

**Study Guide for Testing to  
Staff Sergeant  
1 November 2021**



**Source: Air Force Handbook 1, *Airman* (dated 1 November 2021)**

**OPR: AETC Studies & Analysis Squadron  
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**AIRMAN DEVELOPMENT AND TESTING CHART**  
**Air Force Handbook 1, Airman (1 November 2021)**

The Airman Development and Testing Chart (ADTC) is used by the Air Force to identify the relevance of Air Force Handbook (AFH) 1, *Airman*, testable content for the Promotion Fitness Examination (PFE) as well as to determine subject matter content for inclusion in applicable enlisted promotion study guides. Testable content comprehension levels were determined by survey of all active duty chief master sergeants.

The primary purpose of the ADTC is to relate test content relevant to promotion with desired comprehension levels. It is the primary measurement to ensure enlisted promotion tests are developed to the required AF-level of knowledge for enlisted promotion to the next grade.

The ADTC is an outline of the subject matter content in AFH 1. For promotion testing purposes, the level of comprehension necessary for each section is identified by rank using a scale of A through D. Enlisted Airmen should use the chart to identify the levels of comprehension of subjectmatter content for the enlisted promotion exam and development expectations associated with eachrank.

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Level of Comprehension</b>	<b>Indicates the level of comprehension necessary for each rank as enlisted Air Force professionals</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>Remembering</b>	Recognizing or recalling knowledge from memory. Remembering is when memory is used to produce or retrieve definitions, facts, or lists, or to recite previously learned information.
<b>B</b>	<b>Understanding</b>	Constructing meaning from different types of functions, whether written or graphic messages, or activities like interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, or explaining.
<b>C</b>	<b>Applying</b>	Carrying out or using a procedure through executing or implementing. Applying relates to or refers to situations where learned material is used through products like models, presentations, interviews, or simulations.
<b>D</b>	<b>Analyzing</b>	Breaking materials or concepts into parts, determining how the parts relate to one another, how they interrelate, or how the parts relate to an overall structure or purpose.

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## Chapter 4 MILITARY ORGANIZATION AND COMMAND

### *Section 4A—United States Armed Forces*

#### **4.1. Command Authority**

Since the birth of our Nation, policies and directives have been made by civilians assigned to the military and to the executive and legislative branches of the government. Command authority is the established levels of responsibility for command, control, and communication throughout a chain of command. Responsibility and authority for the U.S. Armed Forces extends from the U.S. President, through the Secretary of Defense, through two distinct branches of command, and through each commander at every level in the branches of service. The various levels within the chain of command have different responsibilities and authority; however, each level in the chain is responsible for all lower levels and accountable to all higher levels.

**Commander in Chief.** The U.S. Constitution establishes the basic principle of civilian control of the U.S. Armed Forces. As Commander in Chief, the U.S. President has final command authority; however, as head of the executive branch, the President is subject to the checks and balances system of the legislative and judicial branches.

**Chain of Command.** By statute, the chain of command runs from the U.S. President, through the Secretary of Defense, to the Combatant Commanders. For all forces not assigned to the Combatant Commanders, the chain of command runs from the U.S. President, through the Secretary of Defense, to the Secretaries of the military departments. When forces are assigned to the Combatant Commanders, administrative control over those forces still typically flows through their respective service branch. **Note:** A provision of the Public Law 99-433, *Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986*, 1 October 1986, permits the U.S. President to authorize communications through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, placing the Chairman in the communications chain of command.

#### **4.2. Department of Defense**

With over 1.3 million members in the Regular Forces, another 826,000 in the National Guard and Reserve Forces, and 742,000 civilian personnel, the Department of Defense is America's largest government agency. The mission of the Department of Defense is to provide military forces to deter war and protect the security of our country. Headquartered at the Pentagon, the Department of Defense includes the Office of the Secretary of Defense; the Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Joint Staff; and the Departments of the Army, Navy (including the Marine Corps), and Air Force (including the Space Force). Furthermore, the Department of Defense includes the unified combatant commands and forces dedicated to combined commands, defense agencies, and field activities. As the civilian head of the Department of Defense, the Secretary of Defense reports directly to the U.S. President.

**Secretary of Defense.** The Secretary of Defense (SecDef), is appointed by the U.S. President, with advice and consent of the Senate. The SecDef serves as principal defense policy advisor to the U.S. President and is responsible for the formulation of general defense policy, policy related to all matters of direct and primary concern to the Department of Defense, and for the execution of

approved policy. In addition to exercising the operational chain of command between the U.S. President and the Combatant Commanders, a specific responsibility of the SecDef is to provide written policy guidance for Department of Defense national security objectives and policies, military mission priorities, and projected levels for available resources. The SecDef also provides the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff with written policy guidance regarding contingency plans. The Secretaries of the military departments and the Combatant Commanders are provided written guidelines to direct the effective detection and monitoring of all potential aerial and maritime threats to the national security of the United States.

**The Armed Forces Policy Council.** The Armed Forces Policy Council assists in matters requiring a long-range view, formulates broad defense policy, and advises the Secretary of Defense on policies, as requested. The Armed Forces Policy Council consists of the Secretary of Defense serving as the Chairman of the Council; the Deputy Secretary of Defense; Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and USAF; the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment, the Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy; the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment; and the Service Chiefs.

**Under Secretaries of Defense.** There are six Under Secretaries of Defense (Policy; Comptroller; Personnel and Readiness; Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (A&S); Under Secretary of Defense for Research and Engineering; and Intelligence) who assist the Secretary of Defense. The Secretary of Defense receives staff assistance through a number of special agencies, such as the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, Security Service, and Defense Logistics Agency, which provide special skills, expertise, and advice.

### **4.3. Joint Staff**

The Joint Staff assists members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in carrying out assigned responsibilities of strategic direction, unified operation of combatant commands, and integration of all branches of the military into an efficient force. By law, the direction of the Joint Staff rests exclusively with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Chairman normally manages the Joint Staff through the Director of the Joint Staff. The Director is selected by the Chairman after consultation with other members of the Joint Chiefs and with the approval of the Secretary of Defense. The Joint Staff consists of more than 1,500 military and civilian personnel, composed of approximately equal numbers of officers from the Army, Navy, and USAF. Marines make up about 20 percent of the number allocated to the Navy.

**Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.** Appointed by the U.S. President, by and with advice and consent of the Senate, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) holds the grade of General or Admiral. The CJCS outranks all other officers of the U.S. Armed Forces, but may not exercise military command over the Joint Chiefs of Staff or the U.S. Armed Forces. The CJCS is the principal military advisor to the U.S. President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. The Secretary of Defense may assign CJCS responsibility for overseeing the activities of the combatant commands. The CJCS presides over the Joint Chiefs of Staff and objectively furnishes recommendations and views of the Joint Chiefs to the U.S. President, National Security Council, or the Secretary of Defense.

**Vice Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff.** The Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (VCJCS), appointed by the U.S. President, by and with advice and consent of the Senate, is a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The VCJCS performs duties prescribed by the Chairman, with the approval of the Secretary of Defense. The VCJCS cannot be from the same branch of service as the Chairman, serves a tour of two years, and may be reappointed for two additional terms. When required, the VCJCS assumes the role of Acting Chairman in the Chairman’s absence.

**Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman.** Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chairman (SEAC), is designated as the highest senior enlisted position in the U.S. Armed Forces. The SEAC is appointed to serve as an advisor to the Chairman and the Secretary of Defense on all matters involving Total Force integration, utilization, health of the force, and joint development for enlisted personnel. The SEAC also serves as a spokesperson to leaders and organizations on applicable issues affecting enlisted forces.

**Joint Chiefs of Staff.** Subject to the authority, direction, and control of the U.S. President and the Secretary of Defense, members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff serve as advisors to the President, Secretary of Defense, and the National Security Council. The Joint Chiefs provide the strategic direction of the U.S. Armed Forces and review major materiel and personnel requirements according to strategic and logistic requirements, and establish joint doctrine. Members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are also responsible for the assignment of logistic responsibilities to the military services, formulation of policies for joint training, and coordination of military education. Members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are the Chairman; Vice Chairman; Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army; Chief of Naval Operations; Chief of Staff of the USAF; Commandant of the Marine Corps; and Chief of the National Guard Bureau. For the Service Chiefs (Chief of Staff of the Army, Chief of Naval Operations, Chief of Staff of the USAF, Commandant of the Marine Corps), their Joint Chiefs of Staff duties take precedence over all other duties. Consequently, as the military heads of their respective services, the Joint Chiefs delegate many duties to their Vice Chiefs while retaining overall responsibility.

## *Section 4B—Military Departments*

### **4.4. Defending the Nation**

Since the nation’s birth, our military has had the constitutional duty to ensure national survival, defend lives and property, and promote vital interests at home and abroad. Jointly, senior military leaders underwrite the strategy of defending the homeland and assuring allies, while dissuading, deterring, and defeating enemies. The military departments consist of the Army, Navy (including the Marine Corps and, in wartime, the Coast Guard), and the USAF (including the Space Force), as shown in **Figure 4.1**.

**Figure 4.1. U.S. Military Departments.**



#### **4.5. General Military Functions**

The Secretary of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff established the general and specific functions (roles and missions) of each branch of the U.S. Armed Forces in the Key West Agreement of 1948. The latest revision of the Key West Agreement in 1958 states three general functions of the U.S. Armed Forces: (1) support and defend the U.S. Constitution against all enemies, foreign and domestic; (2) ensure, by timely and effective military action, the security of the United States, its possessions, and areas vital to its interests; (3) and uphold and advance the national policies and interests of the United States. Each service shall observe the general principles and fulfill the specific functions as established in the Key West Agreement, and make use of the personnel, equipment, and facilities of the other services in all cases where economy and effectiveness will be increased.

**Functions of the United States Army.** The U.S. Army serves as the land-based branch of the U.S. Armed Forces. The mission of the Army is, "To fight and win our Nation's wars by providing prompt, sustained land dominance across the full range of military operations and the spectrum of conflict in support of combatant commanders." The Army is responsible for the preparation of land forces necessary for the effective prosecution of war, and for the expansion of peacetime components of the Army to meet the needs of war. The Army is also responsible for developing weapons, tactics, technique, organization, and equipment of Army combat and service elements and coordinating with the Navy and the USAF in all aspects of joint concern, including those which pertain to amphibious and airborne operations. The specific functions of the Army are to organize, train, and equip land forces for: (1) operations on land, including joint operations; (2) the seizure or defense of land areas, including airborne and joint amphibious operations; and (3) the occupation of land areas.

**Functions of the United States Navy.** The mission of the U.S. Navy is to maintain, train, and equip combat-ready naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression, and maintaining freedom of the seas. The Navy includes naval combat and service forces, naval aviation, and the Marine Corps. It is organized, trained, and equipped primarily for prompt and sustained combat at sea. The Navy is responsible for the preparation of naval forces necessary for the effective prosecution of war, and for the expansion of the peacetime components of the Navy to meet the needs of war. U.S. Navy is the largest, most capable navy in the world, with the highest combined battle fleet tonnage and the world's largest aircraft carrier fleet. The Navy will develop weapons, tactics, technique, organization, and equipment of naval combat and service elements, coordinating with the Army and the USAF in all aspects of joint concern, including those which pertain to amphibious operations. The specific functions of the Navy are to organize, train and, equip naval forces for; (1) operations at sea, including joint operations; (2) the control of vital sea areas, the protection of vital sea lanes, and the suppression of enemy sea commerce; (3) the support of occupation forces as required; (4) the seizure of minor enemy shore positions capable of reduction by such landing forces as may be comprised within the fleet organization; (5) naval reconnaissance, antisubmarine warfare, and protection of shipping.

**Functions of the United States Marine Corps.** The Marine Corps specific functions are: (1) to provide marine forces with supporting components for service in the seizure or defense of advanced naval bases and for the conduct of limited land operations in connection therewith; (2) to develop, in coordination with the Army and the USAF, those phases of amphibious operations which pertain to the tactics, technique, and equipment employed by landing forces; (3) to provide detachments and organizations for service on armed vessels of the Navy; (4) to provide security

detachments for protection of naval property at naval stations and bases; and (5) to provide, as directed by proper authority, such missions and detachments for service in foreign countries as may be required to support the national policies and interests of the United States. The Marine Corps will provide, as directed by proper authority, such missions and detachments for service in foreign countries as may be required to support the national policies and interests of the United States and will assist the Army and the USAF in the accomplishment of their missions.

**Functions of the United States Coast Guard.** The U.S. Coast Guard is a military service and a branch of the U.S. Armed Forces at all times. It is a service in the Department of Homeland Security except when operating as part of the Navy on declaration of war or when the U.S. President directs. Major functions of the Coast Guard are to: (1) enforce or assist in the enforcement of all applicable federal laws on, under, and over the high seas and waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; (2) engage in maritime air surveillance or interdiction to enforce or assist in the enforcement of the laws of the United States; (3) administer laws and promulgate and enforce regulations for the promotion of safety of life and property on and under the high seas and waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, covering all matters not specifically delegated by law to some other executive department; (4) develop, establish, maintain, and operate, with due regard to the requirements of national defense, aids to maritime navigation, icebreaking facilities, and rescue facilities for the promotion of safety on, under, and over the high seas and waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; (5) pursuant to international agreements, develop, establish, maintain, and operate icebreaking facilities on, under, and over waters other than the high seas and waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; (6) engage in oceanographic research of the high seas and in waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; and (7) maintain a state of readiness to function as a specialized service in the Navy in time of war, including the fulfillment of Maritime Defense Zone command responsibilities.

