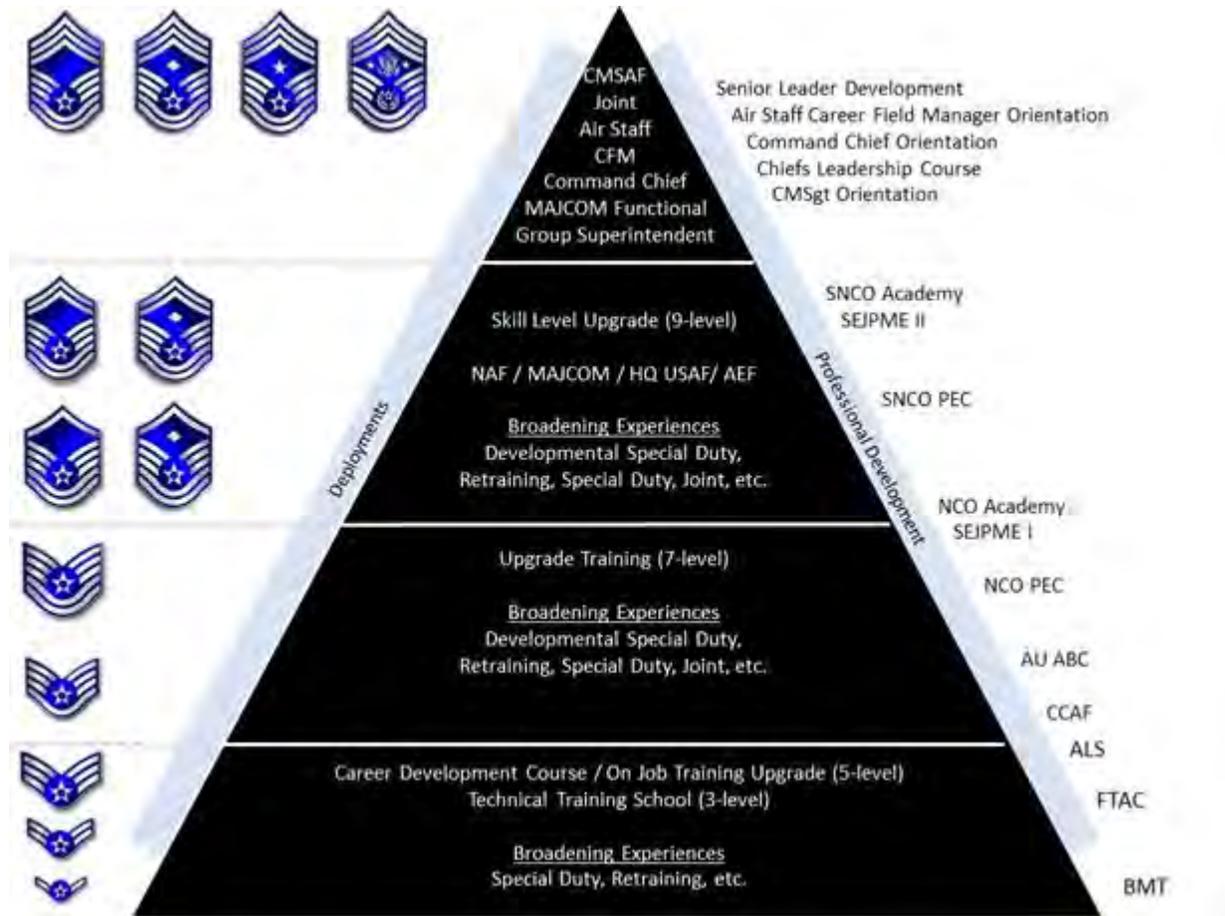
AFI 36-2706, *Equal Opportunity Program Military and Civilian*, 5 October 2010

**Attachment 2****THE AIRMAN'S CREED****I am an American Airman.****I am a warrior.****I have answered my Nation's call.****I am an American Airman.****My mission is to fly, fight, and win.****I am faithful to a proud heritage, a tradition of honor,  
and a legacy of valor.****I am an American Airman,  
guardian of freedom and justice,  
my Nation's sword and shield,  
its sentry and avenger.****I defend my country with my life.****I am an American Airman:****Wingman, Leader, Warrior.****I will never leave an Airman behind,****I will never falter,  
and I will not fail.**

Attachment 3

ENLISTED CAREER PYRAMID

Figure A3.1. Functional, Career Broadening, Special Duty and Leadership Paths.



- ALS – Airman Leadership School
- AU ABC – Air University Associates to Bachelors Cooperative
- BMT – Basic Military Training
- CCAF – Community College of the Air Force
- FTAC – First Term Airmen Center
- NCOA – Noncommissioned Officer Academy
- NCO PEC – Noncommissioned Officer Professional Enhancement Course
- SEJPME – Senior Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education
- SNCOA – Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy
- SNCO PEC – Senior Noncommissioned Officer Professional Enhancement Course



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# ***CSAF ACTION ORDERS***

**To Accelerate  
Change Across  
the Air Force**

GENERAL CHARLES Q. BROWN, JR.  
AIR FORCE CHIEF OF STAFF

It is an honor to be your Chief of Staff and it is an exciting time to serve in our United States Air Force. On 31 August 2020, I published my strategic approach titled *Accelerate Change or Lose*. It recognizes that we live in a world that is driven by rapidly changing technology and an environment that includes aggressive and capable global competitors. Therefore, if our Nation's military is to remain the best in the world, we need to do our part to challenge the status quo and make necessary changes in our Air Force today so we are ready for tomorrow. For example, we cannot assume air dominance is guaranteed and we need to recognize good enough today will cause us to fail tomorrow. Leaders have a responsibility to provide clear guidance so that you ... our talented Airmen at all levels ... are informed and empowered to problem-solve, come up with unique solutions, and make smart recommendations and decisions. Acceleration requires harnessing energy and focusing it in a purposeful direction. The consequences of failure – and success – are profound. Only together will we succeed in accelerating the required change.

As we pursue this endeavor, I ask we remain diligent and hold each other accountable to use *Accelerate Change or Lose* in the emails we write, in the presentations we brief, and in the words we speak rather than allow it to become an overused, stale, and forgotten acronym. I came to this revelation shortly after publication that this strategic approach is bigger than an acronym which is why I want to us all to embrace *Accelerate Change or Lose*. As we speak the words *Accelerate Change or Lose*, let these words remind us of the importance of this strategic approach to our future and the sense of urgency that is required.

Key areas in which we will focus our efforts to accelerate the change we need are captured in four categories: Airmen, Bureaucracy, Competition, and Design Implementation. These Action Orders were tasked to the Air Staff in September 2020, but most of the Air Force is seeing them now for the first time. You will notice the following is written in five paragraph operation order format, just as you would see as a joint warfighter. This is a journey and there will be many waypoints ahead. Let me walk you through the Action Orders.

## **Action Order A: Airmen**

My first two trips as your Chief of Staff were to Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas and Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama ... two of just a few locations that play a critical role in training, educating, and developing our Airmen. Action Order A emphasizes the Air Force's mission to "recruit, access, educate, train, experience, develop, and retain Airmen ... with the attributes required to compete, deter, and win in the high-end fight." One way to achieve this is to find and enhance universal skillsets that are important to all Airmen regardless of their specific Air Force Specialty Code. We need to ensure the way we place our Airmen in specific jobs offering opportunities for advancement fosters a diverse and inclusive culture promoting dignity and fairness.

Leaders owe Airmen and their families the Quality of Service and Quality of Life where all can reach their full potential. Leaders have a responsibility to provide clear guidance so our Airmen are able to make decisions at the lowest levels. This is critical so we can execute the mission even if the guidance is unclear or our ability to communicate is disrupted in a contested environment. Ultimately, Airmen must be resilient and ready to operate and succeed in the future high-end fight.

## **Action Order B: Bureaucracy**

Bureaucracy exists in any large organization -- it is a necessity to address complex Air Force-wide decisions, but not a requirement for all of our decisions. I believe our bureaucracy requires a "tune-up" to enable us to make decisions at the speed needed in the dynamic global environment. Even with the best Airmen, poor organizational structure and bureaucratic processes can be a barrier to achieving effectiveness, driving innovation, and achieving success. Per Action Order B, the Air Force "must change its decision processes in order to make analytically-informed and timely decisions ... to enable the USAF to outpace key competitors' decision cycles." Starting with my Headquarters Air Force staff here in the Pentagon, we are streamlining decision-making, eliminating redundancies, and limiting bureaucratic layers. We are also making sure roles and responsibilities at all organizational levels (Headquarters Air Force, Major Commands, Numbered Air Forces, and Wings) are balanced correctly. Finally, we must increase speed and efficiency to effectively work with industry partners. The current acquisition process is not built to maintain our advantage in tomorrow's fight.

## **Action Order C: Competition**

*Accelerate Change or Lose* ... but lose to who? While the stakes are clear enough, we must fully understand our competitors. Our National Defense Strategy acknowledges "an increasingly complex global security environment, characterized by overt challenges to the free and open international order and the re-emergence of long-term, strategic competition between nations." For example, China is re-modernizing their military and Russia seeks to disrupt the North Atlantic Treaty Organization alliance with emerging technology. We ... as our Nation's Airmen ... need to understand these competitions are at the heart of our mission and understand how each of us fit in mission execution. Action Order C states, "[T]he USAF must accelerate its understanding and mastery of these competitions to accrue warfighting advantages to the United States and U.S. allies and partners; enhance collective deterrence credibility; and drive the competitions to areas of U.S. advantages and/or competitors' weaknesses." We need to understand the competition's ambitions and understand how they may conduct future warfare. Similarly, we need to understand and capitalize on our advantages and identify areas we need to improve our capabilities. To do this, Airmen must be taught the background and context of our competitors from language and culture, to professional military education and strategy. Chinese and Russian objectives, mindset, and ways of warfare must be second nature so we can better shape the future together.

## Action Order D: Design Implementation

We must learn how to be agile and adapt to the future. No matter what happens with the budget, it will require us to make tough choices. We need to continue developing a lethal and affordable force that Congress supports. Action Order D drives the Air Force to "make force structure decisions in Fall 2020 and amend force planning processes to create the fiscal flexibility required to design and field the future force we need." We need to begin by determining what we will need in the future and then make decisions now that support that vision. We need to identify systems and programs that are outdated and/or unaffordable to make way for capabilities that will make us competitive in the future high-end fight. Finally, and most importantly, we as an Air Force need to understand our future design so that we can consistently explain it to all stakeholders, to include Congress and our industry partners.

## Conclusion

It is a consequential time to be in the Air Force as we have an opportunity to make decisions today to shape the Air Force we need in the future. Change is critical and speed is paramount. My strategic approach of *Accelerate Change or Lose* explains the why. These Action Orders provide the what. It's the way we address these Action Orders that will provide the how. It is all of us ... our talented Airmen ... that are key to cutting unnecessary bureaucracy, recognizing and understanding our competition, and thinking of creative ways we can reshape the design of our Air Force. The Air Force must accelerate, must change, and must prepare for the future! I'm excited to serve with you during this pivotal time.



CHARLES Q. BROWN, JR.  
General, U.S. Air Force  
Chief of Staff

## CSAF ACTION ORDER A: AIRMEN

REF A ACCELERATE CHANGE OR LOSE

REF B 2018 NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY

REF C CSAF ACTION ORDER C (COMPETITION)

REF D CSAF ACTION ORDER D (DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION)

1. SITUATION. Per REF A-D, a competitive and dangerous strategic environment demands the Air Force reexamine its approach to competition and make difficult force structure decisions that support new operational concepts designed to deter and defeat adversaries' ways of war. The USAF must devote similar time, energy, and resources to build and retain the Airmen we need.

2. MISSION. The USAF must recruit, access, educate, train, experience, develop, and retain Airmen—officer, enlisted, and civilian—with the attributes required to compete, deter, and win in the high-end fight characterized by ambiguity and uncertainty.

3. EXECUTION.

3.A. CSAF INTENT. Headquarters, U.S. Air Force (HAF) must evaluate and update, as required, personnel and talent management systems to ensure the USAF has the Airmen we need for the high-end fight. The attributes of the Airmen we need, and how the USAF develops and manages them, may not be the same as today; Airmen must be able to adapt, innovate, and apply lessons learned to enable a culture of continuous improvement. The HAF must conduct a comprehensive, cross-disciplinary review of how to optimally develop and manage the USAF's most valuable resource.

3.A.1. PURPOSE. Per REF A, past success is no guarantee of future performance. The USAF must ensure the future force reflects the identity and attributes required for success in the high-end fight. Tomorrow's Airmen must be organized, trained, and equipped to succeed in the most challenging and lethal combat scenarios since World War II.

3.A.2. METHOD. Assess the current state of personnel and talent management systems; identify attributes of the Airmen we need; determine materiel and non-materiel options to close the gap. Synchronize culture and values-based efforts to ensure USAF organizational health.

3.A.3. KEY TASKS. Conduct mission analysis of REF A and this Action Order to ensure KEY TASKS below are sufficient to achieve the mission and CSAF INTENT of this order.

3.A.3.A. Review and identify the cross-functional attributes of the Airmen we need to implement the National Defense Strategy.

3.A.3.B. Assess ability of current personnel and talent management systems to produce and support the Airmen We Need, from recruitment through separation or retirement. Propose updates based on public and private-sector best practices to 1) ensure quality future force that meets USAF needs, and 2) makes USAF an attractive career choice for Airmen and families, and 3) leverages modern IT approaches to enhance and deliver talent management

solutions to leaders and Airmen.

3.A.3.C. Permeate diversity, inclusion, and belonging actions with this AO to cultivate and sustain both a USAF culture and environment of excellence in which all Airmen and families can reach their full potential. Diversity, inclusion, and belonging will not succeed as a standalone program.

3.A.3.D. Assess lessons from USAF response to COVID-19 pandemic. Eliminate or re-prioritize low-value activities or processes not critical to Service function and mission success. Where feasible, propose modifications to military and civilian mission execution processes to leverage expanded telework and collaborative IT tools. Capture best practices to maximize effectiveness, efficiency, and minimize redundancy.

3.A.3.E. Transform the way we learn across all facets of USAF education and training curricula, including but not limited to PME, to reflect renewed emphasis on competition and warfighting.

3.A.3.F. Ensure military (and civilian, where applicable) evaluation and promotion systems measure, incentivize, and reward Airmen who possess and positively apply the attributes identified in 3.A.3.A. above to achieve mission success.

3.A.3.G. Normalize and streamline career field management across functional areas for military (officer and enlisted) and civilian employees.

3.A.4. WAYPOINT #1. USAF Airmen have renewed focus on preparation and readiness for the high-end fight. USAF, as an institution, has shared understanding of the challenges posed by key competitors and enhanced appreciation of how USAF intends to fight. Personnel and talent management systems produce the Airmen we need and make USAF an attractive career choice for Airmen and their families. Systems incentivize pursuit and demonstration of desired Airmen attributes when executing and delivering mission success. As work related to this AO continues beyond the initial deliverables, be prepared to adapt as conditions change or new information becomes available.

### 3.B. COORDINATING INSTRUCTIONS.

3.B.1. Collaborate across Directorates and with MAJCOM stakeholders to develop integrated solutions for the HAF.

### 4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS.

4.A. DELIVERABLES. Mission analysis brief for decision at CORONA in October 2020, including an action plan and proposed first steps.

### 5. COMMAND AND CONTROL.

#### 5.A. COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS.

5.A.1. A1 is the designated OPR and supported Directorate for this order. DS will track OPR progress and schedule IPRs with CSAF and other senior leaders as required. All other Air Staff entities and MAJCOMs are supporting. DIRLAUTH approved.

#### 5.B. COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMPUTER SYSTEMS (C4).

5.B.1. All deliverables associated with this order will be controlled and disseminated at the appropriate classification level.

## CSAF ACTION ORDER B: ADDRESSING BUREAUCRACY

REF A ACCELERATE CHANGE OR LOSE

REF B 2018 NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY

1. SITUATION. Per REF B, the USAF must reexamine its decision processes and organizational scheme in order to compete effectively and win the high-end fight. Current processes are too slow, allow “soft vetoes” without accountability, incentivize counterproductive inter-MAJCOM and inter-functional fighting, and too often deliver sub-optimized solutions for the sake of compromise and consensus. The current USAF structure is optimized for an obsolete strategic context and must be updated to compete, deter, and win the high-end fight.

2. MISSION. The USAF must change its decision processes in order to make analytically-informed and timely decisions, accepting anticipated ambiguity or uncertainty, to enable the USAF to outpace key competitors’ decision cycles. Starting with the HAF, the USAF must restructure in order to maximize decision effectiveness and efficiency, realign internal USAF roles and responsibilities, and rebalance manpower to allow healthy organizations at all echelons of command.

3. EXECUTION.

3.A. CSAF INTENT. The HAF must amend decision processes to ensure timely and consistent decisions in an increasingly-competitive security environment. In coming years, the USAF must also restructure to better support emerging force generation and force presentation models, incentivize enterprise-wide perspectives and decision making, and provide for a sustainable workload for Airmen and their families.

3.A.1. PURPOSE. Adjust decision processes and structures to more effectively organize, train, and equip the USAF to compete, deter, and win the high-end fight that will be characterized by ambiguity and uncertainty. Preserve decision space for CSAF to influence the development of options and decisions while there is still time and the potential to do so.

3.A.2. METHOD. Focus initially on HAF decision processes and structures. Leverage POM22 rebuilds to experiment with ways to streamline decision-making, bring MAJCOM/CCs into the process earlier, and provide CSAF more space to influence options and decisions. Examine HAF structure first, then propose USAF-wide structural options.

3.A.3. KEYTASKS. Conduct mission analysis of REF A and this Action Order to ensure KEYTASKS below are sufficient to achieve the mission and CSAF INTENT of this order.

3.A.3.A. Determine which USAF decisions require enterprise-wide perspective. Ensure decision processes incentivize and enable enterprise-wide decision-making and collaboration.

3.A.3.B. Map HAF decision processes and organizations to eliminate redundancies. Each map must describe organizational or process inputs, outputs, and value added to USAF.

3.A.3.C. Accelerate communication within HAF staff, limit bureaucratic layers that add little value, and improve cross-Directorate collaboration and integration. Propose new HAF processes and supporting organizational

structure NLT CORONA in October 2020.

3.A.3.D. Assess current division of roles and responsibilities between HAF and MAJCOMs. Develop alternatives for consideration at CORONA in Fall 2020 with an emphasis on increasing enterprise-wide roles and responsibilities at 4-star level. BPT discuss alternative MAJCOM structures in support of proposed changes to HAF/MAJCOM roles and responsibilities.

3.A.4. WAYPOINT #1. USAF processes and structure prepare USAF to compete, deter, and win the high-end fight, accounting for ambiguity and uncertainty. Roles and responsibilities are clarified and deconflicted between HAF and MAJCOMs, eliminating redundancies. Airmen serve at a sustainable pace in manpower-healthy organizations with direct linkages to how USAF generates and presents forces to the Joint Force. As work related to this AO continues beyond the initial deliverables, be prepared to adapt as conditions change or new information becomes available.

### 3.B. COORDINATING INSTRUCTIONS.

3.B.1. Collaborate across Directorates and with MAJCOM stakeholders to develop integrated solutions for the HAF.

### 4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS.

4.A. DELIVERABLES. Mission analysis brief for decision at CORONA in October 2020, including an action plan and proposed first steps.

### 5. COMMAND AND CONTROL.

#### 5.A. COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS.

5.A.1. A5/7 is the designated OPR and supported Directorate for this order. DS will track OPR progress and schedule IPRs with CSAF and other senior leaders as required. All other Air Staff entities and MAJCOMs are supporting. DIRLAUTH approved.

#### 5.B. COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMPUTER SYSTEMS (C4).

5.B.1. All deliverables associated with this order will be controlled and disseminated at the appropriate classification level.

## CSAF ACTION ORDER C: COMPETITION

REF A ACCELERATE CHANGE OR LOSE

REF B 2018 NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY

1. SITUATION. The United States is engaged in long-term strategic competitions with the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Russian Federation (RF). Per REF A, the USAF must take immediate action to compete more effectively with these two actors with an initial focus on China. While competition affects all aspects of the defense enterprise, the implications of competing effectively, or not, are most significant to the USAF.

2. MISSION. Per REF A, the USAF must accelerate its understanding and mastery of these competitions to accrue warfighting advantages to the United States and U.S. allies and partners; enhance collective deterrence credibility; and drive the competitions to areas of U.S. advantages and/or competitors' weaknesses.

3. EXECUTION.

3.A. CSAF INTENT. HAF must improve its competitive approach. Renewed emphasis on competitive thinking and comparative analysis is required across all HAF elements and decision processes in order to advance the USAF's ability to successfully out-compete potential adversaries.

3.A.1. PURPOSE. In any joint warfighting scenario, the USAF will have a pivotal role responding to conflict with either China or Russia. Effectiveness in deterring or prevailing in high-end conflict depends upon actions taken in peacetime competition, particularly given the time required to affect structural change in developing and fielding air forces.

3.A.2. METHOD. Define the nature of the competition and strategic environment; identify adversaries' objectives, strengths and weaknesses, and ways of warfare; identify USAF objectives, strengths and weaknesses, and ways of warfare; and align USAF decision and support processes to apply comparative analysis and risk assessments to key USAF decisions. Focus efforts on China as the primary competitor, then Russia.

3.A.3. KEYTASKS. Conduct mission analysis of REF A and this Action Order to ensure KEYTASKS below are sufficient to achieve the mission and CSAF INTENT of this order.

3.A.3.A. Define the USAF-specific elements of the military-technological competition that underpins the geopolitical competition between the United States and China. The definition must reflect the key operational challenges Airmen must solve (see REF B).

3.A.3.B. Conduct cross-disciplinary, comparative analysis to assess current USAF standing in the competition and identify trends. Increase intelligence interactions throughout program and operational concept development, with specific focus on the competitive move/counter-move/counter-counter-move cycle to identify critical USAF and competitors' strengths, vulnerabilities, interdependencies, and opportunities.

3.A.3.C. Informed by 3.A.3.B. above, identify USAF competitive aim points and develop plans and supporting strategies to drive the competition towards areas of U.S. advantages and/or competitors' weaknesses.

3.A.3.D. Develop future force design and operating concepts to defeat the adversaries' ways of war (e.g., informationalized warfare, systems confrontation warfare, and systems destruction warfare). Develop solutions to

bridge current force structure to future design through novel operating concepts and adaptation.

3.A.3.E. ICW with industry partners, develop and resource a viable plan for operations, sustainment, and maintenance in a high-end warfight. Consider supply chain vulnerability, mobilization and surge capacity, and combat replenishment in potentially-protracted campaigns.

3.A.3.F. Ensure accessions programs, professional military education (officer and enlisted), and civilian education and professional development courses educate and train Airmen for competition, including the strategy, force design, and warfighting approaches of key adversaries.

3.A.3.G. Integrate homeland defense with nuclear, conventional, and unconventional deterrence concepts.

3.A.4. WAYPOINT #1. USAF able to assess its position in, and adapt to, the changing elements of the competitions over time. Airmen across the force understand that China is the pacing competitor and that the USAF has a unique role in responding to Chinese aggression in the event of conflict. USAF decision processes reflect a competitive mindset and incorporate the highest-fidelity intelligence available in order to influence USAF investments and operational concepts. As work related to this AO continues beyond the initial deliverables, be prepared to adapt as conditions change or new information becomes available.

3.B. COORDINATING INSTRUCTIONS.

3.B.1. Collaborate across Directorates and with MAJCOM stakeholders to develop integrated solutions for the HAF.

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS.

4.A. DELIVERABLES. Mission analysis brief for decision at CORONA in October 2020, including an action plan and proposed first steps.

5. COMMAND AND CONTROL.

5.A. COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS.

5.A.1. A5/7 is the designated OPR and supported Directorate for this order. DS will track OPR progress and schedule IPRs with CSAF and other senior leaders as required. All other Air Staff entities and MAJCOMs are supporting. DIRLAUTH approved.

5.B. COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMPUTER SYSTEMS (C4).

5.B.1. All deliverables associated with this order will be controlled and disseminated at the appropriate classification level, SECRET minimum.

## CSAF ACTION ORDER D: DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION: USAF FORCE STRUCTURE

REF A ACCELERATE CHANGE OR LOSE

REF B 2018 NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY

1. SITUATION. Per REF A, budget pressures will require difficult force structure decisions to ensure a lethal, survivable, sustainable, and affordable force. Increasing budget pressures are due to growing costs of sustainment for current and aging force structure, continuous combat operations, and long-deferred recapitalization and modernization. Immediate action is required.

2. MISSION. The USAF, ICW key stakeholders, must make force structure decisions in Fall CY20 and amend force planning processes to create the fiscal flexibility required to design and field the future force we need while managing operational risk.

3. EXECUTION.

3.A. CSAF INTENT. HAF must accelerate the transition from the force we have to the force required for a future high-end fight, focusing on China then Russia, at acceptable levels of risk to mission, force, and security, within USAF budget constraints.

3.A.1. PURPOSE. Develop an affordable, analytically defensible, and congressionally supported force structure capable of winning the future high-end fight while maintaining sufficient capacity in homeland defense and understanding capability application and associated risk to other National Defense Strategy threats.

3.A.2. METHOD. Focus analysis and proposals first on missions and capabilities vice platforms. Prioritize current and future programs based on their relevance to the high-end fight, consistency with emerging USAF operating concepts, total system affordability across the lifecycle, and relevance to defeating competitors' warfighting strategies.