**Functions of the USAF.** The USAF includes all military aviation forces, both combat and service, not otherwise specifically assigned, and is organized, trained, and equipped primarily for prompt and sustained air offensive and defensive operations. The USAF is responsible for the preparation necessary for the effective prosecution of war except as otherwise assigned, and for the expansion of the peacetime components of the USAF to meet the needs of war. The USAF will provide the means for coordination of air defense among all services and will assist the Army and Navy in accomplishment of their missions, including the provision of common services and supplies as determined by proper authority. The specific functions of the USAF are to organize, train, and equip air forces for: (1) air operations including joint operations; (2) gaining and maintaining general air supremacy; (3) establishing local air superiority where and as required; (4) the strategic force of the United States and strategic air reconnaissance; (5) airlift and support for airborne operations; (6) air support to land forces and naval forces, including support of occupation forces; (7) air transport for the U.S. Armed Forces, except as provided by the Navy; and (8) to develop weapons, tactics, technique, organization and equipment of USAF combat and service elements, coordinating with the Army and Navy on all aspects of joint concern, including those which pertain to amphibious and airborne operations.

**Functions of the United States Space Force.** The Department of the Air Force is composed of air, space, and cyberspace forces, both combat and support, not otherwise assigned. The USAF and Space Force are the nation's principal air and space forces, and are responsible for the preparation of forces necessary for the effective prosecution of war. The Department of the Air Force shall organize, train, equip, and provide air, space, and cyberspace forces for the conduct

of prompt and sustained combat operations, military engagement, and security cooperation in defense of the nation, and to support the other Military Services and joint forces. The USAF and Space Force will provide the nation with global vigilance, global reach, and global power in the form of in-place, forward-based, and expeditionary forces possessing the capacity to deter aggression and violence by state, non-state, and individual actors to prevent conflict, and, should deterrence fail, prosecute the full range of military operations in support of U.S. national interests. The Space Force, within the Department of the Air Force, shall develop concepts, doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures and organize, train, equip, and provide forces to perform the following specific functions: (1) provide freedom of operation for the United States in, from, and to space. (2) provide prompt and sustained space operations. (3) protect the interests of the United States in space. (4) deter aggression in, from, and to space. (5) conduct space operations.

#### *Section 4C—Military Command Structure*

#### **4.6. Combined Commands**

Combined commands consist of forces from more than one allied nation. Since combined commands are binational or multinational, their missions and responsibilities (including command responsibilities) must establish, assign, and conform to binational and multinational agreements. Normally, a combined command operates under the terms of a treaty, alliance, or bilateral agreement between or among the nations concerned. Examples of multinational commands are: North American Aerospace Defense Command, Combined Forces Command Korea, and Allied Command Operations.

#### **4.7. Unified Combatant Commands**

The U.S. President, assisted by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff through the Secretary of Defense, establishes unified combatant commands for the performance of military missions. Unified combatant commands have a broad, continuing mission composed of forces from two or more military departments. All units assigned to a unified combatant command remain under the combatant command authority of the unified combatant command commander and the administrative control authority of the respective service component commander. The combatant commander deploys, directs, controls, and coordinates the action of the command's forces; conducts joint training exercises; and controls certain support functions. Once assigned to a unified combatant command, a force cannot be transferred except by authority of the Secretary of Defense or under special procedures with approval of the U.S. President.

**Unified Command Plan.** The Unified Command Plan is an unclassified, for official use only, executive branch document prepared by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff that assigns missions; planning, training, and operational responsibilities; and geographic areas of responsibilities to combatant commands. The Unified Command Plan has a significant impact on how combatant commands are organized, trained, and resourced—areas over which Congress has constitutional authority. The plan is reviewed and updated every two years.

#### **4.8. Combatant Command Organization**

There are currently 11 combatant commands, as shown in **Figure 4.2**. They are organized geographically or functionally. Geographic combatant commands operate in clearly delineated

areas of responsibility and have a distinctive regional military focus. Geographic unified combatant commands include: U.S. Africa Command, U.S. Central Command, U.S. European Command, U.S. Northern Command, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, and U.S. Southern Command. Functional combatant commands operate world-wide across geographic boundaries and provide unique capabilities to geographic combatant commands and the services. Functional unified combatant commands include: U.S. Special Operations Command, U.S. Strategic Command, U.S. Cyber Command, U.S. Transportation Command, and U.S. Space Command.

**Figure 4.2. Combatant Commands.**



**United States Africa Command.** United States Africa Command (USAFRICOM) headquarters is located at Kelley Barracks, Stuttgart, Germany. USAFRICOM is responsible for military relations with African nations, the African Union, and African regional security organizations. It protects and defends the interests of the United States by strengthening the defense capabilities of African nations and, in cooperation with African governments, conducts military missions that increase security while deterring and defeating a variety of transnational threats.

**United States Central Command.** United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) headquarters is located at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. USCENTCOM is responsible for operations in 20 countries that fall in the “central” area of the globe, to include countries in the Middle East, parts of Northern Africa, and Central Asia. USCENTCOM utilizes national and international partnerships to build cooperation among nations, respond to crisis, deter and defeat threats, and support development that ultimately increases stability in the region.

**United States European Command.** United States European Command (USEUCOM) headquarters is located at Patch Barracks, Stuttgart, Germany. USEUCOM works closely with countries in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and other partner nations to address the security and defense needs of nations in Europe, parts of the Middle East, and Eurasia. USEUCOM coordinates with these nations to find cooperative solutions in peace and wartime alike, to plan training missions, provide humanitarian assistance, and develop strategies for promoting peace and stability in the region.

**United States Northern Command.** United States Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) headquarters is located at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado. USNORTHCOM operates in the area of responsibility encompassing the Continental United States, Alaska, Mexico, Canada, portions of the Caribbean, and surrounding waters. USNORTHCOM is primarily responsible for civil support and homeland security. The Commander of USNORTHCOM is designated as the Commander of U.S. Element, North American Aerospace Defense (NORAD) Command and Commander of NORAD Command when a United States officer fulfills that role.

**Indo-Pacific Command (vice Pacific Command).** United States Indo-Pacific Command (USINDOPACOM) headquarters is located at Camp H.M. Smith, Hawaii. USINDOPACOM oversees an area of responsibility stretching from the western shores of the United States to the western border of India, and from Antarctica to the Aleutian Islands, encompassing 36 diverse nations. USINDOPACOM and its partners work to promote the development of the region while cooperating to enhance security, deter aggression, respond with force when necessary, provide humanitarian assistance associated with illicit trafficking, and conduct multinational military exercises designed to strengthen partnerships while developing collective capabilities.

**United States Southern Command.** United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) headquarters is located at Miami, Florida. USSOUTHCOM oversees an area of responsibility encompassing 31 nations in Latin America south of Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean Sea. USSOUTHCOM works to increase the security of the United States by engaging its partners to enhance the peacekeeping abilities of the region, promote human rights, deter illegal activities associated with illicit trafficking, and conduct multinational military exercises designed to strengthen partnerships while developing collective capabilities.

**United States Special Operations Command.** United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) headquarters is located at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. USSOCOM is responsible for planning and conducting special operations. It offers direct action in the form of short duration strikes and small-scale offensives, special reconnaissance, unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, civil affairs operations, counterterrorism, psychological operations, information operations, counter-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, security force assistance, counterinsurgency operations, and any specific activities directed by the U.S. President or the Secretary of Defense.

**United States Strategic Command.** United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) headquarters is located at Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska. USSTRATCOM conducts global operations in partnership with other combatant commands, services, and U.S. Government agencies, to deter and detect strategic attacks against the United States. USSTRATCOM is responsible for command of nuclear capabilities, space operations, global strike, joint electromagnetic spectrum operations, and global missile defense.

**United States Cyber Command.** United States Cyber Command (USCYBERCOM) headquarters is located at Fort Meade, Maryland. USCYBERCOM is responsible for achieving and maintaining cyberspace superiority in alignment with the National Security Strategy and National Defense Strategy as a critical component of advancing national interests.

**United States Transportation Command.** United States Transportation Command (USTRANSCOM) headquarters is located at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. USTRANSCOM provides the Department of Defense with an aggregate of transportation capabilities and assets. Together with commercial partnerships, USTRANSCOM enables a diverse array of joint mobility.

**United States Space Command.** United States Space Command conducts operations in, from and to space to deter conflict, and, if necessary, defeat aggression, deliver space combat power for the Joint/Combined Force and defend U.S. vital interests with allies and partners. Ultimately, space combat power is how United States Space Command ensures there is never a day without space.

#### **4.9. USAF Service Component to a Combatant Commander**

In compliance with Title 10 United States Code, *Armed Forces*, and the Unified Command Plan, the Secretary of the Air Force, in accordance with direction of the Secretary of Defense, selects and assigns Air Force Forces to Air Force Service Component Commands, commanded by a Commander, Air Force Forces (COMAFFOR). The COMAFFOR is under the operational branch authority (also called operational control or OPCON) of the combatant commander to whom he or she is assigned, and under the administrative branch authority (also called administrative control or ADCON) of the Secretary of the Air Force. Further details can be found in AFI 38-101, *Manpower and Organization*, 29 August 2019.

#### ***Section 4E—USAF Structure***

#### **4.14. Department of the United States Air Force**

Title 10 United States Code, *Armed Forces*, provides specified duties, responsibilities, and legal obligations of the Department of the Air Force. The USAF's mission is to *fly, fight, and win...airpower* anytime, anywhere. The Department of the Air Force is comprised of HAF and field units and Headquarters Space Force and field units. It is responsible for preparing the air, space and cyber forces necessary for the effective prosecution of war and military operations short of war for the expansion of the peacetime components of the USAF and Space Force to meet the needs of war. HAF consists of three major entities: the Secretariat (including the Secretary of the Air Force and the Secretary's principal staff) and the Air Staff (headed by the Chief of Staff of the Air Force), and the Space Staff (headed by the Chief of Space Operations). Field units are the component organizations within the USAF and Space Force.

**USAF Distinctive Capabilities.** To achieve strategic, operational, and tactical objectives unhindered by time, distance, and geography, the USAF employs six distinctive capabilities: Air and Space Superiority, Global Attack, Rapid Global Mobility, Precision Engagement, Information Superiority, and Agile Combat Support.

**USAF Primary Functions.** In addition to general and specific functions of the military branches outlined in the Key West Agreement, there are also primary functions of the branches. The primary functions of the USAF include, but are not limited to organizing, training, equipping, and providing forces for prompt and sustained combat operations in the air and space; strategic air and missile warfare; joint amphibious, space, and airborne operations; close air support and air logistic support to the other branches of service; operating air and space lines of communication; support and conduct of psychological operations; and equipment, forces, procedures, and doctrine necessary for effective electronic warfare operations.

As stated in AFI 1-1, the USAF will be a trusted and reliable joint partner with our sister services known for integrity in all 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 USAF resources in service to the American people, while

providing precise and reliable *Global Vigilance*, *Global Reach*, and *Global Power* for the nation.

**Secretary of the Air Force.** The Secretary of the Air Force (SecAF) is a civilian appointed by the U.S. President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The SecAF is the head of the Department of the Air Force and is subject to the authority, control, and direction of the Secretary of Defense. Responsibilities of the SecAF include recruiting, organizing, supplying, equipping (including research and development), training, servicing, mobilizing, demobilizing, and administering personnel (morale and welfare programs); maintaining, constructing, outfitting, and repairing military equipment; constructing, maintaining, and repairing buildings, structures, and utilities; and acquiring real property and interests in real property.

#### **4.15. Levels of Command and Responsibility**

**Chief of Staff of the Air Force.** The Chief of Staff of the Air Force (CSAF) is an USAF General Officer appointed for four years by the U.S. President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. The CSAF is subject to the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of the Air Force, and presides over the Air Staff. The CSAF acts as an agent in carrying out recommendations or plans by the Secretary, and exercises supervision consistent with the authority assigned to commanders of unified or specified combatant commands and organizations of the USAF. As a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the CSAF informs the Secretary of the Air Force regarding military advice rendered by the Joint Chiefs of Staff on matters affecting the Department of the Air Force to the extent that such action does not impair the independence or performance of required duties as a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

**Air Staff.** The function of the Air Staff is to assist the Secretary of the Air Force in carrying out his or her responsibilities. The Air Staff is composed of the Chief of Staff, Vice Chief of Staff, Deputy Chiefs of Staff, Assistant Chiefs of Staff, Surgeon General of the Air Force, The Judge Advocate General of the Air Force, Chief of the Air Force Reserve, and other USAF and civilian employees in the Department of the Air Force assigned or detailed to the Air Staff. Responsibilities are organized based on function and identified with office symbol codes. The USAF office symbol codes are provided here.

A1 – Manpower, Personnel, and Services

A2 – Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance

A3 – Operations

A4 – Logistics, Engineering, and Force Protection

A5 – Plans and Requirements

A6 – Communications

A8 – Strategic Plans and Programs

A9 – Studies, Analyses, Assessments, and Lessons Learned

A10 – Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration (as designated by USAF)

**Field Operating Agencies.** Field Operating Agencies (FOA) are USAF subdivisions directly subordinate to a HAF functional manager. A FOA performs field activities beyond the scope of major commands. The activities are specialized or associated with an USAF-wide mission and do not include functions performed in management headquarters (such as Headquarters Air Mobility Command), unless specifically directed by a Department of Defense authority. Two examples of FOAs are the Air Force Personnel Center and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations.

**Direct Reporting Units.** Direct Reporting Units (DRU) are USAF subdivisions directly subordinate to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. A DRU performs a mission that does not fit into any of the major commands, but has many of the same administrative and organizational responsibilities. Two examples of DRUs are the Air Force District of Washington and the USAF Academy. **Note:** The Air Force District of Washington (AFDW), headquartered at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, is a DRU to HAF, reporting to the Chief of Staff of the Air Force. AFDW was reactivated in 2005 to address three broad objectives: align the USAF command structure in the National Capital Region (NCR) and abroad; improve USAF support to the Joint Force Headquarters-NCR (JFHQ-NCR); and designate a single voice for USAF cross-service issues in the NCR.

AFDW serves as the USAF Service Component for coordination purposes to JFHQ-NCR and the supporting command to the Defense Health Agency National Capital Region Medical Directorate. When the JFHQ-NCR transitions to the Joint Task Force NCR (JTF-NCR), the 320th Air Expeditionary Wing (320 AEW) activates and becomes the USAF Service Component of JTF-NCR. When activated, the Commander of AFDW is dual-hatted as the Commander, 320 AEW. Air Force Mission Directive 13 delineates missions and clarifies assigned duties applicable to AFDW in both its worldwide USAF role and its JTF-NCR USAF Service Component role.

**Major Commands.** Major commands (MAJCOM) are organized functionally in the United States and geographically overseas. A MAJCOM, as shown in **Figure 4.3.**, represents a major USAF subdivision having a specific portion of the USAF mission. Each MAJCOM is directly subordinate to HAF. MAJCOMs are interrelated and complementary, providing offensive, defensive, and support elements. An operational command consists (in whole or in part) of strategic, tactical, space, or defense forces, or of flying forces that directly support such forces. A support command may provide supplies, weapon systems, support systems, operational support equipment, combat material, maintenance, surface transportation, education and training, special services, and other supported organizations. Within the USAF MAJCOM structure, there are two specialized types of MAJCOMs: Lead MAJCOMs and Component MAJCOMs.

**Lead MAJCOM.** A Lead MAJCOM is the type of MAJCOM that consolidates responsibilities for a particular function in a single MAJCOM, supporting the entire USAF, as applicable. For example, Air Education and Training Command is the Lead MAJCOM for education and training for the USAF.

**Component MAJCOM.** A Component MAJCOM (C-MAJCOM) is the type of MAJCOM that is the USAF Component to a unified combatant command. A C-MAJCOM is commanded by the Commander of Air Force Forces and includes supporting staff, one or more Component Numbered Air Forces (through which it presents its forces to the combatant commander), and all assigned and attached forces. The C-MAJCOM integrates, at the strategic level, component activities across all phases of conflict. An example of a C-MAJCOM is Pacific Air Forces, the USAF Component to United States Pacific Command. For additional information on component relationships and

roles, refer to AF Doctrine Volume 1, *Command*, AF Doctrine Annex 3-30, *Command and Control*, and AFI 38-101. **Note:** A MAJCOM can be both a Lead MAJCOM and a C-MAJCOM.

**Figure 4.3. Major Commands.**



**Air Combat Command.** Air Combat Command (ACC), was activated as a MAJCOM on 1 June 1992, and is headquartered at Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Virginia. ACC is the primary provider of air combat forces to America's warfighting commanders. ACC's mission is to support global implementation of the national security strategy by operating fighter, bomber, reconnaissance, battle-management, and electronic-combat aircraft. It also provides command, control, communications, and intelligence systems, and conducts global information operations. ACC organizes, trains, equips, and maintains combat-ready forces for rapid deployment and employment while ensuring strategic air defense forces are ready to meet the challenges of peacetime air sovereignty and wartime air defense. Additionally, ACC develops strategy, doctrine, concepts, tactics, and procedures for airpower employment. The command provides conventional and information warfare forces to all unified commands to ensure air, space, and information superiority for warfighters and national decision-makers. The command can be called upon to assist national agencies with intelligence, surveillance, and crisis response capabilities. ACC also has responsibility for inland search and rescue operations in the 48 contiguous states. Overall, ACC operates more than 1,300 aircraft, 34 wings, 19 bases, and has more than 70 worldwide operating locations with 94,000 Total Force members.

**Air Mobility Command.** Air Mobility Command (AMC) was activated as a MAJCOM on 1 June 1992, is headquartered at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, and is the USAF Component to U.S. Transportation Command. AMC's mission is to provide global air mobility, the right effects, right place, right time. The command plays a crucial role in providing humanitarian support at home and around the world, and provides airlift and aerial refueling for all U.S. Armed Forces. Many special duty and operational support aircraft and stateside aeromedical evacuation missions are assigned to AMC. This rapid, flexible, and responsive force promotes stability in regions by keeping America's capability and character highly visible. Overall, AMC has one Numbered Air Force, 17 wings, two airlift groups, and one air base group. AMC has nearly 133,700 Total Force members who make the command's rapid global mobility operations possible.

**Pacific Air Forces.** Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) was activated as a MAJCOM on 3 August 1944, is headquartered at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, and is the USAF Component of U.S. Pacific Command. PACAF's mission is to deliver rapid and precise air, space, and cyberspace capabilities to protect and defend the United States, its territories, allies, and partners; provide integrated air and missile warning and defense; promote interoperability throughout the area of responsibility; maintain strategic access and freedom of movement across all domains; and respond across the full spectrum of military contingencies to restore regional security.

PACAF's area of responsibility is home to 60 percent of the world's population in 36 nations across 52 percent of the Earth's surface and 16 time zones, with more than 1,000 languages spoken. The

unique location of the strategic triangle (Hawaii-Guam-Alaska) gives our Nation persistent presence and options to project airpower from sovereign territory. PACAF's Airmen are postured to deploy at any given time in support of overseas contingency operations, many participating in non-traditional missions, such as convoy and detainee operations. Overall, PACAF has approximately 46,000 military and civilian personnel serving in nine strategic locations and numerous smaller facilities, primarily in Hawaii, Alaska, Japan, Guam, and the Republic of Korea. Approximately 320 fighter and attack aircraft are assigned to the command with approximately 100 additional deployed aircraft rotating on Guam.

**United States Air Forces in Europe & Air Forces Africa.** United States Air Forces in Europe & Air Forces Africa (USAFE-AFAFRICA) was activated as a MAJCOM on 20 April 2012 and is headquartered at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. USAFE-AFAFRICA is a combined organization that provides two separate combatant commands. USAFE is the USAF Service Component to U.S. European Command, and AFAFRICA is the USAF Service Component to U.S. Africa Command. Both USAFE and AFAFRICA, which function together as a blended USAFE-AFAFRICA staff, are commanded by the same General Officer in two different billets.

USAFE-AFAFRICA plans, conducts, controls, coordinates, and supports air and space operations in Europe, parts of Asia, and all of Africa with the exception of Egypt, to achieve United States and North Atlantic Treaty Organization objectives. As part of its mission, USAFE-AFAFRICA commands USAF units maintaining combat-ready wings based from Great Britain to Turkey.

USAFE-AFAFRICA directs air operations in a theater spanning three continents, covering more than 19 million square miles, containing 104 independent states, possessing more than a quarter of the world's population, and producing more than a quarter of the world's gross domestic product. Its role in Europe and Africa has expanded from war-fighting to humanitarian and peacekeeping operations, as well as other non-traditional contingencies throughout its area of responsibility. Overall, USAFE-AFAFRICA consists of one Numbered Air Force, seven main operating bases, and 114 geographically separated locations. More than 35,000 Total Force members are assigned to USAFE-AFAFRICA. Equipment assets include about 217 aircraft and a full complement of conventional weapons.

**Air Education and Training Command.** Air Education and Training Command (AETC) was activated as a MAJCOM on 1 July 1993 and is headquartered at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas. AETC's mission is to recruit, train, and educate Airmen to deliver airpower for America. AETC develops America's young men and women who have volunteered to serve their country, into Airmen, motivating them to embrace the USAF culture by teaching (by our example) the USAF and USSF core values. AETC's training mission makes it the first command to touch the lives of nearly every USAF member. Over the years, more than 25 million students have graduated from AETC. Overall, AETC includes USAF Recruiting Service, two Numbered Air Forces and the Air University. AETC operates 12 major installations and supports tenant units on numerous bases across the globe.

**Air Force Materiel Command.** Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC) was activated as a MAJCOM on 1 July 1992 and is headquartered at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. AFMC's mission is to equip the USAF for world-dominant airpower. AFMC delivers war-winning expeditionary capabilities to the warfighter through development and transition of technology, professional acquisition management, exacting test and evaluation, and world-class sustainment of all USAF weapon systems. AFMC fulfills its mission of equipping the USAF with the best

weapon systems through the Air Force Research Laboratory and several unique centers which are responsible for the “cradle-to-grave” oversight for aircraft, electronic systems, missiles, and munitions. AFMC employs a highly professional and skilled command work force of some 80,000 Total Force members.

**Air Force Special Operations Command.** Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) was activated as a MAJCOM on 22 May 1990, is headquartered at Hurlburt Field, Florida, and is the USAF Component of U.S. Special Operations Command. AFSOC’s mission is to provide our Nation’s specialized airpower, capable across the spectrum of conflict...any place, anytime, anywhere. AFSOC provides highly trained, rapidly deployable Airmen for global special operations missions ranging from precision application of firepower to infiltration, exfiltration, resupply, and refueling of operational elements for worldwide deployment and assignment to regional unified commands. The command's core missions include battlefield air operations; agile combat support; aviation foreign internal defense; information operations/military information support operations; precision strike; specialized air mobility; command and control; and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance. AFSOC’s priorities are to ensure readiness to execute global special operations today, transform our force and fleet to maintain relevance tomorrow, and invest in the resiliency of our force, family, and relationships always.

The Air Force Special Operations Air Warfare Center, headquartered at Hurlburt Field, Florida, organizes, trains, educates, and equips forces to conduct special operations missions; leads MAJCOM irregular warfare activities; executes special operations test and evaluation and lessons learned programs; and develops doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures for Air Force special operations missions. AFSOC’s special tactics squadrons combine combat controllers, special operations weathermen, pararescuemen, and tactical air control party specialists with other services to form versatile joint special operations teams. AFSOC has more than 19,500 Total Force members assigned, and operates multiple fixed-wing and rotary-wing assets.

**Air Force Global Strike Command.** Air Force Global Strike Command (AFGSC) was activated as a MAJCOM on 7 August 2009, is headquartered at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, and is one of two USAF Service Components of U.S. Strategic Command. AFGSC’s mission is to provide strategic deterrence, global strike, and combat support...anytime, anywhere. AFGSC is responsible for the nation's three intercontinental ballistic missile wings, the USAF’s entire bomber force, the Long Range Strike Bomber Program, and operational and maintenance support to organizations within the nuclear enterprise. AFGSC is the guardian of the most powerful weapons on the planet, and is the force provider for two legs of the nuclear triad. AFGSC’s intercontinental ballistic missile force is postured around the clock to answer the U.S. President’s call, just as it has been for over 50 years. AFGSC’s bomber fleet remains prepared and equipped for nuclear deterrence and conventional global strike. Approximately 31,000 professionals are assigned to two Numbered Air Forces, nine wings, two geographically-separated squadrons, one detachment in the Continental United States, and deployed around the globe.

**Air Force Reserve Command.** Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC) was activated as a MAJCOM on 17 February 1997, and is headquartered at Robins Air Force Base, Georgia. AFRC’s mission is to provide combat-ready forces to *fly, fight, and win*. AFRC provides the USAF approximately 20 percent of the Total Force for about 5 percent of the manpower budget. Capabilities include nuclear deterrence operations; air, space, and cyberspace superiority; command and control; global integrated intelligence surveillance reconnaissance; global precision attack; special operations; rapid global mobility; and personnel recovery. AFRC also perform

space operations, aircraft flight testing, aerial port operations, civil engineering, security forces, military training, communications, mobility support, transportation, and services missions. The commander of AFRC is responsible for organizing, training, and equipping all USAF Reserve units. Overall, AFRC is composed of three Numbered Air Forces, a Force Generation Center, the Air Reserve Personnel Center, 35 wings, 10 independent groups, various mission support units, and additional miscellaneous locations and ranges. AFRC has nearly 74,718 Total Force members assigned to accomplish the demands of its diverse mission.

#### **4.16. Subordinate Levels of Command and Responsibility**

Below MAJCOMs are several structured subordinate levels of command, each with an established purpose and assigned responsibilities to be carried out respectively, as briefly described here. For additional details on USAF levels of command, refer to AFI 38-101.

**Numbered Air Force.** The Numbered Air Force (NAF) is an administrative level of command directly under a MAJCOM. NAFs provide intermediate level operational leadership and supervision. They do not have complete functional staffs. In non-component NAFs, the number of personnel assigned varies but should not exceed 99 manpower authorizations without an approved waiver. A NAF is assigned subordinate units, such as wings, groups, and squadrons.

**USAF Component Numbered/Named Air Forces.** A Component NAF (C-NAF), nicknamed as warfighting headquarters, is structured to perform an operational and warfighting mission in support of a Joint Force Commander. The 10 USAF C-NAFs are the primary operational-level warfighting component commands. The C-NAF headquarters normally consists of an Air Force Forces staff and an assigned air and space operations center or operations center. They are dedicated to supporting the unified combatant commander and subordinate Joint Force Commanders across the full range of military operations. The C-NAF commander, assigned as the Commander of Air Force Forces to a geographic combatant command, will normally also be designated as the theater Joint Force Air Component Commander. A C-NAF commander may also be designated by the component commander to command a joint task force, as required.

**Wing.** The wing is a level of command below the Numbered Air Force and has a distinct mission with significant scope. A wing is responsible for maintaining the installation and may have several squadrons in more than one dependent group. Wings will have a minimum adjusted population of at least 1,000 (750 for Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command), to include manpower authorizations, students, and a percentage of contractor workforces. The different types of wings are operational, air base, or specialized mission.

**Operational Wing.** An operational wing is one that has an operations group and related operational mission activity assigned. When an operational wing performs the primary mission of the base, it usually maintains and operates the base. In addition, an operational wing is capable of self-support in functional areas, such as maintenance and munitions, as needed. When an operational wing is a tenant unit, the host command typically provides base and logistics support.

**Air Base Wing.** An air base wing performs a support function rather than an operational mission. This type of wing maintains and operates a base. An air base wing often provides functional support to a MAJCOM headquarters.

**Specialized Mission Wing.** A specialized mission wing performs a specialized mission and usually does not have aircraft or missiles assigned. Examples include intelligence wings, training

wings, and so on. This wing is either a host or a tenant wing, depending on if it maintains and operates the base.