3.A.3. KEY TASKS. Conduct mission analysis of REF A and this Action Order to ensure KEY TASKS below are sufficient to achieve the mission and CSAF INTENT of this order.

3.A.3.A. Determine the capability and capacity requirements for the USAF force structure needed in 2030 and beyond, informed by comprehensive understanding of competitors' capabilities, strategies, and operational concepts. Incorporate emerging USAF operational concepts and force generation and force presentation models.

3.A.3.B. Determine the min-viable force structure to provide required capability and capacity to the combatant commands at moderate risk as the force transitions from 2020 to 2030.

3.A.3.C. Identify underperforming and/or unaffordable programs (both fielded and planned, new starts, and modernization programs) with limited utility to, or timeliness for, a high-end fight for possible termination, deferral, or restructuring.

3.A.3.D. Develop and execute HAF-level decision processes that translate CSAF direction into a balanced program and a balanced long-range plan. ICW SAF/AQ, propose USAF-standard funding stability requirements: beyond Milestone X, programs must be funded to the Y percentile at Z level of confidence.

3.A.3.E. Ensure future force requirements capture comprehensive manpower requirements. Account for total lifecycle sustainment costs, including combat surge capacity and battle damage repair capability. Revalidate existing assumptions regarding the potential for protracted high-end conflict and adjust sustainment posture to support.

3.A.3.F. Present USAF force generation and force presentation models for decision at CORONA in October 2020. Include proposed changes to Wing structures in this brief.

3.A.3.G. Develop narrative to articulate how divestments, terminations, and/or restructures relate to the specific capabilities the USAF needs in the future, including strategic basing decisions and other areas of specific interest to Congress.

3.A.4. WAYPOINT #1. USAF successfully divests, terminates, and/or restructures programs to create the fiscal flexibility to build the force required for the high-end fight. USAF plan and program reflects unique value proposition (per REF A) and deliberately balances investments across core missions IAW CSAF and SecAF guidance and direction informed by planning factors to meet Congressional approval. Planning and programming choices informed by Service foundational beliefs, strategy, and operational concepts accrue warfighting advantage to U.S., allied, and partner armed forces. As work related to this AO continues beyond the initial deliverables, be prepared to adapt as conditions change or new information becomes available.

### 3.B. COORDINATING INSTRUCTIONS

3.B.1. Collaborate across Directorates and with MAJCOM stakeholders to develop integrated solutions for the HAF.

3.B.2. Coordinate with SAF/LL to map current legislative landscape, assessing opportunities and known friction points to best identify potential trades or offsets.

3.B.3. Coordinate with SAF/AQ for assistance in identifying underperforming and late-to-need programs and with SAF/FM for affordability concerns.

### 4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS.

4.A. DELIVERABLES. Mission analysis brief for decision at CORONA in October 2020, including an action plan and proposed first steps. Be prepared to adjust FY21 and FY22 POMs in accordance with CORONA decisions.

### 5. COMMAND AND CONTROL.

#### 5.A. COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS.

5.A.1. A8 is the designated OPR and supported Directorate for this order. DS will track OPR progress and schedule IPRs with CSAF and other senior leaders as required. All other Air Staff entities and MAJCOMs are supporting. DIRLAUTH approved.

#### 5.B. COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATIONS, AND COMPUTER SYSTEMS (C4).

5.B.1. All deliverables associated with this order will be controlled and disseminated at the appropriate classification level, SECRET minimum.





*Summary of the*  
**2 0 1 8**  
**National Defense Strategy**  
*of*  
**The United States of America**

*Sharpening the American Military's Competitive Edge*

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## INTRODUCTION

The Department of Defense's enduring mission is to provide combat-credible military forces needed to deter war and protect the security of our nation. Should deterrence fail, the Joint Force is prepared to win. Reinforcing America's traditional tools of diplomacy, the Department provides military options to ensure the President and our diplomats negotiate from a position of strength.

Today, we are emerging from a period of strategic atrophy, aware that our competitive military advantage has been eroding. We are facing increased global disorder, characterized by decline in the long-standing rules-based international order—creating a security environment more complex and volatile than any we have experienced in recent memory. Inter-state strategic competition, not terrorism, is now the primary concern in U.S. national security.

China is a strategic competitor using predatory economics to intimidate its neighbors while militarizing features in the South China Sea. Russia has violated the borders of nearby nations and pursues veto power over the economic, diplomatic, and security decisions of its neighbors. As well, North Korea's outlaw actions and reckless rhetoric continue despite United Nation's censure and sanctions. Iran continues to sow violence and remains the most significant challenge to Middle East stability. Despite the defeat of ISIS's physical caliphate, threats to stability remain as terrorist groups with long reach continue to murder the innocent and threaten peace more broadly.

This increasingly complex security environment is defined by rapid technological change, challenges from adversaries in every operating domain, and the impact on current readiness from the longest continuous stretch of armed conflict in our Nation's history. In this environment, there can be no complacency—we must make difficult choices and prioritize what is most important to field a lethal, resilient, and rapidly adapting Joint Force. America's military has no preordained right to victory on the battlefield.

This unclassified synopsis of the classified *2018 National Defense Strategy* articulates our strategy to compete, deter, and win in this environment. The reemergence of long-term strategic competition, rapid dispersion of technologies, and new concepts of warfare and competition that span the entire spectrum of conflict require a Joint Force structured to match this reality.

A more lethal, resilient, and rapidly innovating Joint Force, combined with a robust constellation of allies and partners, will sustain American influence and ensure favorable balances of power that safeguard the free and open international order. Collectively, our force posture, alliance and partnership architecture, and Department modernization will provide the capabilities and agility required to prevail in conflict and preserve peace through strength.

The costs of not implementing this strategy are clear. Failure to meet our defense objectives will result in decreasing U.S. global influence, eroding cohesion among allies and partners, and reduced access to markets that will contribute to a decline in our prosperity and standard of living. Without sustained and predictable investment to restore readiness and modernize our military to make it fit for our time, we will rapidly lose our military advantage, resulting in a Joint Force that has legacy systems irrelevant to the defense of our people.

## STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

The *National Defense Strategy* acknowledges an increasingly complex global security environment, characterized by overt challenges to the free and open international order and the re-emergence of long-term, strategic competition between nations. These changes require a clear-eyed appraisal of the threats we face, acknowledgement of the changing character of warfare, and a transformation of how the Department conducts business.

The central challenge to U.S. prosperity and security is the *reemergence of long-term, strategic competition* by what the National Security Strategy classifies as revisionist powers. It is increasingly clear that China and Russia want to shape a world consistent with their authoritarian model—gaining veto authority over other nations’ economic, diplomatic, and security decisions.

China is leveraging military modernization, influence operations, and predatory economics to coerce neighboring countries to reorder the Indo-Pacific region to their advantage. As China continues its economic and military ascendance, asserting power through an all-of-nation long-term strategy, it will continue to pursue a military modernization program that seeks Indo-Pacific regional hegemony in the near-term and displacement of the United States to achieve global preeminence in the future. The most far-reaching objective of this defense strategy is to set the military relationship between our two countries on a path of transparency and non-aggression.

Concurrently, Russia seeks veto authority over nations on its periphery in terms of their governmental, economic, and diplomatic decisions, to shatter the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and change European and Middle East security and economic structures to its favor. The use of emerging technologies to discredit and subvert democratic processes in Georgia, Crimea, and eastern Ukraine is concern enough, but when coupled with its expanding and modernizing nuclear arsenal the challenge is clear.

Another change to the strategic environment is a *resilient, but weakening, post-WWII international order*. In the decades after fascism’s defeat in World War II, the United States and its allies and partners constructed a free and open international order to better safeguard their liberty and people from aggression and coercion. Although this system has evolved since the end of the Cold War, our network of alliances and partnerships remain the backbone of global security. China and Russia are now undermining the international order from within the system by exploiting its benefits while simultaneously undercutting its principles and “rules of the road.”

Rogue regimes such as North Korea and Iran are destabilizing regions through their pursuit of nuclear weapons or sponsorship of terrorism. North Korea seeks to guarantee regime survival and increased leverage by seeking a mixture of nuclear, biological, chemical, conventional, and unconventional weapons and a growing ballistic missile capability to gain coercive influence over South Korea, Japan, and the United States. In the Middle East, Iran is competing with its neighbors, asserting an arc of influence and instability while vying for regional hegemony, using state-sponsored terrorist activities, a growing network of proxies, and its missile program to achieve its objectives.

Both revisionist powers and rogue regimes are competing across all dimensions of power. They have increased efforts short of armed conflict by expanding coercion to new fronts, violating principles of sovereignty, exploiting ambiguity, and deliberately blurring the lines between civil and military goals.

*Challenges to the U.S. military advantage* represent another shift in the global security environment. For decades the United States has enjoyed uncontested or dominant superiority in every operating domain. We could generally deploy our forces when we wanted, assemble them where we wanted, and operate how we wanted. Today, every domain is contested—air, land, sea, space, and cyberspace.

We face an ever more lethal and disruptive battlefield, combined across domains, and conducted at increasing speed and reach—from close combat, throughout overseas theaters, and reaching to our homeland. Some competitors and adversaries seek to optimize their targeting of our battle networks and operational concepts, while also using other areas of competition short of open warfare to achieve their ends (e.g., information warfare, ambiguous or denied proxy operations, and subversion). These trends, if unaddressed, will challenge our ability to deter aggression.

The security environment is also affected by *rapid technological advancements and the changing character of war*. The drive to develop new technologies is relentless, expanding to more actors with lower barriers of entry, and moving at accelerating speed. New technologies include advanced computing, “big data” analytics, artificial intelligence, autonomy, robotics, directed energy, hypersonics, and biotechnology—the very technologies that ensure we will be able to fight and win the wars of the future.

New commercial technology will change society and, ultimately, the character of war. The fact that many technological developments will come from the commercial sector means that state competitors and non-state actors will also have access to them, a fact that risks eroding the conventional overmatch to which our Nation has grown accustomed. Maintaining the Department’s technological advantage will require changes to industry culture, investment sources, and protection across the National Security Innovation Base.

States are the principal actors on the global stage, but *non-state actors* also threaten the security environment with increasingly sophisticated capabilities. Terrorists, trans-national criminal organizations, cyber hackers and other malicious non-state actors have transformed global affairs with increased capabilities of mass disruption. There is a positive side to this as well, as our partners in sustaining security are also more than just nation-states: multilateral organizations, non-governmental organizations, corporations, and strategic influencers provide opportunities for collaboration and partnership. Terrorism remains a persistent condition driven by ideology and unstable political and economic structures, despite the defeat of ISIS’s physical caliphate.

It is now undeniable that the *homeland is no longer a sanctuary*. America is a target, whether from terrorists seeking to attack our citizens; malicious cyber activity against personal, commercial, or government infrastructure; or political and information subversion. New threats to commercial and military uses of space are emerging, while increasing digital connectivity of all aspects of life, business, government, and military creates significant vulnerabilities. During conflict, attacks against our critical defense, government, and economic infrastructure must be anticipated.

Rogue regimes, such as North Korea, continue to seek out or develop *weapons of mass destruction* (WMD) – nuclear, chemical, and biological – as well as long range missile capabilities and, in some cases, proliferate these capabilities to malign actors as demonstrated by Iranian ballistic missile exports. Terrorists likewise continue to pursue WMD, while the spread of nuclear weapon technology and advanced manufacturing technology remains a persistent problem. Recent advances in bioengineering raise another concern, increasing the potential, variety, and ease of access to biological weapons.

## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OBJECTIVES

In support of the *National Security Strategy*, the Department of Defense will be prepared to defend the homeland, remain the preeminent military power in the world, ensure the balances of power remain in our favor, and advance an international order that is most conducive to our security and prosperity.

Long-term strategic competitions with China and Russia are the principal priorities for the Department, and require both increased and sustained investment, because of the magnitude of the threats they pose to U.S. security and prosperity today, and the potential for those threats to increase in the future. Concurrently, the Department will sustain its efforts to deter and counter rogue regimes such as North Korea and Iran, defeat terrorist threats to the United States, and consolidate our gains in Iraq and Afghanistan while moving to a more resource-sustainable approach.

Defense objectives include:

- Defending the homeland from attack;
- Sustaining Joint Force military advantages, both globally and in key regions;
- Deterring adversaries from aggression against our vital interests;
- Enabling U.S. interagency counterparts to advance U.S. influence and interests;
- Maintaining favorable regional balances of power in the Indo-Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, and the Western Hemisphere;
- Defending allies from military aggression and bolstering partners against coercion, and fairly sharing responsibilities for common defense;
- Dissuading, preventing, or deterring state adversaries and non-state actors from acquiring, proliferating, or using weapons of mass destruction;
- Preventing terrorists from directing or supporting external operations against the United States homeland and our citizens, allies, and partners overseas;
- Ensuring common domains remain open and free;
- Continuously delivering performance with affordability and speed as we change Departmental mindset, culture, and management systems; and
- Establishing an unmatched twenty-first century National Security Innovation Base that effectively supports Department operations and sustains security and solvency.