**Group.** A group is a level of command below the wing. Like the Numbered Air Force, a group is a tactical echelon with minimal staff support. A group usually has two or more subordinate units. A dependent group is a mission, logistics, support, medical, or large functional unit, such as a civil engineer group. Dependent groups may possess small supporting staff elements that are organized as sections, such as standardization and evaluation or quality control. An independent group has the same functions and responsibilities as a like-type wing, but its scope and size do not warrant wing-level designation. Groups will have a minimum adjusted population of at least 400 (200 for Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Command), to include manpower authorizations, students, and a percentage of contractor workforces.

**Squadron.** A squadron is the basic unit, the nuclei, and the basic building block of the USAF. The different types of squadrons are either mission units, such as operational flying squadrons, or functional units, such as civil engineering, security forces, or logistics readiness squadrons. Squadrons vary in size according to responsibility, and should be organized and resourced to allow Airmen to focus on the USAF mission. Squadrons will have a minimum adjusted population of at least 35 and can range up to several hundred personnel, which includes manpower authorizations, students, and a percentage of contractor workforces.

**Flight.** If internal subdivision within a squadron is required, numbered/named, alpha, or functional flights may be established. Flights typically consist of 12 to 100 people. A numbered or named flight primarily incorporates smaller elements into an organized unit. The administrative characteristics for a numbered or named flight include, strength reporting, like those of a squadron. Alpha flights are part of a squadron (usually a mission squadron) and are composed of several elements that perform identical missions. Functional flights are usually part of a squadron and are composed of elements that perform specific missions.

**Element.** Elements are subdivisions of flights. Typically, flights are broken into three or four evenly distributed elements, when necessary.

## Chapter 6 ENLISTED FORCE DEVELOPMENT

### *Section 6E—Training Responsibilities*

#### **6.12. Training Opportunities**

Well-trained workers mean higher production, positive morale, greater profits, and higher wages. The demand for training costs the USAF millions of dollars annually, and for good reason. To accomplish the mission, whether that means sending satellites into orbit, planes in the air, reports to higher headquarters, or vehicles on the road, training is a must. Training is something every Airman needs throughout their career, from basic military training, to technical training, to advanced skill level training, and beyond.

#### **6.13. Basic Military Training**

All enlisted Airmen are trained in the fundamental skills necessary to be successful in the USAF. These skills include basic combat skills, field training exercises, weapons training, military discipline, physical fitness, drill and ceremonies, dormitory inspections, history and heritage, core values, and a comprehensive range of subjects relating to USAF life, such as financial management, family issues, and alcohol/substance abuse. More than seven million young men and women have entered USAF basic military training. Basic military training begins with the receiving phase (zero week) and ends with graduation. Military training instructors are responsible for most of the training that takes place, and they accompany trainees throughout the training process. Following graduation, all Airmen proceed to the appropriate technical training school or their first duty assignment. Technical training typically lasts anywhere from one month to two years, depending on the Airman's assigned Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC).

#### **6.14. On-the-Job Training**

The USAF on-the-job training (OJT) provides personnel the opportunity to attain knowledge and skill qualifications required to perform duties in their specialty. Effective training, knowledge, proficiency, and experience are integral parts of a unit's mission that will ultimately lead to a successful career and contribute to a solid national defense. An effective OJT program requires commander and supervisory involvement at all levels. While the supervisor's primary responsibility is to plan OJT that outlines specific short-term, mission-related goals for the trainee, overall success depends on the supervisor's ability to advise and actively assist Airmen in reaching their long-range career objectives. The USAF OJT program consists of three components: job knowledge, job proficiency, and job experience.

**Job Knowledge.** Job knowledge is satisfied through a planned program of study involving Career Development Courses (CDC) or technical references listed in the Career Field Education and Training Plan (CFETP) or identified by the supervisor.

**Job Proficiency.** Job proficiency is hands-on training provided on the job, allowing the trainee to gain proficiency in tasks performed in the work center.

**Job Experience.** Job experience is gained during and after upgrade training to build confidence and competence.

## 6.15. Upgrade Training

Upgrade training leads to award of higher skill levels and is designed to increase skills and abilities. AFSC upgrade training requirements for award of 3-, 5-, 7-, and 9-skill levels are outlined AFMAN 36-2100, *Military Utilization and Classification*, 7 April 2021, Department of the Air Force Instructions (DAFI) 36-2670, *Total Force Development*, 12 October 2021, and the applicable CFETP.

**Apprentice.** Airmen must complete an initial skills course for award of the 3-skill level. Retraining into an AFSC may be accomplished via OJT training alone, only when specified in the retraining instructions and as approved by the career field manager or the career field functional manager (Air Reserve Component). Personnel retraining via OJT may be awarded a 3-skill level when they complete knowledge training on all tasks taught in the initial skills course and other tasks and mandatory requirements.

**Journeyman.** Airmen must complete mandatory CDCs, if available, and applicable mandatory core tasks identified in the CFETP. Award of the 5-skill level also requires completion of all mandatory requirements listed in the Air Force Enlisted Classification Directory (AFECD). Additionally, the member must be recommended by the supervisor and approved by the commander. Individuals in retraining status (Training Status Code F) are subject to the same training requirements.

**Craftsman.** To be a craftsman, the member must be at least a Staff Sergeant Select; complete mandatory CDCs, if available, and complete applicable mandatory core tasks identified in the CFETP. Award of the 7-skill level also requires completion of a 7-skill level craftsman course (if career field requires it) and mandatory requirements listed in the AFECD. Additionally, the member must be recommended by the supervisor and approved by the commander. Individuals in retraining status (Training Status Code G) are subject to the same training requirements.

**Superintendent.** For award of the 9-skill level, the member must be at least a Senior Master Sergeant, meet mandatory requirements listed in the AFECD, be recommended by the supervisor, and be approved by the commander.

## 6.16. Unit Training Management

The unit training program is designed to ensure all Airmen receive quality, standardized, comprehensive training. The trainee is the focal point of the training program, while at the forefront, unit training managers and supervisors work together to plan, conduct, and evaluate the trainees' efforts to become qualified to perform in their USAF specialty. The success and quality of training greatly depends on the trainee's active participation and understanding of the training program, as well as the relationship between the supervisor, trainer, and trainee. Basic requirements of the unit training program state that newly assigned personnel will be interviewed within 30 days (60 days for Air Reserve Component) to determine training status and issue CDCs upon confirmation within the Course Development Student Administration Record System.

Work center training orientation will be conducted within 60 days of assignment (120 days for Air Reserve Component); a comprehensive trainee orientation will be conducted for trainees initially entering upgrade training within 60 days of assignment (90 days for Air Reserve Component); and a training progress review will be conducted with the unit training manager, supervisor, and trainee at the 24th month of upgrade training. Before being submitted for upgrade, the trainee must meet

all mandatory requirements as defined in the CFETP, AFECD, and the Air Force Job Qualification Standard (AFJQS).

**Unit Training Managers.** Unit training managers are the commander's key staff members responsible for overall management of the training program. Training managers serve as training consultants to all unit members and determine if quality training programs are in effect within all sections. Training managers develop, manage, and conduct training in support of in-garrison and expeditionary mission requirements; advise and assist commanders and unit personnel in executing their training responsibilities; and conduct a staff assistance visit of the unit's training program when requested by the unit commander.

**Supervisors.** In addition to unit training managers, supervisors have the single greatest impact on mission accomplishment with regard to training. They must share their experiences and expertise with trainees to meet mission requirements and ensure a quality training program is provided. Supervisors develop master training plans to ensure completion of all work center duty position requirements (for example, 100 percent task coverage). The supervisor must also integrate training with day-to-day work center operations and consider trainer and equipment availability, training opportunities, and schedules.

**Trainers.** The trainer (often the trainee's supervisor) is selected based on their experience and their ability to provide instruction to the trainee. Additionally, they must maintain task qualification and complete the USAF training course. Trainer responsibilities include planning, conducting, and documenting training; preparing and using teaching outlines or task breakdowns; developing evaluation tools; and briefing the trainee and supervisor on the training evaluation results.

**Task Certifiers.** Task certifiers provide third-party certification and evaluation of progress in the training program. Certifiers must be at least a Staff Sergeant with a 5-skill level or civilian equivalent, complete the USAF training course, and be capable of evaluating the task being certified. Certifiers will develop evaluation tools or use established training evaluation methods to determine the trainee's abilities and training program effectiveness, and will brief the trainee, supervisor, and trainer on evaluation results.

### **6.17. Training Forms and Documentation**

Training documentation is important to personnel at all levels because it validates the status of training and task qualification. Documentation also helps managers assess mission capability and readiness, and it defines requirements for individual career progression.

**Air Force Form 623, *Individual Training Record*.** The AF Form 623, *Individual Training Record Folder*, six-part folder (when required by the career field manager), or approved electronic equivalent, is generated for all trainees entering upgrade training for the first time. The training record reflects past and current qualifications, and is used to determine training requirements. Supervisors maintain the training record, and ensure it is available to applicable personnel in the chain of command, including the unit training manager, upon request. Unless classified, the training record is returned to the member upon separation, retirement, commissioning, promotion to Master Sergeant, or as otherwise directed by the career field manager.

**Air Force Form 623A, *On-the-Job Training Record Continuation Sheet*.** Use AF Form 623A, *On-the-Job Training Record Continuation Sheet*, or automated version, to document an individual's training progress. The form reflects status, counseling, and breaks in training.

**Career Field Education and Training Plan.** The CFETP is a comprehensive core document identifying life-cycle education and training requirements, training support resources, core and home station training, and deployment/unit type code task requirements for USAF specialties. Supervisors use the CFETP to plan, prioritize, manage, and execute training within the career field and to identify and certify all past and current qualifications. CFETP Part I provides information necessary for overall management of the specialty and is maintained as part of the work center master training plan. CFETP Part II contains the specialty training standard identifying the duties, tasks, and technical references to support training, core and home station training tasks, deployment/unit type code tasks, and CDC requirements. At least one copy of the entire CFETP (Part I and II), should be kept in the work center for general access and master training plan development.

**Air Force Job Qualification Standard.** The AFJQS is a training document approved by the career field manager for a particular job type or duty position within an USAF specialty.

**Air Force Form 797, *Job Qualification Standard Continuation/Command JQS*.** AF Form 797, *Job Qualification Standard Continuation/Command JQS*, is a continuation of the CFETP Part II, or AFJQS. This form defines locally assigned duty position, home station training, and deployment/unit type code requirements not included in the CFETP, Part II.

**Air Force Form 803, *Report of Task Evaluations*.** Evaluators use the AF Form 803, *Report of Task Evaluations*, to conduct and document completion of task evaluations during training staff assistance visits, when directed by the commander, or when task certification requires validation. Completed evaluations conducted on a single trainee by the supervisor/trainer or task certifier are filed in AF Form 623, *Individual Training Record*, until upgraded or no longer applicable.

**Air Force Form 1098, *Special Task Certification and Recurring Training*.** Supervisors use the AF Form 1098, *Special Task Certification and Recurring Training*, to document selected tasks requiring recurring training or evaluation. USAF and major command directives may identify tasks contained in the CFETP that require special certification, as well as recurring training or evaluations.

**Master Training Plan.** All work centers will have a master training plan established. The master training plan employs a strategy for ensuring all work center job requirements are completed by using a master task listing. The master training plan provides milestones for tasks and CDC completion, and prioritizes deployment/unit type code, home station training, upgrade, and qualification tasks.

## **6.18. Retraining Program**

The retraining program is designed to balance the number of personnel in specific grades and year groups of an USAF specialty. Once retraining is approved and the Airman has been assigned duty in the new specialty, upgrade training begins. With minor exceptions, training requirements are identical for retrainees and standard upgrade trainees. Refer to AFMAN 36-2100 for additional details.

## **6.19. Language Enabled Airman Program**

The Language Enabled Airman Program (LEAP), designed and managed by the USAF Culture and Language Center at Air University, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, provides opportunities for officers and enlisted Airmen in the general purpose force (GPF) who have outstanding service records and possess some level of skill in a foreign language, as measured by the Defense Language Proficiency Test (DLPT) or Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI). LEAP is a highly-competitive, board-selected program that enables the USAF to sustain, deliberately develop, and posture Airmen for utilization in language designated positions, deployments, and other combatant command requirements. Selected members develop and professionalize their skills through an online synchronous platform called “eMentor” and through periodic overseas language immersions. Additional information on the Strategic Language List or the LEAP program can be found at: <https://www.airuniversity.af.edu/AFCLC/>

### ***Section 6F—Professional Military Education***

## **6.20. Education Opportunities**

Educational opportunities exist throughout an Airman’s career which contribute to individual overall development. Professional military education (PME), enhances performance in each phase of professional development and builds upon the foundation of leadership abilities developed during the earlier stages of an individual’s career. PME compliments training, experience, and other educational programs to provide enlisted leaders a continuum of learning via progressive courses concentrated on developing leadership, Airmanship, and military professionalism. PME courses provide professional education to enlisted Airmen and ensure development of Air Force institutional competencies and sub-competencies vital to the knowledge and skills required for critical thinking, sound decision-making, and a strategic mindset. For additional information about Air Force PME programs and policies, refer to AFI 36-2670 *Total Force Development*.

## **6.21. Enlisted Professional Military Education**

In 1955, enlisted PME schools were established across the Air Force to provide non-commissioned officers leadership and management training required to assume day-to-day mission execution responsibilities. The stand-up of these schools coincided with the release of the first official enlisted force structure which established the leadership roles and responsibilities of enlisted Airmen at each grade. Operational control of stateside enlisted PME schools lies with Air Education and Training Command at the Thomas N. Barnes Center for Enlisted Education, located at Maxwell Air Force Base-Gunter Annex, Alabama.

The Barnes Center, Academic Affairs is responsible for developing and providing enlisted PME program development, faculty development, and operational program management. Barnes Center programs consist of academic courses that use performance evaluations and objective examinations to determine how well students achieve instructional objectives. Courses are designed with principle instructional methods, experiential activities, problem-centered leadership laboratories, personal reflection, guided discussion, case study analysis, and writing assignments.