## STRATEGIC APPROACH

A long-term strategic competition requires the seamless integration of multiple elements of national power—diplomacy, information, economics, finance, intelligence, law enforcement, and military. More than any other nation, America can expand the competitive space, seizing the initiative to challenge our competitors where we possess advantages and they lack strength. A more lethal force, strong alliances and partnerships, American technological innovation, and a culture of performance will generate decisive and sustained U.S. military advantages.

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As we expand the competitive space, we continue to offer competitors and adversaries an outstretched hand, open to opportunities for cooperation but from a position of strength and based on our national interests. Should cooperation fail, we will be ready to defend the American people, our values, and interests. The willingness of rivals to abandon aggression will depend on their perception of U.S. strength and the vitality of our alliances and partnerships.

*Be strategically predictable, but operationally unpredictable.* Deterring or defeating long-term strategic competitors is a fundamentally different challenge than the regional adversaries that were the focus of previous strategies. Our strength and integrated actions with allies will demonstrate our commitment to deterring aggression, but our dynamic force employment, military posture, and operations must introduce unpredictability to adversary decision-makers. With our allies and partners, we will challenge competitors by maneuvering them into unfavorable positions, frustrating their efforts, precluding their options while expanding our own, and forcing them to confront conflict under adverse conditions.

*Integrate with U.S. interagency.* Effectively expanding the competitive space requires combined actions with the U.S. interagency to employ all dimensions of national power. We will assist the efforts of the Departments of State, Treasury, Justice, Energy, Homeland Security, Commerce, USAID, as well as the Intelligence Community, law enforcement, and others to identify and build partnerships to address areas of economic, technological, and informational vulnerabilities.

*Counter coercion and subversion.* In competition short of armed conflict, revisionist powers and rogue regimes are using corruption, predatory economic practices, propaganda, political subversion, proxies, and the threat or use of military force to change facts on the ground. Some are particularly adept at exploiting their economic relationships with many of our security partners. We will support U.S. interagency approaches and work by, with, and through our allies and partners to secure our interests and counteract this coercion.

*Foster a competitive mindset.* To succeed in the emerging security environment, our Department and Joint Force will have to out-think, out-maneuver, out-partner, and out-innovate revisionist powers, rogue regimes, terrorists, and other threat actors.

We will expand the competitive space while pursuing three distinct lines of effort:

- First, rebuilding military readiness as we build a more lethal Joint Force;
- Second, strengthening alliances as we attract new partners; and
- Third, reforming the Department's business practices for greater performance and affordability.

### **Build a More Lethal Force**

The surest way to prevent war is to be prepared to win one. Doing so requires a competitive approach to force development and a consistent, multiyear investment to restore warfighting readiness and field a lethal force. The size of our force matters. The Nation must field sufficient, capable forces to defeat enemies and achieve sustainable outcomes that protect the American people and our vital interests. Our aim is a Joint Force that possesses decisive advantages for any likely conflict, while remaining proficient across the entire spectrum of conflict.

*Prioritize preparedness for war.* Achieving peace through strength requires the Joint Force to deter conflict through preparedness for war. During normal day-to-day operations, the Joint Force will sustainably compete to: deter aggression in three key regions—the Indo-Pacific, Europe, and Middle East; degrade terrorist and WMD threats; and defend U.S. interests from challenges below the level of armed conflict. In wartime, the fully mobilized Joint Force will be capable of: defeating aggression by a major power; deterring opportunistic aggression elsewhere; and disrupting imminent terrorist and WMD threats. During peace or in war, the Joint Force will deter nuclear and non-nuclear strategic attacks and defend the homeland. To support these missions, the Joint Force must gain and maintain information superiority; and develop, strengthen, and sustain U.S. security relationships.

*Modernize key capabilities.* We cannot expect success fighting tomorrow’s conflicts with yesterday’s weapons or equipment. To address the scope and pace of our competitors’ and adversaries’ ambitions and capabilities, we must invest in modernization of key capabilities through sustained, predictable budgets. Our backlog of deferred readiness, procurement, and modernization requirements has grown in the last decade and a half and can no longer be ignored. We will make targeted, disciplined increases in personnel and platforms to meet key capability and capacity needs. The *2018 National Defense Strategy* underpins our planned fiscal year 2019-2023 budgets, accelerating our modernization programs and devoting additional resources in a sustained effort to solidify our competitive advantage.

- *Nuclear forces.* The Department will modernize the nuclear triad—including nuclear command, control, and communications, and supporting infrastructure. Modernization of the nuclear force includes developing options to counter competitors’ coercive strategies, predicated on the threatened use of nuclear or strategic non-nuclear attacks.
- *Space and cyberspace as warfighting domains.* The Department will prioritize investments in resilience, reconstitution, and operations to assure our space capabilities. We will also invest in cyber defense, resilience, and the continued integration of cyber capabilities into the full spectrum of military operations.
- *Command, control, communications, computers and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR).* Investments will prioritize developing resilient, survivable, federated networks and information ecosystems from the tactical level up to strategic planning. Investments will also prioritize capabilities to gain and exploit information, deny competitors those same advantages, and enable us to provide attribution while defending against and holding accountable state or non-state actors during cyberattacks.
- *Missile defense.* Investments will focus on layered missile defenses and disruptive capabilities for both theater missile threats and North Korean ballistic missile threats.
- *Joint lethality in contested environments.* The Joint Force must be able to strike diverse targets inside adversary air and missile defense networks to destroy mobile power-projection platforms. This will include capabilities to enhance close combat lethality in complex terrain.
- *Forward force maneuver and posture resilience.* Investments will prioritize ground, air, sea, and space forces that can deploy, survive, operate, maneuver, and regenerate in all domains while under attack. Transitioning from large, centralized, unhardened infrastructure to smaller, dispersed, resilient, adaptive basing that include active and passive defenses will also be prioritized.

- *Advanced autonomous systems.* The Department will invest broadly in military application of autonomy, artificial intelligence, and machine learning, including rapid application of commercial breakthroughs, to gain competitive military advantages.
- *Resilient and agile logistics.* Investments will prioritize prepositioned forward stocks and munitions, strategic mobility assets, partner and allied support, as well as non-commercially dependent distributed logistics and maintenance to ensure logistics sustainment while under persistent multi-domain attack.

*Evolve innovative operational concepts.* Modernization is not defined solely by hardware; it requires change in the ways we organize and employ forces. We must anticipate the implications of new technologies on the battlefield, rigorously define the military problems anticipated in future conflict, and foster a culture of experimentation and calculated risk-taking. We must anticipate how competitors and adversaries will employ new operational concepts and technologies to attempt to defeat us, while developing operational concepts to sharpen our competitive advantages and enhance our lethality.

*Develop a lethal, agile, and resilient force posture and employment.* Force posture and employment must be adaptable to account for the uncertainty that exists in the changing global strategic environment. Much of our force employment models and posture date to the immediate post-Cold War era, when our military advantage was unchallenged and the primary threats were rogue regimes.

- *Dynamic Force Employment.* Dynamic Force Employment will prioritize maintaining the capacity and capabilities for major combat, while providing options for proactive and scalable employment of the Joint Force. A modernized Global Operating Model of combat-credible, flexible theater postures will enhance our ability to compete and provide freedom of maneuver during conflict, providing national decision-makers with better military options.

The global strategic environment demands increased strategic flexibility and freedom of action. The Dynamic Force Employment concept will change the way the Department uses the Joint Force to provide proactive and scalable options for priority missions. Dynamic Force Employment will more flexibly use ready forces to shape proactively the strategic environment while maintaining readiness to respond to contingencies and ensure long-term warfighting readiness.

- *Global Operating Model.* The Global Operating Model describes how the Joint Force will be postured and employed to achieve its competition and wartime missions. Foundational capabilities include: nuclear; cyber; space; C4ISR; strategic mobility, and counter WMD proliferation. It comprises four layers: contact, blunt, surge, and homeland. These are, respectively, designed to help us compete more effectively below the level of armed conflict; delay, degrade, or deny adversary aggression; surge war-winning forces and manage conflict escalation; and defend the U.S. homeland.

*Cultivate workforce talent.* Recruiting, developing, and retaining a high-quality military and civilian workforce is essential for warfighting success. Cultivating a lethal, agile force requires more than just new technologies and posture changes; it depends on the ability of our warfighters and the Department workforce to integrate new capabilities, adapt warfighting approaches, and change

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business practices to achieve mission success. The creativity and talent of the American warfighter is our greatest enduring strength, and one we do not take for granted.

- *Professional Military Education (PME)*. PME has stagnated, focused more on the accomplishment of mandatory credit at the expense of lethality and ingenuity. We will emphasize intellectual leadership and military professionalism in the art and science of warfighting, deepening our knowledge of history while embracing new technology and techniques to counter competitors. PME will emphasize independence of action in warfighting concepts to lessen the impact of degraded/lost communications in combat. PME is to be used as a strategic asset to build trust and interoperability across the Joint Forces and with allied and partner forces.
- *Talent management*. Developing leaders who are competent in national-level decision-making requires broad revision of talent management among the Armed Services, including fellowships, civilian education, and assignments that increase understanding of interagency decision-making processes, as well as alliances and coalitions.
- *Civilian workforce expertise*. A modern, agile, information-advantaged Department requires a motivated, diverse, and highly skilled civilian workforce. We will emphasize new skills and complement our current workforce with information experts, data scientists, computer programmers, and basic science researchers and engineers—to use information, not simply manage it. The Department will also continue to explore streamlined, non-traditional pathways to bring critical skills into service, expanding access to outside expertise, and devising new public-private partnerships to work with small companies, start-ups, and universities.

### **Strengthen Alliances and Attract New Partners**

Mutually beneficial alliances and partnerships are crucial to our strategy, providing a durable, asymmetric strategic advantage that no competitor or rival can match. This approach has served the United States well, in peace and war, for the past 75 years. Our allies and partners came to our aid after the terrorist attacks on 9/11, and have contributed to every major U.S.-led military engagement since. Every day, our allies and partners join us in defending freedom, deterring war, and maintaining the rules which underwrite a free and open international order.

By working together with allies and partners we amass the greatest possible strength for the long-term advancement of our interests, maintaining favorable balances of power that deter aggression and support the stability that generates economic growth. When we pool resources and share responsibility for our common defense, our security burden becomes lighter. Our allies and partners provide complementary capabilities and forces along with unique perspectives, regional relationships, and information that improve our understanding of the environment and expand our options. Allies and partners also provide access to critical regions, supporting a widespread basing and logistics system that underpins the Department's global reach.

We will strengthen and evolve our alliances and partnerships into an extended network capable of deterring or decisively acting to meet the shared challenges of our time. We will focus on three elements for achieving a capable alliance and partnership network:

- *Uphold a foundation of mutual respect, responsibility, priorities, and accountability.* Our alliances and coalitions are built on free will and shared responsibilities. While we will unapologetically represent America’s values and belief in democracy, we will not seek to impose our way of life by force. We will uphold our commitments and we expect allies and partners to contribute an equitable share to our mutually beneficial collective security, including effective investment in modernizing their defense capabilities. We have shared responsibilities for resisting authoritarian trends, contesting radical ideologies, and serving as bulwarks against instability.
- *Expand regional consultative mechanisms and collaborative planning.* We will develop new partnerships around shared interests to reinforce regional coalitions and security cooperation. We will provide allies and partners with a clear and consistent message to encourage alliance and coalition commitment, greater defense cooperation, and military investment.
- *Deepen interoperability.* Each ally and partner is unique. Combined forces able to act together coherently and effectively to achieve military objectives requires interoperability. Interoperability is a priority for operational concepts, modular force elements, communications, information sharing, and equipment. In consultation with Congress and the Department of State, the Department of Defense will prioritize requests for U.S. military equipment sales, accelerating foreign partner modernization and ability to integrate with U.S. forces. We will train to high-end combat missions in our alliance, bilateral, and multinational exercises.

Enduring coalitions and long-term security partnerships, underpinned by our bedrock alliances and reinforced by our allies’ own webs of security relationships, remain a priority:

- *Expand Indo-Pacific alliances and partnerships.* A free and open Indo-Pacific region provides prosperity and security for all. We will strengthen our alliances and partnerships in the Indo-Pacific to a networked security architecture capable of deterring aggression, maintaining stability, and ensuring free access to common domains. With key countries in the region, we will bring together bilateral and multilateral security relationships to preserve the free and open international system.
- *Fortify the Trans-Atlantic NATO Alliance.* A strong and free Europe, bound by shared principles of democracy, national sovereignty, and commitment to Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty is vital to our security. The alliance will deter Russian adventurism, defeat terrorists who seek to murder innocents, and address the arc of instability building on NATO’s periphery. At the same time, NATO must adapt to remain relevant and fit for our time—in purpose, capability, and responsive decision-making. We expect European allies to fulfill their commitments to increase defense and modernization spending to bolster the alliance in the face of our shared security concerns.
- *Form enduring coalitions in the Middle East.* We will foster a stable and secure Middle East that denies safe havens for terrorists, is not dominated by any power hostile to the United States, and that contributes to stable global energy markets and secure trade routes. We will develop enduring coalitions to consolidate gains we have made in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, and elsewhere, to support the lasting defeat of terrorists as we sever their sources of strength and counterbalance Iran.
- *Sustain advantages in the Western Hemisphere.* The U.S. derives immense benefit from a stable, peaceful hemisphere that reduces security threats to the homeland. Supporting the U.S. interagency lead,

the Department will deepen its relations with regional countries that contribute military capabilities to shared regional and global security challenges.

- *Support relationships to address significant terrorist threats in Africa.* We will bolster existing bilateral and multilateral partnerships and develop new relationships to address significant terrorist threats that threaten U.S. interests and contribute to challenges in Europe and the Middle East. We will focus on working by, with, and through local partners and the European Union to degrade terrorists; build the capability required to counter violent extremism, human trafficking, trans-national criminal activity, and illegal arms trade with limited outside assistance; and limit the malign influence of non-African powers.

### **Reform the Department for Greater Performance and Affordability**

The current bureaucratic approach, centered on exacting thoroughness and minimizing risk above all else, is proving to be increasingly unresponsive. We must transition to a culture of performance where results and accountability matter. We will put in place a management system where leadership can harness opportunities and ensure effective stewardship of taxpayer resources. We have a responsibility to gain full value from every taxpayer dollar spent on defense, thereby earning the trust of Congress and the American people.

*Deliver performance at the speed of relevance.* Success no longer goes to the country that develops a new technology first, but rather to the one that better integrates it and adapts its way of fighting. Current processes are not responsive to need; the Department is over-optimized for exceptional performance at the expense of providing timely decisions, policies, and capabilities to the warfighter. Our response will be to prioritize speed of delivery, continuous adaptation, and frequent modular upgrades. We must not accept cumbersome approval chains, wasteful applications of resources in uncompetitive space, or overly risk-averse thinking that impedes change. Delivering performance means we will shed outdated management practices and structures while integrating insights from business innovation.

*Organize for innovation.* The Department's management structure and processes are not written in stone, they are a means to an end—empowering the warfighter with the knowledge, equipment and support systems to fight and win. Department leaders will adapt their organizational structures to best support the Joint Force. If current structures hinder substantial increases in lethality or performance, it is expected that Service Secretaries and Agency heads will consolidate, eliminate, or restructure as needed. The Department's leadership is committed to changes in authorities, granting of waivers, and securing external support for streamlining processes and organizations.

*Drive budget discipline and affordability to achieve solvency.* Better management begins with effective financial stewardship. The Department will continue its plan to achieve full auditability of all its operations, improving its financial processes, systems, and tools to understand, manage, and improve cost. We will continue to leverage the scale of our operations to drive greater efficiency in procurement of materiel and services while pursuing opportunities to consolidate and streamline contracts in areas such as logistics, information technology, and support services. We will also continue efforts to reduce management overhead and the size of headquarters staff. We will reduce or eliminate duplicative organizations and systems for managing human resources, finance, health services, travel, and supplies. The Department will also work to reduce excess property and infrastructure, providing Congress with options for a Base Realignment and Closure.

*Streamline rapid, iterative approaches from development to fielding.* A rapid, iterative approach to capability development will reduce costs, technological obsolescence, and acquisition risk. The Department will realign incentive and reporting structures to increase speed of delivery, enable design tradeoffs in the requirements process, expand the role of warfighters and intelligence analysis throughout the acquisitions process, and utilize non-traditional suppliers. Prototyping and experimentation should be used prior to defining requirements and commercial-off-the-shelf systems. Platform electronics and software must be designed for routine replacement instead of static configurations that last more than a decade. This approach, a major departure from previous practices and culture, will allow the Department to more quickly respond to changes in the security environment and make it harder for competitors to offset our systems.

*Harness and protect the National Security Innovation Base.* The Department's technological advantage depends on a healthy and secure national security innovation base that includes both traditional and non-traditional defense partners. The Department, with the support of Congress, will provide the defense industry with sufficient predictability to inform their long-term investments in critical skills, infrastructure, and research and development. We will continue to streamline processes so that new entrants and small-scale vendors can provide cutting-edge technologies. We will also cultivate international partnerships to leverage and protect partner investments in military capabilities.

## CONCLUSION

This strategy establishes my intent to pursue urgent change at significant scale.

We must use creative approaches, make sustained investment, and be disciplined in execution to field a Joint Force fit for our time, one that can compete, deter, and win in this increasingly complex security environment. A dominant Joint Force will protect the security of our nation, increase U.S. influence, preserve access to markets that will improve our standard of living, and strengthen cohesion among allies and partners.

While any strategy must be adaptive in execution, this summary outlines what we must do to pass intact to the younger generation the freedoms we currently enjoy. But there is nothing new under the sun: while this strategy will require sustained investment by the American people, we recall past generations who made harsher sacrifices so that we might enjoy our way of life today.

As it has for generations, free men and women in America's military will fight with skill and valor to protect us. To carry out any strategy, history teaches us that wisdom and resources must be sufficient. I am confident this defense strategy is appropriate and worthy of the support of the American people.



Jim Mattis





Description of the  
**National  
Military  
Strategy  
2018**



The Joint Staff

## Overview

The *2018 National Military Strategy* (NMS) provides the Joint Force a framework for protecting and advancing U.S. national interests. Pursuant to statute, it reflects a comprehensive review conducted by the Chairman with the other members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the unified combatant commanders.

As an overarching military strategic framework, this strategy implements the substantial body of policy and strategy direction provided in the *2017 National Security Strategy*, the *2018 National Defense Strategy* (NDS), the *Defense Planning Guidance* (DPG), and other documents. The 2018 NMS provides the Chairman's military advice for how the Joint Force implements the defense objectives in the NDS and the direction from the President and the Secretary of Defense.

The 2018 NMS also reflects lessons learned from implementing global integration over the last two years. The strategy articulates a continuum of strategic direction to frame global integration into three strategy horizons to meet the challenges of the existing and future security environment. *Force employment* addresses planning, force management, and decisionmaking to fulfill the defense objectives of the NDS. *Force development* adapts functions, capabilities, and concepts to improve the current Joint Force. *Force design* innovates to enable the Joint Force to do what it does differently to retain a competitive advantage against any adversary.

The vision of the Joint Force articulated in the 2018 NMS is a Joint Force capable of defending the homeland and projecting power globally, now and into the future.

# Strategic Approach

From its global perspective, the NMS premises an adaptive and innovative Joint Force capable of employing its capabilities seamlessly across multiple regions and all domains -- continuing the transition from a regional to a global mindset and approach.

## NDS Relevant Security Trends

- Reemergence of great-power competition
- Post-World War II order—resilient but weakening
- Technology and the changing character of war: diffusion, competition, and new threats
- Empowered non-state actors
- Homeland is no longer a sanctuary
- Threat of weapons of mass destruction (WMD)
- Allies and partners—evolving opportunities
- Battle of narratives
- Scale and urgency of change

This strategy anchors its approach against a set of clearly identified security trends outlined in the NDS (see inset).

These trends, especially those posed by the reemergence of great power

competition with China and Russia, represent the most difficult challenges facing the Joint Force. However, the full scope of global integration must recognize uncertainty and be vigilant for emerging threats to the security and interests of the United States, its allies and partners. In a security environment where the homeland is no longer a sanctuary and every operating domain is contested, competitors and adversaries will continue to operate across geographic regions and span multiple domains to offset or erode Joint Force advantages.

To achieve military advantage over competitors and adversaries, the NMS introduces the notion of *joint combined arms*, defined as *the conduct of operational art through the integration of joint capabilities in all domains*. The Joint Force and its leaders must be as comfortable fighting in space or cyberspace as they are in the other three traditional domains of land, sea, or air.

# Force Employment

To guide force employment, the 2018 NMS orients on the defense objectives in the NDS as its ends. To implement those ends, the 2018 NMS articulates five mutually supporting mission areas (see inset) as the principal ways that the Joint Force operates across the continuum of conflict in multiple regions and in all domains. Defending the homeland is a Joint Force activity that cuts across all five mission areas and spans all joint functions.

## **NMS Mission Areas**

- Respond to Threats
- Deter Strategic Attack (and proliferation of WMD)
- Deter Conventional Attack
- Assure Allies and Partners
- Compete Below the Level of Armed Conflict  
(With a Military Dimension)

The Joint Force will leverage a wide range of means to enhance force employment. Dynamic Force Employment (DFE) serves as the force management framework to prioritize preparedness for war while meeting current force demands in day-to-day operations. By proactively shaping the security environment through identifying and exploiting strategic opportunities, DFE aligns Joint Force actions across multiple global campaign plans, defense critical missions, time horizons, warfighting domains, and geographic boundaries.

As one of the principal methods by which the Joint Force operationalizes the NDS's Global Operating Model, DFE will assist in balancing current operational needs with readiness recovery and modernization to preserve Joint Force competitive advantage.

The 2018 NMS acknowledges the unique contributions of allies and partners, a strategic source of strength for the Joint Force. Building a strong, agile, and resilient force requires better interoperability and enhancing the combat

lethality and survivability of our allies and partners. The NMS also informs engagement with interagency partners, both abroad and domestically, to enable the Joint Force to best support the application of all instruments of national power throughout the continuum of conflict.

To prepare the Joint Force for employment, exercises build readiness, interoperability, and the mutual trust required for a joint combined arms approach to global campaigning. Those exercises are key to building interoperability, relationships, and capabilities of allies, partner nations, and interagency partners, as well as enabling units and leaders to “punch above weight class” when necessary. Exercises can also facilitate near-term experimentation to rapidly incorporate innovative ideas and disruptive technologies that promote competitive advantage.

## **Force Development and Force Design**

Force Development and Force Design are the expression of Joint Force adaptation and innovation under global integration to implement the NDS’s direction to build a more lethal force. *Force Development* adapts current planning, decisionmaking, and force management processes to enable the Joint Force to do what it does *better*. *Force Design* enables the Joint Force to do what it does *in fundamentally different and disruptive ways* to ensure the Joint Force can deter or defeat future adversaries.

As with force employment, the ends for force development and force design are drawn from the defense objectives of the NDS. To implement those ends and build a combat-credible Joint Force capable of defending the homeland, deterring competitors, and defeating adversaries, the NMS outlines three ways oriented on the investments in the Joint Force’s people, ideas, and equipment to maintain its competitive advantage.

To implement the force investment priorities of the NDS, the 2018 NMS provides guidance to inform the development of a Capstone Concept for Joint Operations (CCJO). The CCJO will express the collective vision of the Joint Chiefs of Staff for a Joint Force designed and able to out-think, out-manuever, and out-fight any adversary under conditions of disruptive change. It will mark a shift to a concept-driven, threat-informed, capability development process and provide a campaign approach to unify service capabilities across materiel and non-materiel solutions.

Achieving the Joint Chiefs' vision will require people—the Joint Force's primary source of competitive advantage—to continuously adapt and innovate to maintain their competitive edge.

Consistent with the guidance laid out in the NDS, capability investments must emphasize military advantages in lethality and operational reach, while enabling the Joint Force to compete effectively below the level of armed conflict.

## **Conclusion**

The *2018 National Military Strategy* describes a roadmap for how the Joint Force will defend the homeland and retain its competitive advantage to deter competitors and defeat adversaries, whether great power competitors like China and Russia or other security challenges, now and into the future.

Implementation of the strategy is informed by strategic frameworks, input from the field, and the judgment of senior leaders. The NMS guides other joint documents including the Joint Strategic Campaign Plan, global campaign plans, the CCJO, and other capability development and program advice documents, and the body of assessments that benchmark those documents.

Collectively, the strategy and its related processes will enable the Joint Force to provide a range of military options that enhance the military contribution to national security and best serve the national interests of the United States.

**Office of Primary Responsibility:**

Strategy Development Division  
Deputy Directorate for Joint Strategic Planning  
Directorate for Strategy, Plans, and Policy (J-5)  
The Joint Staff





# SUMMARY

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DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE  
CYBER STRATEGY

2018

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# INTRODUCTION

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American prosperity, liberty, and security depend upon open and reliable access to information. The Internet empowers us and enriches our lives by providing ever-greater access to new knowledge, businesses, and services. Computers and network technologies underpin U.S. military warfighting superiority by enabling the Joint Force to gain the information advantage, strike at long distance, and exercise global command and control.

The arrival of the digital age has also created challenges for the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Nation. The open, transnational, and decentralized nature of the Internet that we seek to protect creates significant vulnerabilities. Competitors deterred from engaging the United States and our allies in an armed conflict are using cyberspace operations to steal our technology, disrupt our government and commerce, challenge our democratic processes, and threaten our critical infrastructure.