**Note:** With the exception of the Chief Leadership Course, Airmen are awarded collegiate academic credit for completing enlisted PME courses through the Community College of the Air Force, which is accredited through Air University by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

**Airman Leadership School Distance Learning.** The Airman Leadership School Distance Learning (ALS-DL) Course provides PME to prepare Senior Airmen to supervise and foster a commitment to the military profession. The ALS-DL curriculum is designed to develop a mindset and associated skills with respect to four core attributes: (1) professional Airmen, (2) expeditionary Airmen, (3) supervisor of Airmen, and (4) supervisory communicator. The ALS-DL course is open to Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Senior Airmen and Staff Sergeants. The course is not available for Regular Air Force personnel. Students must pass two course exams by attaining the minimum passing score on each exam.

**Airman Leadership School Blended Learning.** In October 2016, the Airman Leadership School launched the Blended Learning Course (ALS-BLC), which combines distance learning principles with traditional classroom learning. ALS-BLC is divided into two phases. Phase I is eight weeks long and delivered by utilizing an online learning management system. Students complete core academic work in an asynchronous environment. Phase II is two weeks long and conducted at the Paul H. Lankford PME Center located on McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base, Tennessee. The ALS-BLC curriculum is designed to develop a mindset and associated skills with respect to four core attributes: (1) professional Airmen, (2) expeditionary Airmen, (3) supervisor of Airmen, and (4) supervisory communicator.

**Airman Leadership School.** Airman Leadership School (ALS) is the first level of enlisted PME that Airmen complete as they progress through their Air Force careers. ALS is offered at almost every installation across the Air Force and is designed to prepare Senior Airmen to be professional warfighting Airmen, able to supervise and lead Air Force teams to support the employment of air, space, and cyberspace power. The first level of ALS is the distance learning course (ALS-DL). ALS-DL includes: (1) professional Airmen, (2) expeditionary Airmen, (3) supervisor of Airmen, and (4) supervisory communicator. The ALS curriculum includes: (1) mission, (2) leadership, (3) problem solving, and (4) Air Force culture.

**Noncommissioned Officer Distance Learning.** The Noncommissioned Officer Distance Learning (NCO-DL) Course provides PME for basic NCO institutional competency development required to prepare each enlisted leader to be professional, warfighting Airmen who can lead and manage Air Force units in the employment of air and space power. The NCO-DL course consists of three course modules: (1) course foundation, (2) leadership and management, and (3) operational Airman. The NCO-DL course is open to Air Reserve Component Airmen. To successfully complete this course, students are required to pass three course exams, demonstrating curriculum mastery by attaining the minimum passing score on each exam.

**Noncommissioned Officer Academy.** The NCO Academy (NCOA) mission is to prepare enlisted leaders for current and future leadership and management opportunities to operate (think and act) critically in complex and ambiguous environments. The NCOA program encompasses the intermediate leadership experience, which includes: guided discussions,

experiential exercises, case study analysis, and immersive leadership development laboratories designed to improve an NCO's competence, confidence, and will to exercise assigned leadership responsibilities.

**Senior Noncommissioned Officer Distance Learning.** The Senior Noncommissioned Officer Distance Learning (SNCO-DL) Course provides institutional competency development required to prepare SNCOs to lead the enlisted force at the tactical and operational levels. The curriculum's design heightens students' appreciation and understanding of three attributes: (1) self-awareness, (2) leadership and management, and (3) joint warfighter. This course is open to Air Reserve Component Airmen. To successfully complete the course, students are required to demonstrate curriculum mastery by attaining the minimum passing score on each of three module exams.

**Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy.** The SNCO Academy (SNCOA) trains up to 2,250 Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard, Marine, and international SNCOs, annually. The SNCOA mission is to develop joint and coalition senior enlisted leaders to influence mission success in dynamic service environments. The SNCOA program encompasses the advanced leadership experience, representing comprehensive institutional competency development. The SNCOA is designed to sharpen senior enlisted leader skills with education that helps prepare them for continued and increased relevant responsibilities in joint, combined, interagency, and strategic environments.

**Chief Leadership Course.** The Chief Leadership Course (CLC) is the capstone and pinnacle level of enlisted PME. Currently, the CLC provides newly selected Chief Master Sergeants with foundational, strategic-level leadership competencies. The CLC conducts seven classes per year, educating 750 Total Force Chief Master Sergeants and Chief Master Sergeant-selects annually. The CLC mission is to provide Chiefs the education to bridge operational-to-strategic perspectives of the Air Force. The CLC vision is to develop chiefs into strategic level leaders and to inspire them to effectively lead, manage, and mentor today's Airmen. The CLC demands extensive self-study, critical creative thinking, communication, and interpersonal skills.

## **6.22. Senior Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education**

In addition to enlisted PME courses, the CJCSI 1805.01B, *Enlisted Professional Military Education Policy*, requires all enlisted personnel operating in joint, interagency, multinational, and coalition warfighting organizations to learn joint concepts. Senior Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education (SEJPME), provides SNCOs a comprehensive joint education to prepare them for assignments to joint billets at the senior enlisted leader or command senior enlisted leader level. SEJPME is web-based and is designed to expose enlisted personnel to joint education, prepare them to succeed by improving their ability to operate effectively and supervise multiple service members. SEJPME courses are offered online and are accessible from anywhere at any time.

SEJPME consists of two courses of instruction referred to as SEJPME I and II. SEJPME I emphasizes curriculum commensurate with E-5/E-7 joint assignment responsibilities. SEJPME II is focused on preparing E-7/E-9 enlisted members for their senior leadership roles in joint assignments. SEJPME I and II have learning areas and objectives in: (1)

national strategic overview; (2) joint interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational capabilities; (3) foundations of joint operations; and (4) Joint Force leadership. For additional information on SEJPME I and II or to enroll, refer to: <https://jkodirect.jten.mil/Atlas2/faces/page/login/Login.seam>.

**Note:** Students must complete rank-required service enlisted PME before enrolling in SEJPME.

### **6.23. International Professional Military Education**

**Defense Security Cooperation Agency.** Security cooperation, under the Department of Defense guidance, leads national security objective efforts to train, educate, advise, and equip foreign partners. Department of Defense policy states that security cooperation, as an important tool of national security and foreign policy, shall be planned, programmed, budgeted, and executed with the same high degree of attention and efficiency as other integral Department of Defense activities.

**Inter-American Air Forces Academy.** In addition to enlisted and joint PME, Air Education and Training Command hosts the Inter-American Air Forces Academy (IAAFA), an organization designed to focus on education, training and security cooperation. IAAFA was initially established as a training program on 15 March 1943, at the request of Peru's Minister of Aeronautics, General Fernando Melgar. The Academy trained 11 Peruvian students in support of Allied unity in the western hemisphere at Albrook Air Force Station, Panama Canal Zone, marking the first United States aeronautics training in Latin America. Today, as an element of the U.S. Security Assistance

Program, and more specifically the International Military Education and Training Program, IAAFA has provided significant contributions to promote regional stability, encourage the growth of democracy, prevent low intensity conflicts, and counter foreign intervention in Central America.

Since its inception, IAAFA has served as a military training center for Latin American Air Forces by training military forces, national police services, and civilian personnel from over 25 nations in areas ranging from PME for officers and enlisted personnel, security forces training, principles of logistics, aircraft maintenance, and pilot aviation training. IAAFA has served a variety of national interests in the Latin America region, ranging from support of United States-Allied efforts in World War II, to Counter-Insurgency/Civic Action actions during the Alliance for Progress era, to current national and security policies in support of democracy, individual freedoms, and human rights.

IAAFA's mission is to provide military education and training to military personnel of the Americas and other eligible partner nations and its vision is to strengthen partnerships that advance shared interests and enable partner nations to act in support of aligned strategic objectives. The Academy integrates USAF and guest instructors from different partner nations as critical enablers to provide the highest quality of in-residence training, mobile training and a virtual learning environment to support of our Latin American partners from Central, South America, and Caribbean nations. Currently located at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, IAAFA graduates an average of 900 students annually, it has graduated over 35,000 students in its 75-year history and it allocates the only PME center

in the Air Force with the capability of offering the three enlisted tiers of professional military education (Airman Leadership School, Noncommissioned Officer Academy and Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy).

**Inter-European Air Forces Academy.** The Inter-European Air Forces Academy (IEAFA) was passed into U.S. law in the Carl Levin and Howard P. “Buck” McKeon National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2015, Section 1268. In 2017 IEAFA was codified as a permanent authority to train and educate partner nations. The purpose of IEAFA is to provide military education and training to military personnel of countries that are members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) or signatories to the Partnership for Peace (PfP) Framework Documents. IEAFA's mission is to enable combined, joint air operations by strengthening NATO and PfP Air Force capabilities and interoperability through targeted military education and training.

The Academy was officially activated on 23 March 2016, and is subordinate to Headquarters, United States Air Forces in Europe & Air Forces Africa (USAFE-AFAFRICA), and the Warrior Preparation Center located at Einsiedlerhof Air Station, Germany. Since its establishment, IEAFA has educated and trained more than 500 students from 32 countries. With PME as the Academy's primary focus, IEAFA's unique approach develops officers and NCOs in a combined learning environment, integrating the learning experience between the ranks, thus showcasing the benefit of a professional working relationship and how it drives mission success. Additionally, IEAFA is expanding its technical training course offerings to boost partnership capacity in the European theater for specific disciplines, which in-turn strengthens NATO and enables successful combined air operations.

## **Chapter 7**

### **ASSESSMENTS AND RECOGNITION**

#### ***Section 7A—Airman Comprehensive Assessment***

##### **7.1. Airman Comprehensive Assessment Administration**

The Airman Comprehensive Assessment (ACA) is used during formal communication between a rater and a ratee to communicate responsibility, accountability, USAF culture, an Airman's critical role in support of the mission, individual readiness, expectations regarding duty performance, and how well the ratee is meeting those expectations. Also, during feedback sessions, raters will provide the ratee with the most current USAF Benefits Fact Sheet. The ACA is designed to increase Airmen interaction and support at all levels, provide Airmen an opportunity to discuss personal and professional goals, and assist Airmen in achieving those goals. Once the ACA has been completed, raters will give the original, completed, and signed worksheet to the ratee, and maintain copies of all completed ACAs and all signed ACA notices, or appropriate statements (RegAF only).

Unit commanders are responsible for developing a tracking mechanism for ACAs and ensuring they are conducted properly. Rater's raters will monitor personnel to ensure ACAs are conducted, as required. When a lower-level rater is not available due to unusual circumstances, or when officially assuming the subordinate rater's responsibilities, the rater's rater will conduct ACA sessions in place of the rater. Ratees are responsible for knowing when their ACA sessions are due. When a required or requested ACA does not take place, ratees will notify the rater and, if necessary, the rater's rater.

ACAs are mandatory for officers up through the rank of Colonel, and for all RegAF and Air Reserve Component personnel. For student officers receiving AF Form 475, *Education/Training Report*, or for enlisted personnel in initial or advanced skills training, an ACA is not required, but may be given at the discretion of school leadership. For performance evaluations completed on non-rated initial or advanced skills training students, documented academic progress reports, such as the AETC Form 156, *Student Training Report*, will serve in-lieu of the mandatory mid-term ACA. The mid-term ACA is a mandatory supporting document to be routed with the performance evaluation, but will not be made a matter of official record.

##### **7.2. Guidance for Conducting ACA Sessions**

Effective feedback is a realistic assessment of an individual's performance. Raters should be impartial and provide honest, realistic feedback. The private, face-to-face feedback session is an opportunity to inform an individual of where they need improvement, determine if an individual needs more information, and set future expectations. It also lets the ratee know what needs to be done before the evaluation performance report is due. Feedback, whether positive or negative, needs to be specific. Specific positive comments reinforce the behavior, and specific negative comments focus the attention where the ratee needs improvement. Raters may only conduct sessions by telephone in unusual circumstances where face-to-face sessions are impractical.

##### **7.3. Airman Comprehensive Assessment Worksheet**

ACA Worksheets are used to document formal communication between raters and ratees and may be used on the ratee's evaluation. Each section of the form should be filled out to the best of the

ratee's and rater's ability. The ratee completes Section III on their own and reviews Section IX (*AB thru Technical Sergeant*) or VIII (*Master Sergeant thru Chief Master Sergeant*) prior to the feedback session. The areas following Section III are completed by the rater. Sections are broken into various categories to allow raters to objectively indicate the ratee's level of performance in each area. There are three different ACA Worksheets, designated for use based on the ratee's rank.

AF Form 724, *Airman Comprehensive Assessment (2Lt thru Col)*

AF Form 931, *Airman Comprehensive Assessment (AB thru TSgt)*

AF Form 932, *Airman Comprehensive Assessment (MSgt thru CMSgt)*

#### **7.4. When to Conduct the Airman Comprehensive Assessment**

In most cases, the military personnel flight will provide a computer-generated ACA notice to raters and ratees within 30 days of when supervision begins (identifying initial or follow-up ACA sessions, as required), and again halfway between the time supervision began and the projected performance report close-out date (identifying mid-term ACA session requirements). The notice serves to remind raters that an ACA session is due; however, failure to receive an ACA notice does not justify failing to hold a required session. The Air National Guard does not currently have an automated process for ACA notices, and may use an alternate form of communication to notify raters and ratees of ACA schedules.

All initial ACA sessions must be conducted within the first 60 days of when supervision begins. This will be the ratee's only *initial* feedback until there is a change of reporting official. The rater must conduct a mid-term ACA session midway between the date supervision begins and the next evaluation projected close-out date. For the end-of-reporting period, the rater conducts the ACA session within 60 days after the evaluation has been accomplished. **Note:** Ratees may request a feedback as long as 60 days have passed since the last session. For Chief Master Sergeants and colonels, the initial ACA is the only feedback required. Air Reserve Component personnel do not require an ACA if action is pending in accordance with AFI 36-3209, *Separation Procedures for Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve Members*, 20 September 2011. If the ratee is due an annual evaluation and the period of supervision is less than 150 days, the rater conducts the ACA approximately 60 days before the projected evaluation close-out date. For Lieutenant through Captain only, if an evaluation is due to a change of reporting official, the new rater will do an initial feedback. This feedback may be accomplished using the ACA Worksheet, but documentation is not required. For Airman Basic, Airman, or Airman First Class (with less than 20 months of Total Active Federal Military Service), after the initial feedback, a mid-term ACA session is conducted every 180 days until the rater writes a performance report or a change of reporting official occurs.