We are engaged in a long-term strategic competition with China and Russia. These States have expanded that competition to include persistent campaigns in and through cyberspace that pose long-term strategic risk to the Nation as well as to our allies and partners. China is eroding U.S. military overmatch and the Nation's economic vitality by persistently exfiltrating sensitive information from U.S. public and private sector institutions. Russia has used cyber-enabled information operations to influence our population and challenge our democratic processes. Other actors, such as North Korea and Iran, have similarly employed malicious cyber activities to harm U.S. citizens and threaten U.S. interests. Globally, the scope and pace of malicious cyber activity continue to rise. The United States' growing dependence on the cyberspace domain for nearly every essential civilian and military function makes this an urgent and unacceptable risk to the Nation.

The Department must take action in cyberspace during day-to-day competition to preserve U.S. military advantages and to defend U.S. interests. Our focus will be on the States that can pose strategic threats to U.S. prosperity and security, particularly China and Russia. We will conduct cyberspace operations to collect intelligence and prepare military cyber capabilities to be used in the event of crisis or conflict. We will defend forward to disrupt or halt malicious cyber activity at its source, including activity that falls below the level of armed conflict. We will strengthen the security and resilience of networks and systems that contribute to current and future U.S. military advantages. We will collaborate with our interagency, industry, and international partners to advance our mutual interests.

During wartime, U.S. cyber forces will be prepared to operate alongside our air, land, sea, and space forces to target adversary weaknesses, offset adversary strengths, and amplify the effectiveness of other elements of the Joint Force. Adversary militaries are increasingly reliant on the same type of computer and network technologies that have become central to Joint Force warfighting. The Department will exploit this reliance to gain military advantage. The Joint Force will employ offensive cyber capabilities and innovative concepts that allow for the use of cyberspace operations across the full spectrum of conflict.

The *2018 Department of Defense Cyber Strategy* represents the Department's vision for addressing this threat and implementing the priorities of the *National Security Strategy* and *National Defense Strategy* for cyberspace. It supersedes the *2015 DoD Cyber Strategy*.

The United States cannot afford inaction: our values, economic competitiveness, and military edge are exposed to threats that grow more dangerous every day. We must assertively defend our interests in cyberspace below the level of armed conflict and ensure the readiness of our cyberspace operators to support the Joint Force in crisis and conflict. Our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines, and civilian employees stand ready, and we will succeed.

## STRATEGIC COMPETITION IN CYBERSPACE

The United States' strategic competitors are conducting cyber-enabled campaigns to erode U.S. military advantages, threaten our infrastructure, and reduce our economic prosperity. The Department must respond to these activities by exposing, disrupting, and degrading cyber activity threatening U.S. interests, strengthening the cybersecurity and resilience of key potential targets, and working closely with other departments and agencies, as well as with our allies and partners.

First, we must ensure the U.S. military's ability to fight and win wars in any domain, including cyberspace. This is a foundational requirement for U.S. national security and a key to ensuring that we deter aggression, including cyber attacks that constitute a use of force, against the United States, our allies, and our partners. The Department must defend its own networks, systems, and information from malicious cyber activity and be prepared to defend, when directed, those networks and systems operated by non-DoD Defense Critical Infrastructure (DCI)<sup>1</sup> and Defense Industrial Base (DIB)<sup>2</sup> entities. We will defend forward to halt or degrade cyberspace operations targeting the Department, and we will collaborate to strengthen the cybersecurity and resilience of DoD, DCI, and DIB networks and systems.

Second, the Department seeks to preempt, defeat, or deter malicious cyber activity targeting U.S. critical infrastructure that could cause a significant cyber incident regardless of whether that incident would impact DoD's warfighting readiness or capability. Our primary role in this homeland defense mission is to defend forward by leveraging our focus outward to stop threats before they reach their targets. The Department also provides public and private sector partners with indications and warning (I&W) of malicious cyber activity, in coordination with other Federal departments and agencies.

Third, the Department will work with U.S. allies and partners to strengthen cyber capacity, expand combined cyberspace operations, and increase bi-directional information sharing in order to advance our mutual interests.

The Department’s cyberspace objectives are:

1. Ensuring the Joint Force can achieve its missions in a contested cyberspace environment;
2. Strengthening the Joint Force by conducting cyberspace operations that enhance U.S. military advantages;
3. Defending U.S. critical infrastructure from malicious cyber activity that alone, or as part of a campaign, could cause a significant cyber incident;<sup>3</sup>
4. Securing DoD information and systems against malicious cyber activity, including DoD information on non-DoD-owned networks; and
5. Expanding DoD cyber cooperation with interagency, industry, and international partners.

## DEFENDING CIVILIAN ASSETS THAT ENABLE U.S. MILITARY ADVANTAGE

The Department must be prepared to defend non-DoD-owned Defense Critical Infrastructure (DCI) and Defense Industrial Base (DIB) networks and systems. Our chief goal in maintaining an ability to defend DCI is to ensure the infrastructure’s continued functionality and ability to support DoD objectives in a contested cyber environment. Our focus working with DIB entities is to protect sensitive DoD information whose loss, either individually or in aggregate, could result in an erosion of Joint Force military advantage. As the Sector Specific Agency (SSA) for the DIB and a business partner with the DIB and DCI, the Department will: set and enforce standards for cybersecurity, resilience, and reporting; and be prepared, when requested and authorized, to provide direct assistance, including on non-DoD networks, prior to, during, and after an incident.

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<sup>1</sup> **“Defense Critical Infrastructure”** refers to the composite of DoD and non-DoD assets essential to project, support, and sustain military forces and operations worldwide (Department of Defense Directive 3020.40).

<sup>2</sup> **“Defense Industrial Base”** refers to the Department, Government, and private sector worldwide industrial complex with capabilities to perform research and development, design, produce, and maintain military weapon systems, subsystems, components, or parts to satisfy military requirements (32 CFR Part 236).

<sup>3</sup> **“Significant cyber incident”** refers to an event occurring on or conducted through a computer network that is (or a group of related events that together are) likely to result in demonstrable harm to the national security interests, foreign relations, or economy of the United States or to the public confidence, civil liberties, or public health and safety of the American people (Presidential Policy Directive 41).

# STRATEGIC APPROACH

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Our strategic approach is based on mutually reinforcing lines of effort to build a more lethal force; compete and deter in cyberspace; expand alliances and partnerships; reform the Department; and cultivate talent.

## › BUILD A MORE LETHAL JOINT FORCE

Accelerate cyber capability development: The Department will accelerate the development of cyber capabilities for both warfighting and countering malicious cyber actors. Our focus will be on fielding capabilities that are scalable, adaptable, and diverse to provide maximum flexibility to Joint Force commanders. The Joint Force will be capable of employing cyberspace operations throughout the spectrum of conflict, from day-to-day operations to wartime, in order to advance U.S. interests.

Innovate to foster agility: The Department must innovate to keep pace with rapidly evolving threats and technologies in cyberspace. We will accept and manage operational and programmatic risk in a deliberate manner that moves from a “zero defect” culture to one that fosters agility and innovation because success in this domain requires the Department to innovate faster than our strategic competitors.

Leverage automation and data analysis to improve effectiveness: The Department will use cyber enterprise solutions to operate at machine speed and large-scale data analytics to identify malicious cyber activity across different networks and systems. The Department will leverage these advances to improve our own defensive posture and to ensure that our cyber capabilities will continue to be effective against competitors armed with cutting edge technology.

Employ commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) cyber capabilities: The Department excels at creating cyber capabilities tailored for specific operational problems. In addition to these capabilities, we will make greater use of COTS capabilities that can be optimized for DoD use.

## › COMPETE AND DETER IN CYBERSPACE

Deter malicious cyber activities: The United States seeks to use all instruments of national power to deter adversaries from conducting malicious cyberspace activity that would threaten U.S. national interests, our allies, or our partners. The Department will prioritize securing sensitive DoD information and deterring malicious cyber activities that constitute a use of force against the United States, our allies, or our partners. Should deterrence fail, the Joint Force stands ready to employ the full range of military capabilities in response.

Persistently contest malicious cyber activity in day-to-day competition: The Department will counter cyber campaigns threatening U.S. military advantage by defending forward to intercept and halt cyber threats and by strengthening the cybersecurity of systems and networks that support DoD missions. This includes working with the private sector and our foreign allies and partners to contest cyber activity that could threaten Joint Force missions and to counter the exfiltration of sensitive DoD information.

Increase the resilience of U.S. critical infrastructure: The Department will work with its interagency and private sector partners to reduce the risk that malicious cyber activity targeting U.S. critical infrastructure could have catastrophic or cascading consequences. We will streamline our public-private information-sharing mechanisms and strengthen the resilience and cybersecurity of critical infrastructure networks and systems.

## › STRENGTHEN ALLIANCES AND ATTRACT NEW PARTNERSHIPS

Build trusted private sector partnerships: The private sector owns and operates the majority of U.S. infrastructure and is on the frontlines of nation-state competition in cyberspace. In coordination with other Federal departments and agencies, the Department will build trusted relationships with private sector entities that are critical enablers of military operations and carry out deliberate planning and collaborative training that enables mutually supporting cybersecurity activities.

Operationalize international partnerships: Many of the United States' allies and partners possess advanced cyber capabilities that complement our own. The Department will work to strengthen the capacity of these allies and partners and increase DoD's ability to leverage its partners' unique skills, resources, capabilities, and perspectives. Information-sharing relationships with allies and partners will increase the effectiveness of combined cyberspace operations and enhance our collective cybersecurity posture.

Reinforce norms of responsible State behavior in cyberspace: The Department will reinforce voluntary, non-binding norms of responsible State behavior in cyberspace during peacetime. The United States has endorsed the work done by the UN Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security (UNGGE) to develop a framework of responsible State behavior in cyberspace. The principles developed by the UNGGE include prohibitions against damaging civilian critical infrastructure during peacetime and against allowing national territory to be used for intentionally wrongful cyber activity. The Department will work alongside its interagency and international partners to promote international commitments regarding behavior in cyberspace as well as to develop and implement cyber confidence building measures (CBM). When cyber activities threaten U.S. interests, we will contest them and we will be prepared to act, in conjunction with partners, to defend U.S. interests.

## › REFORM THE DEPARTMENT

Incorporate cyber awareness into DoD institutional culture: The Department will adapt its institutional culture so individuals at every level are knowledgeable about the cyberspace domain and can incorporate that knowledge into their day-to-day activities. Leaders and their staffs need to be “cyber fluent” so they can fully understand the cybersecurity implications of their decisions and are positioned to identify opportunities to leverage the cyberspace domain to gain strategic, operational, and tactical advantages.

Increase cybersecurity accountability: Reducing the Department's “attack surface” requires an increase in cybersecurity awareness and accountability across the Department. We will hold DoD personnel and our private sector partners accountable for their cybersecurity practices and choices.

Seek material solutions that are affordable, flexible, and robust: The Department will reduce the time it takes to procure software and hardware in order to keep pace with the rapid advance of technology. We will identify opportunities to procure scalable services, such as cloud storage and scalable computing power, to ensure that our systems keep pace with commercial information technology and can scale when necessary to match changing requirements. We will also leverage COTS capabilities where feasible to reduce our reliance on expensive, custom-built software that is difficult to maintain or upgrade.

Expand crowd-sourced vulnerability identification: The Department will continue to identify crowd-sourcing opportunities, such as hack-a-thons and bug-bounties, in order to identify and mitigate vulnerabilities more effectively and to foster innovation.

## › CULTIVATE TALENT

Sustain a ready cyber workforce: The Department's workforce is a critical cyber asset. We will invest in building future talent, identifying and recruiting sought-after talent, and retaining our current cyber workforce. We will provide ample opportunities—both inside and outside the Department—for the professional development and career progression of cyber personnel. We will create processes for maintaining visibility of the entire military and civilian cyber workforce and optimizing personnel rotations across military departments and commands, including maximizing the use of the Reserve Components. The Department will also ensure that its cyber requirements are filled by the optimal mix of military service members, civilian employees, and contracted support to serve mission requirements.

Enhance the Nation's cyber talent: The Department plays an essential role in enhancing the Nation's pool of cyber talent in order to further the goal of increasing national resilience across the private and public sectors. To that end, we will increase our efforts alongside other Federal departments and agencies to promote science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and foreign language (STEM-L) disciplines at the primary and secondary education levels throughout the United States. The Department will also partner with industry and academia to establish standards in training, education, and awareness that will facilitate the growth of cyber talent in the United States.

Embed software and hardware expertise as a core DoD competency: To make it attractive to skilled candidates, the Department will establish a career track for computer science related specialties (including hardware engineers, software developers, and data analysts) that offers meaningful challenges, rotational billets at other Federal departments and agencies, specialized training opportunities tied to retention commitments, and the expansion of compensation incentives for the Cyber Excepted Service (CES).

Establish a cyber top talent management program: The Department will establish a cyber talent management program that provides its most skilled cyber personnel with focused resources and opportunities to develop key skills over the course of their careers. The Department will use competitive processes, including individual and team competitions, to identify the most capable DoD military and civilian cyber specialists and then empower those personnel to solve the Department's toughest challenges.

## CONCLUSION

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The arrival of the cyber era has created new opportunities and challenges for the Department and the Nation. Open and reliable access to information is a vital U.S. interest, and our allies and competitors alike should understand that we will assertively defend it. The *2018 DoD Cyber Strategy* directs the Department to defend forward, shape the day-to-day competition, and prepare for war by building a more lethal force, expanding alliances and partnerships, reforming the Department, and cultivating talent, while actively competing against and deterring our competitors. Taken together, these mutually reinforcing activities will enable the Department to compete, deter, and win in the cyberspace domain.



# DEFENSE SPACE STRATEGY SUMMARY



JUNE 2020

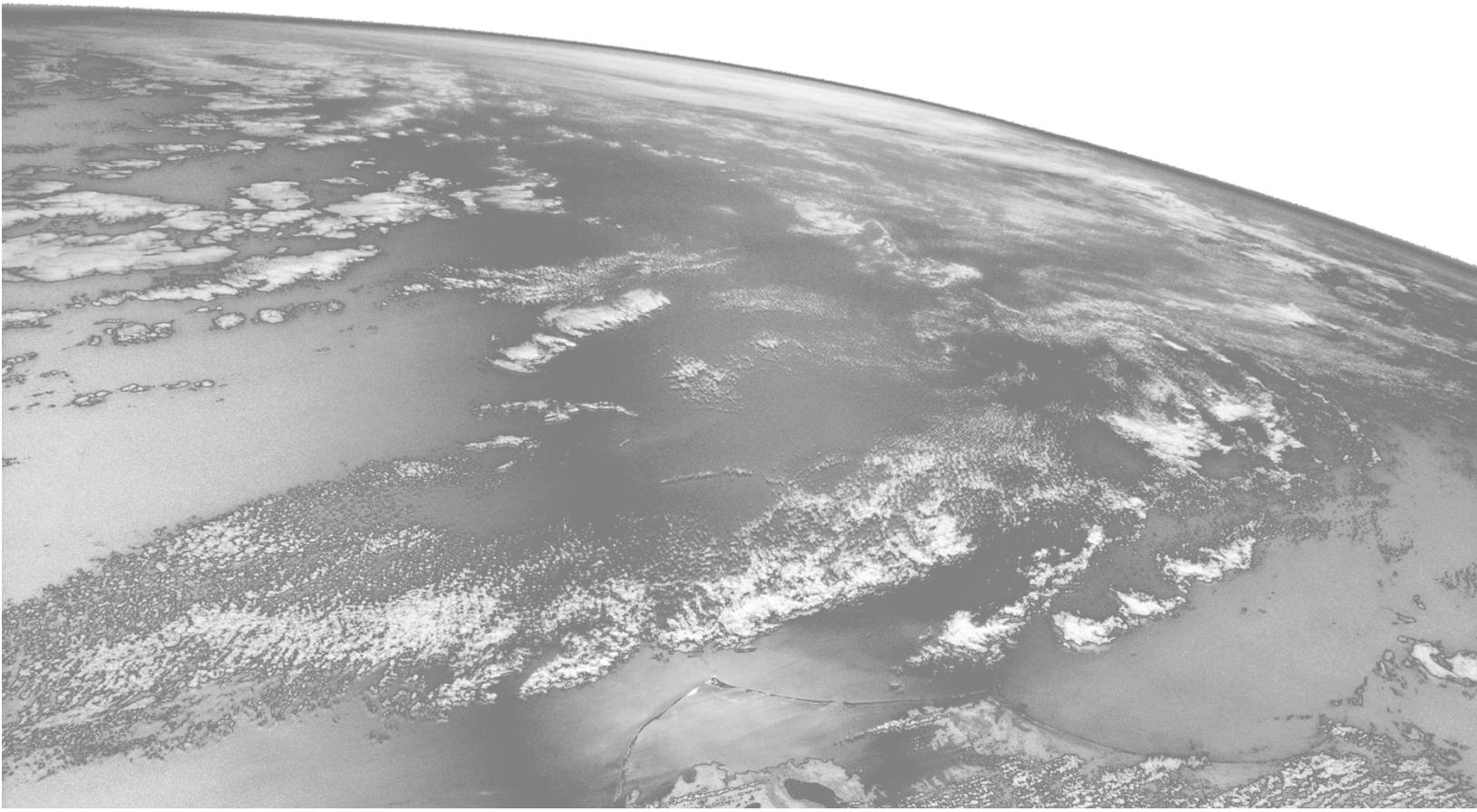


Image courtesy of NASA

DEFENSE SPACE STRATEGY  
SUMMARY



JUNE 2020



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Department of Defense (DoD) is embarking on the most significant transformation in the history of the U.S. national security space program. Space is now a distinct warfighting domain, demanding enterprise-wide changes to policies, strategies, operations, investments, capabilities, and expertise for a new strategic environment. This strategy identifies how DoD will advance spacepower to enable the Department to compete, deter, and win in a complex security environment characterized by great power competition.

Space is vital to our Nation's security, prosperity, and scientific achievement. Space-based capabilities are integral to modern life in the United States and around the world and are an indispensable component of U.S. military power. Ensuring the availability of these capabilities is fundamental to establishing and maintaining military superiority across all domains and to advancing U.S. and global security and economic prosperity. Space, however, is not a sanctuary from attack and space systems are potential targets at all levels of conflict. In particular, China and Russia present the greatest strategic threat due to their development, testing, and deployment of counterspace capabilities and their associated military doctrine for employment in conflict extending to space. China and Russia each have weaponized space as a means to reduce U.S. and allied military effectiveness and challenge our freedom of operation in space.

Rapid increases in commercial and international space activities worldwide add to the complexity of the space environment. Commercial space activities provide national and homeland security benefits with new technologies and services and create new economic opportunities in established and emerging markets. The same activities, however, also create challenges in protecting critical technology, ensuring operational security, and maintaining strategic advantages. Internationally, allies and partners also recognize the benefits of space for military operations, and increasingly understand the threats to those space activities. Allies and partners who are actively expanding their defense space programs, present novel opportunities to increase defense collaboration and cooperation.

In response to this new security environment, and in accordance with the 2018 National Strategy for Space (NSfS) and the 2018 National Defense Strategy (NDS), this Defense Space Strategy (DSS) provides guidance to DoD for achieving desired conditions in space over the next 10 years. The DoD desires a secure, stable, and accessible space domain, whose use by the United States and our allies and partners is underpinned by comprehensive, sustained military strength. The strategy includes a phased approach for the defense enterprise to move with purpose and speed across four lines of effort (LOEs): (1) build a comprehensive military advantage in space; (2) integrate space into national, joint, and combined operations; (3) shape the strategic environment; and (4) cooperate with allies, partners, industry, and other U.S. Government departments and agencies.

The Department is taking innovative and bold actions to ensure space superiority and to secure the Nation's vital interests in space now and in the future. Establishing the U.S. Space Force (USSF) as the newest branch of our Armed Forces and the U.S. Space Command (USSPACECOM) as a unified combatant command, as well as undertaking significant space acquisition reform across the DoD, has set a strategic path to expand spacepower for the Nation. It is a path that embraces space as a unique domain of national military power that, together with the other domains, underpins multi-domain joint and combined military operations to advance national security.



## DESIRED CONDITIONS

This Defense Space Strategy (DSS) is designed to achieve the following desired conditions at an accelerated pace over the next 10 years, focusing on the military application of spacepower through control, exploitation, and influence of space to achieve strategic, operational, and tactical objectives.

### DESIRED CONDITIONS:

*The space domain is secure, stable, and accessible. The use of space by the United States and our allies and partners is underpinned by sustained, comprehensive U.S. military strength. The United States is able to leverage our use of space to generate, project, and employ power across all domains throughout the spectrum of conflict.*

To achieve these desired conditions, DoD will advance spacepower through the pursuit of the following defense objectives:

**Maintain Space Superiority:** DoD will establish, maintain, and preserve U.S. freedom of operations in the space domain. DoD will be prepared to protect and defend U.S. and, as directed, allied, partner, and commercial space capabilities and to deter and defeat adversary hostile use of space.



**Provide Space Support to National, Joint, and Combined Operations:** DoD space forces will deliver advanced space capabilities and effects to enable national, joint, and combined operations in any domain through sustained, comprehensive space military advantages. DoD will leverage and bolster a thriving domestic civil and commercial space industry.

**Ensure Space Stability:** In cooperation with allies and partners, DoD will maintain persistent presence in space in order to: deter aggression in space; provide for safe transit in, to, and through space; uphold internationally accepted standards of responsible behavior as a good steward of space; and support U.S. leadership in space traffic management and the long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

### SPACEPOWER:

*The sum of a nation's capabilities to leverage space for diplomatic, information, military, and economic activities in peace or war in order to attain national objectives.*

# STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Great power competition defines the strategic environment. Space is both a source of and conduit for national power, prosperity, and prestige. As a result, space is a domain that has reemerged as a central arena of great power competition, primarily with China and Russia.

**CENTRAL PROBLEM:**  
*The U.S. defense space enterprise was not built for the current strategic environment. The intentions and advancements of potential adversaries in space are threatening the ability of the United States to deter aggression, to protect U.S. national interests, and to fight and win future conflicts.*

More than any other nation, the United States relies on space-based capabilities to project and employ power on a global scale. Today, U.S. reliance on space has increased to the point where space capabilities not only enhance, but enable our way of life and way of war. U.S. national security and prosperity require unfettered access to and freedom to operate in the space domain.



The reemergence of great power competition and a rapid expansion of allied, partner, and commercial activities in space in recent years have drastically changed the character of the space domain. The actions, intentions, and military strategies of potential adversaries have transformed space into a warfighting domain. In parallel, growth in allied, partner, and commercial space capabilities has added complexity to the space operating environment while creating an unprecedented level of collaborative opportunities.

These factors amplify the need to strengthen the U.S. defense posture and present several threats, challenges, and opportunities as the Department seeks to attain its desired conditions.

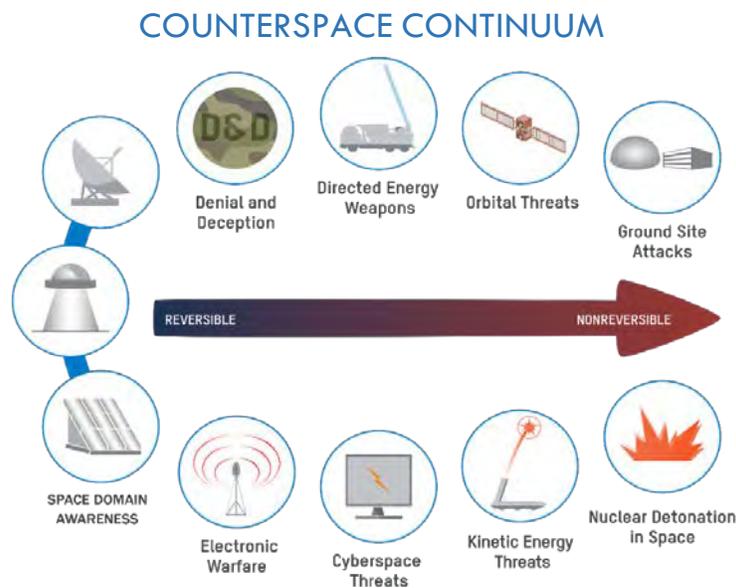
## THREATS, CHALLENGES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

**Threats:** China and Russia present the most immediate and serious threats to U.S. space operations, although threats from North Korea and Iran are also growing. Chinese and Russian strategic intentions and capabilities present urgent and enduring threats to the ability of the Department to achieve its desired conditions in space. China and Russia have analyzed U.S. dependencies on space and have developed doctrine, organizations, and capabilities specifically designed to contest or deny U.S. access to and operations in the domain. Concurrently, their use of space is expanding significantly. Both countries consider space access and denial as critical components of their national and military strategies. Specifically, Chinese and Russian military doctrines indicate that they view space as important to modern warfare and consider the use of counterspace capabilities as a means for reducing U.S., allied, and partner military effectiveness and for winning future wars. China and Russia have weaponized space as a way to deter and counter a possible U.S. intervention during a regional military conflict.



**Challenges:** Several factors may limit DoD's ability to achieve its desired conditions:

- ▶ The DoD will continue to depend on space to project power and to respond rapidly to crises worldwide to a greater extent than potential adversaries operating in their respective regions.
- ▶ The DoD has limited operational experience with conflict beginning in or extending into space, despite rapid counterspace advancements by potential adversaries.
- ▶ International understanding and agreement of what constitutes unsafe, irresponsible, or threatening behavior in space is nascent.
- ▶ U.S. activities, both terrestrial and in space, are increasingly exposed by advances in potential adversary, rest-of-world, and commercial space-based capabilities, impeding the U.S. military's freedom of maneuver and action in all domains. Meanwhile, potential adversaries are leveraging technological advancements in the commercial space sector at decreased costs and broader accessibility to expand their space technologies and capabilities.
- ▶ Public understanding of their reliance on space systems, the changing character of the space domain, and the significantly growing counterspace threats to the United States and its allies and partners remains cursory.