#### ***Section 7B—Performance Evaluations***

#### **7.5. Performance Evaluation Administration**

The performance evaluation system is designed to provide a reliable, long-term, cumulative record of performance and potential. The key aspects associated with the evaluation system are how well the individual does his or her job and the qualities the individual brings to the job. It is important for supervisors to help subordinates understand their strengths and weaknesses and how their efforts contribute to the mission. Supervisors must understand how and when to employ the officer and enlisted evaluation systems and the civilian performance program.

**Access to Evaluations.** Evaluations are For Official Use Only and are subject to the Public Law 93-579, *Privacy Act 1974*, 31 December 1974. They are exempt from public disclosure under Department of Defense Manual (DoDM) 5400.07-R\_AFMAN 33-302, *Freedom of Information Act Program*, 27 April 2018 and AFI 33-332, *Air Force Privacy and Civil Liberties Program*, 10 March 2020. Only persons within the agency who have a proper need to know may read evaluations. The office with custodial responsibility determines if a person's official duties require access. Classified information should not be included in any section of evaluation forms or on attachments to evaluations, referral documents, or endorsements to referral documents. Specific instructions for completing evaluations, with reference to proper formatting, appropriate raters/evaluators, additional raters, content, acronym use, classified information, and other details, are found in AFI 36-2406, *Officer and Enlisted Evaluation Systems*, 25 June 2021.

## **7.6. Performance Evaluation Uses**

The officer and enlisted evaluation systems should be used with the following objectives in mind:

1. Establish performance standards and expectations for ratees, meaningful feedback on how well the ratee is meeting those expectations, and direction on how to better meet those established standards and expectations.
2. Provide a reliable, long-term, cumulative record of performance and promotion potential based on that performance.
3. Provide officer selection boards, enlisted evaluation boards, and personnel managers with sound information to assist in identifying the best qualified personnel for promotion, as well as other personnel management decisions.
4. Document in the permanent record any substantiated allegation of a sex-related offense against an Airman, regardless of grade, that results in conviction by court-martial, non-judicial punishment, or other punitive administrative action.

## **7.7. Performance Evaluation Forms and Documentation**

There are a number of forms, as listed below, used to document performance and potential over the course of a ratee's career. These forms are considered when making promotion recommendations, selections or propriety actions, selective continuations, involuntary separations, selective early retirements, assignments, school nominations and selections, and other management decisions. **Note:** The ratee's grade or projected grade on the static close-out date is used to determine the appropriate performance report form.

AF Form 77, *Letter of Evaluation* (multipurpose evaluation form)

AF Form 475, *Education/Training Report*, (used in education and training environments)

AF Form 707, *Officer Performance Report (Lt thru Col)*

AF Form 910, *Enlisted Performance Report (AB thru TSgt)*

AF Form 911, *Enlisted Performance Report (MSgt thru SMSgt)*

AF Form 912, *Enlisted Performance Report (CMSgt)*

## 7.8. Performance Evaluation Responsibilities

Unit commanders are responsible for ensuring all first-time supervisors receive mandatory officer evaluation system and/or enlisted evaluation system training, as applicable, within 60 days of being appointed as a rater. Additionally, USAF members should receive annual recurring evaluation system training. How and when this training is conducted is at the unit commander's discretion.

Unit commanders must conduct a record review of all personnel assigned to and/or transferred into his or her command to ensure knowledge of and familiarization with the Airman's history of sex-related offenses resulting in conviction by courts-martial, non-judicial punishment, or other punitive administrative action. This is accomplished to reduce the likelihood that repeat offenses will escape the notice of current, subsequent, or higher level commanders. Review of the record will be conducted by the immediate commander of the Airman at the lowest unit level. These responsibilities will not be delegated.

Raters and additional raters must consider the contents of Unfavorable Information Files or Personal Information Files when preparing a performance evaluation. They must assess the ratee's performance, what the ratee did, how well he or she did it, and the ratee's potential based on that performance throughout the rating period.

Ratees must review evaluations prior to them becoming a matter of record. This is the time to bring typos, spelling errors, and inaccurate data to the attention of the rater. When the ratee signs the evaluation, he or she is not concurring with the content, but rather acknowledging receipt of the completed evaluation, and certifying they have reviewed the evaluation for administrative errors. If the ratee disagrees with any comments and/or ratings on the report, the ratee may file an appeal after the evaluation becomes a matter of record.

## 7.9. Documenting Performance

Bullet format is mandatory. Bullets are limited to a minimum of one line and a maximum of two lines per bullet. White space is authorized. Main bullets begin at the left margin and will have one space after the "-". For additional guidance on bullet writing, refer to "The Bullet Background Paper" in AFH 33-337, *The Tongue and Quill*, 27 May 2015, Certified Current 27 July 2016. Although the *Tongue and Quill*, allows three lines per bullet, evaluations will not have more than two lines per bullet. **Note:** In very rare and unique cases, evaluations may be handwritten, only when authorized by HAF or Air Reserve Personnel Center, as appropriate. The U.S. President or Vice President may handwrite evaluations.

**Adverse Information.** The expectation for performance evaluations is fair and equal treatment of all, and enforcement of the same behavior in subordinates. The goal is for fair, accurate, and unbiased evaluations to help ensure the best qualified members are identified for positions of higher responsibility. Failure to document misconduct that deviates from the core values of the USAF is a disservice to all Airmen who serve with honor and distinction. Situations involving convictions or violations of criminal law must be handled appropriately and in accordance with required timelines and procedures.

In all cases, when comments are included in performance evaluations, they must be specific, outlining the event and any corrective action taken. Comments, such as "conduct unbecoming..." or "an error in judgment led to an off-duty incident..." are too vague. Examples of valid comments

are “Master Sergeant Smith drove while intoxicated, for which he received an Article 15” and “Captain Jones made improper sexually suggestive and harassing comments to a squadron member, for which he received a Letter of Reprimand.” Some aspects of performance that may need to be considered when preparing an accurate assessment of behavior include:

- Impact of the misconduct on the USAF as an institution (Did it bring discredit on the USAF?).
- Impact of the misconduct on, and its relationship to, the ratee’s duties (Did it affect the ratee’s ability to fulfill assigned duties?).
- Impact of the misconduct on the USAF mission (Did the mission suffer in any way? Was unit morale affected?).
- Grade, assignment, and experience of the ratee (Is the ratee in a sensitive job? Did the ratee know better?).
- Number of separate violations and frequency of the misconduct (Is this an isolated or repeated incident?).
- Consequences of the misconduct (Did it result in death, injury, or loss of/damage to military or civilian property?).
- Other dissimilar acts of misconduct during the reporting period (Is the ratee establishing a pattern of misconduct?).
- Existence of unique, unusual, or extenuating circumstances (Was the misconduct willful and unprovoked, or were there aggravating factors or events?).

**Adverse Actions.** For the purpose of this policy, an adverse action includes reportable civilian offenses or convictions, other than convictions for motor vehicle violations that do not require a court appearance. Specifically, convictions required to be reported include: 1) any finding of guilt; 2) any plea of guilty; 3) any plea of no contest or *nolo contendere*; 4) any plea of guilty in exchange for a deferred prosecution or diversion program; or 5) any other similar disposition of civilian criminal charges.

In the event a commander or military law-enforcement official receives information that a member of the USAF, under the jurisdiction of another military department, has become subject to a conviction for which a report is required by this section, the commander or military law-enforcement official receiving such information shall forward it to the member’s immediate commander.

Complaints of sex-related offenses against a member, regardless of grade, resulting in conviction by court-martial, non-judicial punishment, or punitive administrative action, require a mandatory notation on the member’s next performance report or training report and promotion recommendation form (if not already documented on an evaluation or court-martial in the selection record). Sex-related offenses include violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice or attempts to commit related offenses.

If a member has been convicted by a court-martial or if the senior rater decides to file any adverse information in an Airman’s selection record, comments relating to the ratee’s behavior are mandatory on the ratee’s next performance or training report and promotion recommendation form (if not already documented on an evaluation or court-martial in the selection record). The evaluation becomes a referral for the performance report or training report.

**Extraordinary Cases.** Raters may request a waiver of the mandatory requirement to document civilian convictions for good cause. The waiver request will route from the rater, through any required additional rater and the ratee's commander, to the ratee's senior rater, and, if endorsed, be forwarded to the major command commander or authorized final approval authority.

### ***Section 7C—Reenlistments and Continuation***

#### **7.10. Selective Reenlistment Program**

The Selective Reenlistment Program applies to all enlisted personnel by which commanders/civilians, directors, and supervisors evaluate first-term, second-term, and career Airmen to ensure the USAF retains those who consistently demonstrate the capability and willingness of maintaining high professional standards. First-term Airmen receive selective reenlistment consideration when they are within 15 months of their expiration of term of service. Second-term and career Airmen with less than 19 years of total active federal military service are considered within 13 months of the original expiration of term of service. Career Airmen receive selective reenlistment consideration within 13 months of completing 20 years of total active federal military service. Career Airmen who have served beyond 20 years of total active federal military service receive selective reenlistment consideration each time they are within 13 months of their original expiration of term of service.

#### **7.11. Selective Reenlistment Program Considerations**

Commanders and civilian directors consider enlisted performance report ratings, unfavorable information from any substantiated source, the Airman's willingness to comply with USAF standards, and the Airman's ability (or lack thereof) to meet required training and duty performance levels when determining if a member may reenlist. Supervisors should carefully evaluate the Airman's duty performance and review the Airman's personnel records, to include the AF Form 1137, *Unfavorable Information File Summary*, if applicable, before making a recommendation to unit commanders and civilian directors concerning the Airman's career potential.

**Non-Selectee.** If an Airman is not selected for reenlistment, an AF Form 418, *Selective Reenlistment Program (SRP) Consideration/Denial of Continued Service for Airmen*, is completed, and the Airman is informed of the decision. The commander sends the completed form to the military personnel flight after the Airman signs and initials the appropriate blocks. The commander must make sure the Airman understands the right to appeal the decision. The Airman has up to three calendar days to render an appeal intent. The Airman must submit the appeal to the military personnel flight within 10 calendar days of the date he or she renders the appeal intent on the form.

**Appeal Authority.** The specific appeal authority is based on an Airman's total active federal military service. The appeal authority for first-term Airmen and career Airmen who will complete at least 20 years of total active federal military service on their current expiration of term of service appeal selective reenlistment program non-selection is the respective group commander. The appeal authority for second-term and career Airmen who will complete fewer than 16 years of total active federal military service on their current expiration of term of service is the respective wing commander. The appeal authority for second-term and career Airmen who will complete at least 16 years of total active federal military service but fewer than 20 years of total active federal

military service on their current expiration of term of service, is the Secretary of the Air Force. The decision of the appeal authority is final. The appeal authority's decision is documented and the Airman is advised of the outcome. Commanders may also conduct selective reenlistment consideration at any time outside the standardized window.

### **7.12. Noncommissioned Officer Career Status Program**

The Noncommissioned Officer Career Status Program extends the length of reenlistments for RegAF Airmen. All Airmen who have been selected for continued service by their commander/civilian director (to include those with approved waivers), and who have at least 12 years total active federal military service on date of discharge (day prior to reenlistment) will be reenlisted for an unspecified period. These Airmen will serve up to their High Year of Tenure based on current grade, or if promoted, projected grade unless sooner separated by USAF policy or law under the NCO Career Status Program. Airmen who serve 20 or more years of total active federal military service may retire, if otherwise eligible, no later than the first day of the month following High Year of Tenure.

This program streamlines the reenlistment and extension process and alleviates unnecessary administrative actions for Airmen, supervisor chains, and military personnel flights.

### **7.13. Career Job Reservation Program**

Because of various career force size and composition restrictions, there are times when the USAF must place a limit on the number of authorized first-term Airmen who may reenlist. The Career Job Reservation (CJR) Program exists to assist in the management of first-term Airmen reenlistments by Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) to prevent surpluses and shortages. All eligible first-term Airmen must have an approved CJR to reenlist. Airmen are automatically placed on the career job applicant list on the first duty day of the month during which they complete 35 months on their current enlistment (59 months for six-year enlistees), but no later than the last duty day of the month during which they complete 43 months on their current enlistment (67 months for six-year enlistees). To keep their approved CJR, Airmen must reenlist on or before the CJR expiration date. CJRs may be constrained (limited) quotas or unconstrained (unlimited) quotas.

**Constrained:** First-term Airmen in constrained AFSCs have limited quotas, when available and compete for a CJR. Commanders or civilian directors recommend award of CJRs to Airmen in constrained AFSCs where an allocation has been awarded. Approval of CJRs are made at the group commander level or equivalent. Commanders or civilian directors may recommend First Term Airmen for award of a CJR anytime during the Airman's CJR window. Airmen outside their CJR window are not eligible for award of a CJR. Airmen's EPRs must reflect that the member has met the minimum expectation and not have an unfavorable information file, lost time, or record of active nonjudicial punishment on their current enlistment in order to be considered for a CJR. The Airman's job performance, demonstrated leadership, how the Airmen exemplifies USAF core values, and ability to succeed in the AFSC should also be considered. Upon Airmen entering their CJR window, commanders or civilian directors are encouraged to advise Airmen on their potential for a CJR and when appropriate, encourage retraining.