**Opportunities:** The emerging strategic environment also presents numerous opportunities that may enhance the Department's ability to attain its desired conditions:

- ▶ National leadership recognizes the criticality of space to national security and prosperity. Space, including space security, is a top national priority with increasing resources to ensure continued U.S. leadership in this critical domain. Strategic guidance, including the National Security Strategy, the NDS, and the NSfS underscore the Nation's vital interest of unfettered access to, and freedom to operate in, space.

▶ The creation of new space-focused organizations in DoD offers an historic opportunity to reform every aspect of our defense space enterprise. The USSF, the newest branch of the Armed Forces, will bring unity, focus, and advocacy to organizing, training, and equipping space forces. USSPACECOM, the newest combatant command, will bring additional operational focus to deterring threats and shaping the security environment in space. Concurrent with ongoing space acquisition activities within the Department of the Air Force, the Space Development Agency was established under a new model for rapid acquisition to rapidly develop and field new space capabilities. Taken together, the establishment of these organizations institutionalizes the commitment of both the legislative and executive branches of government to champion strategic change across the national security space enterprise. These new institutions bring focus and momentum to addressing current and future challenges.



- ▶ New leadership and management for space acquisition has been established to unify the Department’s space acquisition efforts into a streamlined structure for better integration and speed of delivery. A new Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Space Acquisition and Integration ASAF(A&I), along with a new Space Force Acquisition Council (SFAC), will simplify the leadership and synchronization of the DoD’s space development efforts by overseeing and directing: the Space Development Agency, the Space and Missile Systems Center, and the Space Rapid Capabilities Office. When the transfer of the Space Development Agency is completed, the Department will have a new unified structure.
- ▶ The United States has long maintained a robust and prolific arrangement of alliances and partnerships built on trust, common values, and shared national interests. This approach creates an important advantage for the United States and its allies and partners. Many U.S. allies and partners acknowledge space as an integral component of their respective national security strategies and recognize the increasing counterspace threats posed by potential adversaries. As a result, they are increasingly interested in collaborating in the development of space capabilities, sharing space-related information and intelligence, and partnering in space operations to secure access to, and ensure freedom of action in, space.
- ▶ Commercial space activities have expanded significantly in both volume and diversity, resulting in new forms of commercial capabilities and services that leverage commoditized, off-the-shelf technologies and lower barriers for market entry. These developments are contributing to a burgeoning space industry driven by entrepreneurial innovation and investment, advanced technology, decreased costs, and increased demand for space-based services. The DoD has an opportunity to leverage innovation and cost-effective investments driven by the private sector, presenting opportunities for collaboration to develop game-changing capabilities with a more streamlined and responsive acquisition process.



## STRATEGIC APPROACH

The Department is rapidly transforming its approach to space from a support function to a warfighting domain in order to achieve our desired conditions and strategic objectives over the next 10 years in the face of identified threats, challenges, and opportunities.

### **CENTRAL IDEA:**

*The Department will grow its spacepower capacity over the next 10 years to ensure space superiority and secure the Nation's vital interests. The Department will take action rapidly to leverage opportunities and U.S. strengths in close cooperation with our allies, partners, and industry.*



Generating an enduring superior spacepower capacity will take a number of years and will require DoD to rely in the near-term on enhancing existing capabilities. The Department will expand its space partnerships and will establish new and deeper pathways to collaborate with allies, partners, industry, and other U.S. Government departments and agencies, making cooperation and collaboration a matter of course in future capability development and operations. These actions will be undertaken while the Department builds comprehensive military spacepower through a trained and ready force that is integrated into Joint Force plans to

support the Department's objectives to compete, deter, and win across the spectrum of conflict. This will require embracing space as a unique domain of national and military power while also embracing principles of joint warfare.

The Department will pursue the following prioritized lines of effort (LOEs) to achieve our desired conditions while addressing identified threats, opportunities, and challenges:

- 1) Build a comprehensive military advantage in space.**
- 2) Integrate military spacepower into national, joint, and combined operations.**
- 3) Shape the strategic environment.**
- 4) Cooperate with allies, partners, industry, and other U.S. Government departments and agencies.**

**LOE 1: Build a comprehensive military advantage in space.** The Department must transform its space enterprise by: reforming its organizations; fielding resilient architectures; building capabilities to counter hostile uses of space; and developing spacepower expertise, doctrine, and operational concepts commensurate with the threat. DoD will develop an agile space enterprise that can take advantage of emerging technological and commercial innovation in order to continually outpace adversary threats. Space superiority will be achieved through on-orbit, multi-domain, and cross-component operations that are fully integrated with our allies and partners. The establishment of the USSF as a new branch of the Armed Forces offers a historic and immediate opportunity to rapidly transform the enterprise to achieve space superiority. Additionally, the creation of a new ASAF (A&I) and SFAC will further unify DoD space acquisition efforts, improving the synchronization of space systems and programs and ensuring integration across the national security space enterprise. DoD components will prioritize necessary resources for this LOE for the duration of the DSS timeframe. Specific objectives include:



- ▶ Build out the U.S. Space Force.
- ▶ Develop and document doctrinal foundations of military spacepower.
- ▶ Develop and expand space warfighting expertise and culture.
- ▶ Field assured space capabilities.
- ▶ Develop and field capabilities that counter hostile use of space.
- ▶ Improve intelligence and command and control (C2) capabilities that enable military advantage in the space domain.

**LOE 2: Integrate military spacepower into national, joint, and combined operations.** Military spacepower achieves its greatest potential when combined with all other forms of military power. The integration of superior space capabilities into and throughout the Joint Force, along with operational integration with allies and partners, is essential for securing our military advantage against threats in space. As DoD builds superior space forces, it must further develop and enhance integration of space warfighting doctrine, capabilities, and personnel into national, joint, and combined operations. The establishment of USSPACECOM as a new combatant command provides a full-time operational focus on deterrence, integration, and employment of military spacepower. DoD components will prioritize necessary resources for this LOE for the duration of the DSS timeframe. Specific objectives include:



- ▶ Enable USSPACECOM to plan, exercise, and execute joint and combined space operations across the spectrum of conflict.
- ▶ Realign operational authorities and update rules of engagement.
- ▶ Integrate space warfighting operations, intelligence, capabilities, and personnel into military plans and staffs.
- ▶ Update security classification for DoD space programs.
- ▶ Integrate allies and partners into plans, operations, exercises, engagements, and intelligence activities.

**LOE 3: Shape the strategic environment.** DoD will deter aggression and attacks in space and, if deterrence fails, be capable of winning wars that extend into space. Additionally, DoD will take actions that enhance domain stability and reduce the potential for miscalculations. In this context, international views about space as a warfighting domain and what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behavior in that domain are nascent or, in some cases, non-

existent. DoD will partner with the Department of State (DoS) to work closely with allies and partners in order to develop common understandings of appropriate behavior in space. The United States must align with allies and partners to engage proactively and assertively with the wider international community, including with potential adversaries, to advance U.S., allied, and partner national security interests and to reduce the possibility of mishaps and misperceptions. This LOE must be executed in close cooperation with DoS and across all key DoD components, utilizing appropriate authorities,

without adversely affecting space capability development, production, and fielding activities. Overall, LOE 3 activities are enduring but critical in the near-term in order to leverage U.S. strengths as the Department develops space warfighting policy and builds associated warfighting capacity.

Specific objectives include:

- ▶ Inform international and public audiences of growing adversarial threats in space.
- ▶ Deter adversary aggression against the space capabilities of the United States and its allies, partners, and commercial interests.
- ▶ Coordinate space messaging.
- ▶ Promote standards and norms of behavior in space favorable to U.S., allied, and partner interests.



**LOE 4: Cooperate with allies, partners, industry, and other U.S. Government departments and agencies.** Partnering is both inherent in the first three LOEs and a distinct LOE in its own right. In close partnership with key U.S. departments and agencies, DoD must enhance space cooperation with international partners and commercial entities, many of whose space capabilities are already integral to collective security. DoD will promote burden-sharing with our allies and partners, developing and leveraging cooperative opportunities in policy, strategy, capabilities, and operational realms. Pursuit of LOE 4 will be ongoing, with the most significant attention needed in the short-term to lay foundations for benefits over the long-term. Specific objectives include:



- ▶ Expand information sharing relationships with capable allies and partners.
- ▶ Align with allies and partners on space policy.
- ▶ Join with allies, partners, and other U.S. Government departments and agencies to promote favorable standards and norms of behavior in space.
- ▶ Expand cooperative research, development, and acquisition (RD&A) with allies and partners.
- ▶ Leverage commercial technological advancements and acquisition processes.
- ▶ Modernize DoD’s approach to the commercial licensing approval process.



## CONCLUSION

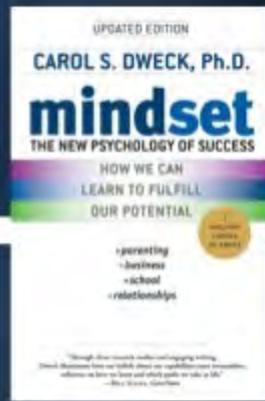
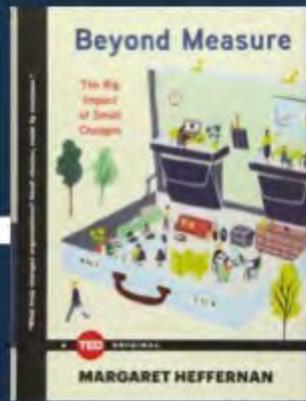
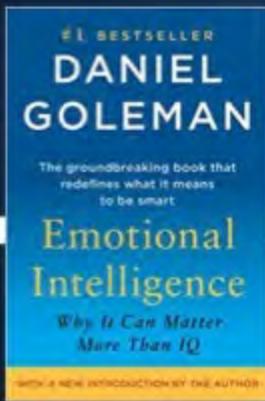
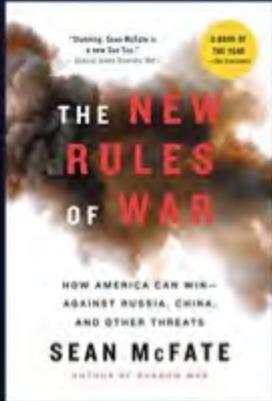
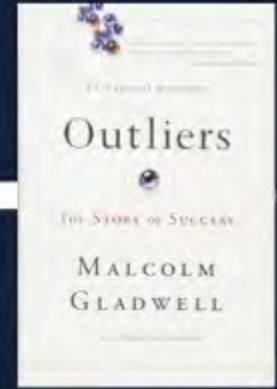
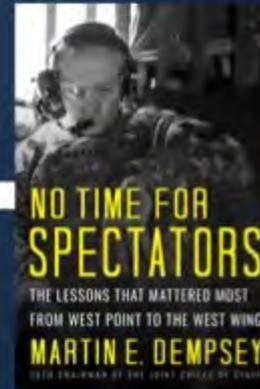
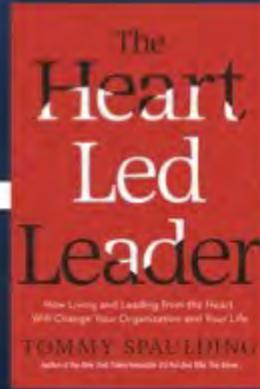
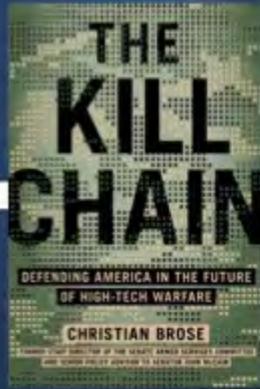
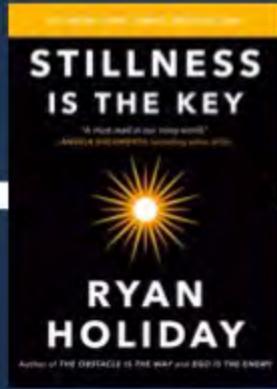


This strategy provides an opportunity to build upon existing work by taking immediate and enduring steps to generate and employ a superior spacepower capacity. Successful implementation of this strategy requires embracing space activities as a unique source of national and military power and incorporating the principles of joint warfare into space operations. Implementation of the strategy will posture the Department to achieve its strategic objectives with the necessary prioritization of resources and risk management to advance U.S. national interests.

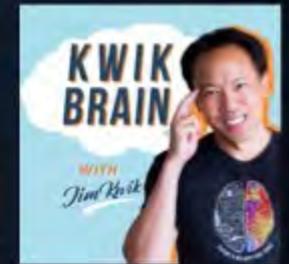
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