When constrained AFSCs are implemented, Air Force Personnel Center issues CJR quotas on a fiscal year basis and selection authorities may consider Airmen by board, nomination packages, etc. Airmen who are on the CJR waiting list and whose AFSC is removed from the constrained list

will receive a CJR. Airmen who are removed from the waiting list prior to the AFSC being removed, will not receive supplemental consideration. If eligible, Airmen qualify for award of a CJR when an allocation exists and the Airman is in their CJR eligibility window. When the group commander (or equivalent) approves an Airman for award of a CJR, Air Force Personnel Center will verify an allocation exists and will reduce the number of remaining CJRs accordingly. **NOTE:** Approved CJRs do not expire until the Airman's date of separation.

**Unconstrained:** Airmen in unconstrained AFSCs do not compete for a CJR. Airmen are automatically awarded the CJR on the first duty day of the month during which they complete 35 months on their current enlistment (59 months for six-year enlistees), but no later than the last duty day of the month during which they complete 43 months on their current enlistment (67 months for six-year enlistees), provided they have been selected for continued service by their commander/civilian director under the selective reenlistment program.

#### **7.14. Enlistment Extensions**

Airmen serving on an active enlistment may request an enlistment extension if he or she has a service-directed retainability reason and the extension is in the best interest of the USAF. Extensions are granted in whole-month increments. For example, if the individual needs 15½ months of retainability for an assignment, the individual must request a full 16-month extension. Voluntary extensions for all Airmen are limited to a maximum of 48 months per enlistment. In the event that USAF specialties are constrained, the Air Staff may limit first-term Airmen extensions to a specified period. Certain situations (such as citizenship pending) may warrant exceptions to policy. Airmen may be eligible to request an extension of enlistment to establish a date of separation at high year of tenure to separate or retire. Normally, Airmen must be within two years of their high year of tenure before they can extend. **Note:** Once approved, an extension has the legal effect of the enlistment agreement by extending the Airman's period of obligated service. Enlistment extensions can only be canceled when the reason for the extension no longer exists, as long as the Airman has not already entered into the extension.

#### **7.15. Selective Retention Bonus**

The Selective Retention Bonus (SRB) Program is a monetary incentive paid to Airmen serving in certain selected critical military skills who reenlist for additional obligated service. The bonus is intended to encourage the reenlistment of sufficient numbers of qualified enlisted personnel in military skills with either demonstrated retention shortfalls or high training costs. Airmen in SRB skills who reenlist or extend their enlistment in the active for at least three years are eligible for an SRB provided they meet all criteria listed in AFI 36-2606, *Reenlistment and Extension of Enlistment in the United States Air Force*, 27 January 2021. Airmen can expect to serve in the SRB specialty for the entire enlistment for which the bonus was paid.

SRB designations are established by zones, which are determined by the total active federal military service of Airmen at the time of reenlistment or the date they enter the extension. Eligible Airmen may receive an SRB in each zone (A, B, C or E), but only one SRB per zone.

Zone A applies to Airmen reenlisting between 17 months and 6 years.

Zone B applies to Airmen reenlisting between 6 and 10 years.

Zone C applies to Airmen reenlisting between 10 and 14 years.

Zone E applies to Airmen reenlisting between 18 and 20 years.

SRBs are calculated using one month's base pay, multiplied by the number of years reenlisting or extending, multiplied by the SRB multiple as listed on the authorized SRB listing. The maximum SRB per zone is \$100,000. **Note:** The Airman's base pay on the date of discharge is used to calculate the SRB. Therefore, if an Airman was promoted to Staff Sergeant on 1 May and reenlisted on 1 May, the SRB would be calculated on the base pay of the day prior to the reenlistment as Senior Airman.

### **7.16. USAF Retraining Program**

Retraining is a force management tool used primarily to balance career fields (officer and enlisted) across all AFSCs, and to ensure sustainability of career fields. Retraining also provides a means to return disqualified Airmen to a productive status. Although Airmen maybe selected for involuntary retraining based on USAF needs, the retraining program allows a limited number of Airmen the opportunity to pursue other career paths in the USAF. The Online Retraining Advisory is a living document found on myPers, maintained by the Air Force Personnel Center as a key tool used to advise members of retraining opportunities. For additional information on retraining eligibility and application procedures, refer to: AFMAN 36-2100.

**First-Term Airmen Retraining Program.** First-term Airmen assigned to the Continental United States may apply not earlier than the first duty day of the month during which they complete 35 months of their current enlistment (59 months for six-year enlistees), but not later than the last duty day of the 43rd month of their current enlistment (67 months for six-year enlistees).

First-term Airmen assigned outside the Continental United States may apply for retraining nine to 15 months prior to the date they are eligible to return from overseas if serving within their normal first-term window (35th month for four-year enlistees or 59th month for six-year enlistees). Airmen with an indefinite return from overseas date must complete the original tour length before departing for retraining.

On the last duty day of each month, the Air Force Personnel Center selects the most eligible Airmen for retraining based on quality indicators of most recent performance report rating, current grade, projected grade, previous two performance report ratings, date of rank, total active federal military service date, aptitude qualification examination score (electrical, mechanical, administrative, general), Air Force Enlisted Classification Directory, Part II, and requested AFSC preferences.

**Noncommissioned Officer Retraining Program.** The NCO retraining program is designed to retrain second-term and career Airmen from overage USAF specialties into shortage specialties to optimize the enlisted force and to best meet current and future mission needs. Airmen possessing a secondary or additional AFSC in a shortage skill may be returned to the shortage skill if in the best interest of the USAF.

**Phases I and II.** The NCO retraining program consists of two phases. The objective of Phase I is to obtain volunteer applicants from identified overage AFSCs to fill requirements in shortage specialty codes. All Airmen with retraining 'out' objectives may apply for any available specialty codes with retraining 'in' objectives for which they qualify. During Phase I, if sufficient applications are not received and retraining objectives for the fiscal year are not met, implementation of Phase II is necessary. In Phase II, Airmen will be selected for mandatory retraining based on USAF needs to balance the force. The master vulnerability list is used to select Airmen for mandatory retraining.

### **7.17. Officer Crossflow and Reclassification Programs**

Tools and procedures are available to address career field manning imbalances and shape the officer force within authorized, funded end-strength. The Nonrated Line Crossflow Program addresses manning shortages and overages by conducting a crossflow panel when needed to select the best qualified officers to fill the required vacancies. The Missileer Crossflow Program is a process ensuring the Nuclear and Missile Operations (13N) Air Force specialty remains balanced for sustainment by crossflowing excess officers at the four-year point back to donor career fields. Out-of-cycle crossflow requests, as well as initial skills training reclassification, are additional programs to ensure

## Chapter 8 ENLISTED PROMOTIONS

### *Section 8A—Promotion Systems and Programs*

#### **8.1. Enlisted Promotion Systems**

The enlisted promotion system supports DoD Directive 1304.20, *Enlisted Personnel Management System (EPMS)*, 28 July 2005, by providing visible, relatively stable career progression opportunities; attracting, retaining, and motivating the kinds and numbers of people the military needs; and ensuring a reasonably uniform application of the principle of equal pay for equal work among the services. While many significant changes have taken place with the enlisted promotion systems in recent years, there are some standardized, consistent aspects that Airmen recognize and rely on for fair and accurate consideration for promotion. AFI 36-2502, *Enlisted Airman Promotion and Demotion Programs*, 16 April 2021, provides detailed information regarding enlisted promotion systems. **Note:** This chapter applies to RegAF enlisted promotions.

#### **8.2. Promotion Quotas**

The Department of Defense limits the number of Airmen the RegAF may have in the top five enlisted grades. Promotion quotas for Staff Sergeant through Chief Master Sergeant are tied to fiscal year-end strength and are affected by funding limits, regulatory limits, and the number of projected vacancies in specific grades. Public law, as outlined in Title 10, U.S.C., *Armed Forces*, Chapter 36, Promotion, Separation, and Involuntary Retirement of Officers on the Active Duty List, limits the number of Airmen who may serve in the RegAF in the top two enlisted grades. The authorized average of enlisted members on RegAF status (other than for training) in pay grades E-8 and E-9 in a fiscal year may not be more than 2.5 percent and 1.25 percent, respectively.

#### **8.3. Enlisted Promotion Opportunities**

While the USAF promotion system is designed to promote eligible Airmen recommended by their commander on a noncompetitive basis, there are additional opportunities and factors for Airmen to consider regarding promotions.

**Airman Below-the-Zone Promotion Program.** Under the Airman Below-the-Zone Program, Airmen in the grade of Airman First Class may compete for early advancement to Senior Airman if they meet the minimum eligibility criteria. If promoted to Senior Airman below-the-zone, the promotion effective date is six months before their fully qualified date. Airmen are considered for below-the-zone promotion in the month (December, March, June, or September) before the quarter (January - March, April - June, July - September, or October - December) that they are eligible.

**Stripes for Exceptional Performers Program.** The Stripes for Exceptional Performers (STEP) Program is designed to meet those unique circumstances that, in a commander's judgment, clearly warrant promotion. The STEP Program is intended to promote Airmen for compelling, although perhaps not quantifiable, reasons. Isolated acts or specific achievements should not be the sole basis for promotion under this program.

Under the STEP Program, commanders at various organizational levels may promote a limited number of exemplary performing Airmen with exceptional potential to the grades of Staff Sergeant through Technical Sergeant. An individual may not receive more than one promotion under any combination of promotion programs within a 12-month period. One exception is that Senior

Airmen must serve six months of time in grade before being promoted to Staff Sergeant. Commanders must ensure personnel who are promoted meet eligibility requirements.

**Weighted Airman Promotion System.** NCOs and SNCOs compete for promotion and test under the Weighted Airman Promotion System (WAPS) in the control Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) held on the promotion eligibility cutoff date. Contributing factors are “weighted” or assigned points based on the importance relative to promotion. The PFE contains a wide range of USAF knowledge, while the SKT covers AFSC broad technical knowledge. The USAF makes promotion selections under the WAPS within each AFSC, not across all AFSCs. This means those who are eligible will compete for promotion with those individuals currently working in their AFSC. Selectees are individuals with the highest scores in each AFSC, within the quota limitations. If more than one individual has the same total score at the cutoff point, the USAF promotes everyone with that score.

**Senior Noncommissioned Officer Promotions.** Consideration for promotion to the grades of Master Sergeant, Senior Master Sergeant, and Chief Master Sergeant is a two-phased process. Phase I consists of the WAPS. Phase II consists of the central evaluation board held at Air Force Personnel Center. Promotion selection is determined by a combination of total points from Phase I and Phase II in each AFSC within the quota limitations. If more than one individual has the same total score at the cutoff point, the USAF promotes everyone with that score.

**In-System Supplemental Promotion Process.** The in-system supplemental action is typically processed on a monthly basis. Eligible Staff Sergeants through Senior Master Sergeants whose weighable data changes in their promotion file compete monthly for promotion consideration. In-system supplemental consideration also applies to Airmen who test after initial selects have been made, such as deployed Airmen, or anyone who was unable to test during their normal testing window.

**Senior Noncommissioned Officer Supplemental Promotion Process.** The SNCO supplemental board is for those members promotion-eligible to Master Sergeant, Senior Master Sergeant, or Chief Master Sergeant. Supplemental evaluation boards are conducted on a semiannual basis. SNCOs may request to meet the supplemental board if they believe they have a valid request. With the exception of a missing static closeout date evaluation, there are no automatic approvals for supplemental board consideration when a record did not meet a previous board for which they were eligible. Supplemental promotion consideration may not be granted if an error or omission appeared on the data verification record or in the SNCO selection record located in the personnel records display application, and the individual did not take the necessary steps to correct the error prior to promotion selection or prior to the evaluation board. Fully documented supplemental consideration requests, to include proof of corrective or follow-up actions taken by the individual to correct the error, are submitted to the military personnel section in writing with the recommendation of the individual’s unit commander. The military personnel section forwards the request to Air Force Personnel Center for final approval.

## *Section 8B—Promotion Cycles*

### **8.4. Promotion Cycles and Eligibility**

The USAF establishes promotion cycles to ensure timely periodic promotions and to permit accurate forecasting of vacancies. Promotion cycles also balance the promotion administrative

workload and provide promotion eligibility cutoff dates (PECD). Factors for promotion eligibility may include: proper skill level, sufficient time in grade, sufficient time in service, commander recommendation, completion of enlisted professional military education (PME), completion of a college degree, cumulative years of enlisted service, and high year of tenure. **Note:** Air Force Reserve promotions are based on a combination of position vacancy, time-in-grade, time-in-service, fitness, and completion of appropriate professional military education.

## **8.5. Basic Promotion Guidelines**

The basic promotion guidelines for enlisted members are provided here.

**Promotion to Airman.** Airman Basic may be promotion eligible to Airman at six months of time in grade.

**Promotion to Airman First Class.** Airman may be promotion eligible to Airman First Class at 10 months of time in grade. Airmen initially enlisting for a period of six years are promoted from Airman Basic to Airman First Class upon completion of either technical training or 20 weeks of technical training after graduation from basic military training (whichever occurs first). The date of rank for Airman First Class is then adjusted to the signatory date on the basic military training certificate, without back pay and allowances.

**Promotion to Senior Airman.** Airmen may be promotion eligible to Senior Airman upon completion of 36 months of time in service and 20 months of time in grade or 28 months of time in grade (whichever occurs first). Required skill level in primary Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) is 3-level. Senior Airman below-the-zone is a one-time promotion consideration to advance to Senior Airman six months earlier than basic promotion timelines to Senior Airman.

**Promotion to Staff Sergeant.** Senior Airmen may be promotion eligible to Staff Sergeant upon completion of three years of time in service and six months of time in grade. The PECD for promotion to Staff Sergeant is 31 March. The test cycle is May – June. Required skill level in primary AFSC is 5-level.

**Promotion to Technical Sergeant.** Staff Sergeants may be promotion eligible to Technical Sergeant upon completion of five years of time in service and 23 months of time in grade. The PECD for promotion to Technical Sergeant is 31 January. The test cycle is February – March. Required skill level in primary AFSC is 7-level.

**Promotion to Master Sergeant.** Technical Sergeants may be promotion eligible to Master Sergeant upon completion of eight years of time in service and 24 months of time in grade. The PECD for promotion to Master Sergeant is 30 November. The test cycle is February – March. Required skill level in primary AFSC is 7-level.

**Promotion to Senior Master Sergeant.** Master Sergeants may be promotion eligible to Senior Master Sergeant upon completion of 11 years of time in service and 20 months of time in grade. The PECD for promotion to Senior Master Sergeant is 30 September. The test cycle is December. Required skill level in primary AFSC is 7-level.

**Promotion to Chief Master Sergeant.** Senior Master Sergeants may be promotion eligible to Chief Master Sergeant upon completion of 14 years of time in service and 21 months of time in grade. The PECD for promotion to Chief Master Sergeant is 31 July. The test cycle is September. Required skill level in primary AFSC is 9-level.

## **8.6. Accepting Promotion**

Selects to the grade of Master Sergeant and Senior Master Sergeant with more than 18 years Total Active Federal Military Service (TAFMS) by effective date of promotion will sign an AF Form 63, *Active Duty Service Commitment (ADSC) Acknowledgement Statement*, or a Statement of Understanding within 10 duty days after selections are confirmed. In addition, all Chief Master Sergeant-selects, regardless of TAFMS, will sign an AF Form 63 or a Statement of Understanding within 10 duty days after selections are confirmed. The form will acknowledge that Master Sergeant-selects and Senior Master Sergeant-selects must obtain two years of service retainability and incur a two-year active duty service commitment (ADSC) from the effective date of promotion to qualify for non-disability retirement. Chief Master Sergeant-selects must acknowledge and obtain three years of service retainability and incur a three-year ADSC from the effective date of promotion to qualify for non-disability retirement. Failure to withdraw an existing retirement application (approved or pending) within 10 duty days from presentation of the AF Form 63 or the Statement of Understanding will result in removal from the selection list.

## **8.7. Promotion Sequence Numbers**

The Air Force Personnel Center assigns promotion sequence numbers to Airmen selected for promotion to Staff Sergeant through Chief Master Sergeant based on date of rank, TAFMS, and date of birth. Supplemental selectees are assigned promotion sequence numbers of .9 (increment previously announced) or .5 (unannounced future increment).

## **8.8. Declining Promotion**

Airmen may decline a promotion in writing by submitting a letter to the military personnel flight (MPF). MPF will ensure Military Personnel Data System (MilPDS) is updated and ensure the declination is entered in the member's electronic records. This may be accomplished any time prior to the promotion effective date.

## **8.9. Promotion Ineligibility**

There are many reasons why an Airman may be considered ineligible for promotion, such as approved retirement, declination for extension or reenlistment, court-martial conviction, control roster action, no commander recommendation, failure to appear for scheduled testing without a valid reason, and absent without leave. When individuals are ineligible for promotion, they cannot test, cannot be considered if already tested, and the projected promotion, if already selected, will be canceled.

### ***Section 8C—Preparation and Responsibilities***

## **8.10. Individual Responsibilities**

Preparing for promotion testing is an individual responsibility. All promotion eligible individuals must know their eligibility status, maintain specialty and military qualifications, initiate a self-study plan, obtain all applicable study references as outlined in the Enlisted Promotions References and Requirements Catalog (EPRRC), ensure their selection folder is accurate if it will be reviewed by the central evaluation board, and be prepared to test on the beginning of the testing window. The importance of individual responsibility cannot be overemphasized. Members who will be unavailable during the entire testing cycle must be prepared to test prior to their departure, even if

that is before the first day of the testing cycle. Airmen may opt to test early provided the correct test booklets are available.

### **8.11. Enlisted Promotion Test Compromise**

Airmen must use a self-initiated program of individual study and effort under the Weighted Airman Promotion System (WAPS). Group study (two or more people) for the purposes of enlisted promotion testing is strictly prohibited. This prohibition protects the integrity of the promotion testing program by ensuring promotion test scores are a reflection of each member's individual knowledge. Enlisted personnel who violate these prohibitions are subject to prosecution under Article 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice for violating a lawful general regulation. Conviction can result in a dishonorable discharge, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, and confinement for up to two years. Information concerning enlisted promotion test compromise is contained in AFMAN 36-2664. **Note:** Training designed to improve general military knowledge does not constitute group study as long as the intent of the training is not to study for promotion tests. Likewise, training to improve general study habits or test-taking skills is permissible if the training does not focus on preparing for promotion tests.

**Restrictions on Group Study.** Restrictions on group study and additional specific test compromise situations regarding promotion tests are briefly covered here.

- Discussing promotion test content with anyone other than the test control officer or test examiner is prohibited. Written inquiries or complaints about a test are handled by the test control officer.
- Sharing pretests or lists of test questions recalled from a current or previous promotion test; personal study materials; underlined or highlighted study reference material; and commercial study guides with other individuals is prohibited.
- Placing commercial study guide software on government computers is prohibited. While Airmen may use commercial study materials in preparation for promotion testing, the USAF does not recommend, endorse, or support commercial study guides.
- Creating, storing, or transferring personal study notes on government computers is prohibited. Government computers may only be used to view electronic versions of official study references.

### **8.12. Distribution of Enlisted Promotion Test Study References**

The Barnes Center for Enlisted Education, Air Force Career Development Academy is responsible for providing promotion-eligible members access to WAPS Career Development Courses. They are available on-line at: <http://cdc.aetc.af.mil/>. The site is updated to coincide with release of the EPRRC. Study materials, such as instructions, manuals, or technical orders, are made available online at: <http://www.e-publishing.af.mil> or other approved repositories. Individuals may ask unit WAPS monitors to order study reference material listed in the catalog that is not locally available. According to AFMAN 36-2664, promotion eligible Airmen must have access to reference materials at least 60 days before the scheduled test date. If not, the Airman may request a delay in testing.

### **8.13. Promotion Eligibility Cutoff Date**

The promotion eligibility cutoff date (PECD) is used to determine Airman promotion eligibility as well as the cutoff date that will determine when contents of the selection folder and information on promotion evaluation briefs must be updated and complete. The PECD is the date that

promotion criteria are considered for promotion, such as the data provided on the Data Verification Brief, that is used for promotion board evaluation consideration. For SNCOs, this information is then used to post the SNCO evaluation brief filed in the SNCO selection folder.

**Promotion Criteria.** As the USAF continues to offer opportunities for career broadening and special duty assignments, it is important to mention that individuals with a reporting identifier or special duty identifier, designated as their control Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) on the PECD, will compete within that reporting identifier or special duty identifier. Otherwise, Master Sergeants being considered for promotion to Senior Master Sergeant will compete for promotion in the superintendent level of the control AFSC they held as of the PECD. Likewise, Senior Master Sergeants being considered for promotion to Chief Master Sergeant will compete for promotion in the chief enlisted manager code of the control AFSC they held as of the PECD.

#### **8.14. Data Verification Record**

The Data Verification Record (DVR) is the document utilized for promotion consideration and is the most important tool to review to ensure information on a promotion record is complete. All eligible Airmen must review their DVR in the Automated Records Management System/Personnel Records Display Application (ARMS/PRDA). If an error or omission is noted, the Airman must immediately contact his or her military personnel flight for assistance. The military personnel flight will update the Military Personnel Data System with the correct data and update the DVR on virtual military personnel flight. Airmen should review the updated record to verify changes have been completed accurately. Data reflected on the DVR should not be confused with the Data Verification Brief or a Single Unit Retrieval Format, commonly referred to as SURF.

##### **Data Verification Record Review Steps:**

- Access the USAF Portal.
- Access PRDA.
- Under My Sections, select PRDA.
- The Selection Folder category within PRDA is the “As Is” record.
- The Board category within PRDA is the “As Met” record.

#### ***Section 8D—Promotion Testing***

##### **8.15. Promotion Test Development**

The Air Education and Training, Studies and Analysis Squadron, Airman Advancement Section, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas, produces all USAF enlisted promotion tests, which are written by Airmen for Airmen. Teams of SNCOs travel to work in-house with test development specialists and apply their knowledge and expertise to develop current, relevant, and accurate test questions for enlisted promotion testing. At the beginning of a test development project, the most current tests are administered to the test development teams. This gives test writers the point of view of the test takers and helps them evaluate how the test content relates to performance in their specialties. Teams will also carefully check the references of each question for currency and accuracy. Only after this is accomplished do the teams begin developing new test questions. During test development, test development specialists provide psychometric and developmental expertise required to ensure the tests are credible, valid, and fair to all examinees.

**Promotion Fitness Examination.** The Promotion Fitness Examinations (PFE) measure military and supervisory knowledge required of Staff Sergeants, Technical Sergeants, and Master Sergeants. For the PFE, test development specialists select Chief Master Sergeants based on USAF demographics, extensive experience, and diverse major command representation to develop and validate questions.

**Specialty Knowledge Tests.** Specialty Knowledge Tests (SKT) measure important job knowledge required in a particular specialty. For SKTs, test development specialists work closely with USAF career field managers to stay abreast of changes affecting career fields which may impact promotion test development. SNCOs, based on their specialties and job experiences, are selected to develop and validate SKT questions. Resources used to develop SKTs include Career Field Education and Training Plans, occupational analysis data, and experiences to ensure test content is related to important tasks performed in the specialty.

### **8.16. Enlisted Promotions References and Requirements Catalog**

Published annually on 1 October, the Enlisted Promotions References and Requirements Catalog (EPRRC), lists all enlisted promotion tests authorized for administration and the study references associated with these tests. Every question on a promotion test comes from one of the publications listed in the EPRRC, and only publications used to support questions on a given promotion test are listed. The study references for the PFE are the grade-specific Enlisted Promotion Study Guides derived from DAFH 1. The study references for SKTs are often a combination of Career Development Courses and technical references. Career Development Courses used as study references may be different from those issued for upgrade training. The catalog also contains administrative and special instructions for test control officers. The EPRRC is available at: <https://www.omsq.af.mil/>.

### **8.17. Promotion Test Administration and Scoring**

Promotion tests are administered to all Airmen competing for promotion to the grades of Staff Sergeant through Chief Master Sergeant. Test administration procedures are standardized to ensure fairness for all members competing for promotion. Strict procedures are used for handling, storing, and transmitting test booklets and answer sheets at all times. All promotion tests are electronically scored at Air Force Personnel Center following thorough quality control steps to ensure accurate test results are recorded for each member. The test scanning and scoring process contains many safeguards to verify accuracy.

**Test Scores.** A minimum score of 40 points is required on a PFE. A minimum score of 40 points is required on a SKT. A combined score of 90 points is required. Airmen who score the minimum 40 points on either exam (when taking both examinations) must score a minimum 50 on the other one to meet the minimum combined score of 90. For those testing PFE only, a minimum score of 45 is required (combined score of 90 when doubled).

### **8.18. Promotion Points**

Calculating points for promotion can be a somewhat complex, but not complicated process. The complete charts, to include exceptions and notes for calculating points and factors for promotion, are included in AFI 36-2502.

## Chapter 10 PERSONNEL PROGRAMS AND BENEFITS

### *Section 10A—Benefits and Services*

#### **10.1. Programs, Benefits, and Services**

The USAF requires military members to be prepared to serve and support the mission at all times. To do this, there are a wide range of benefits and services to ensure military members and families are cared for, whether through pay and entitlements processes, family support programs, or secured military records. Throughout our careers, we as Airmen need to understand the benefits and services applicable to ourselves, as well as to subordinates, peers, and leaders in our chain of command. We need to take responsibility for ourselves and serve as good wingmen for others.

#### **10.2. Information Accessibility**

In 2000, the USAF launched the Air Force Portal to simplify the way Airmen access information and improve the way we do business. The portal provides a single point of entry to web-based information, self-service applications, collaboration and networking tools, and combat support systems, many without requiring a separate user identification and password. Access to the portal is available from any internet-connected computer with a valid Department of Defense public key infrastructure certificate, such as a common access card. Through the portal, users have access to myPay, Air Force Virtual Education Center, Air Force Fitness Management System, Virtual Military Personnel Flight, LeaveWeb, Assignment Management System, and the Air Force E-Publishing Website. On the Library and Resources link, users can access online periodicals, research information, and find valuable education and training materials.

#### **10.3. Airman and Family Readiness Center**

Airman and Family Readiness Center (A&FRC) support services are designed to assist commanders in assessing and supporting the welfare of the military and building a strong sense of community and support within the USAF. The A&FRC supports mission readiness by helping Airmen and their families adapt to the challenges and demands of expeditionary operations and the military lifestyle. A&FRCs coordinate with unit leadership to assess unit strengths, resources, and concerns to help identify issues and trends that affect community readiness and personal preparedness by working with a wide range of civilian and military agencies. A&FRCs provide support for work/life issues and facilitate community readiness, resilience, and personal preparedness. Services offered by the A&FRC are briefly described here.

**Personal and Work Life Program.** The Personal and Work Life Program promotes community wellness and assists with the readiness and resiliency of the force. Services include intervention, prevention/enrichment consultation, and skill building education designed to enhance work-life competencies for individuals, couples, and families. Focus is on promotion, enrichment, and improvement of the balance between work and home to increase quality of life and resilience.

**Key Spouse Program.** The Key Spouse Program is an official USAF program for and owned by commanders designed to enhance mission readiness and resilience and establish a sense of community and partnerships with the A&FRC, unit leadership, families, volunteer key spouses, and other service agencies.

**Transition Assistance Program.** The Transition Assistance Program (TAP) is congressionally mandated and executed by the A&FRC. TAP has four components members are required to complete prior to separation or retirement: pre-separation counseling, transition GPS workshop, Veterans Affairs benefits briefings I and II, and capstone. TAP provides service members with knowledge and skills to make informed decisions, be competitive in a global workforce, and be positive contributors to their community as they transition and reintegrate into civilian life.

**Volunteer Excellence.** The Volunteer Excellence Program is designed to assist installation commanders through collaboration with other base volunteer agencies to recruit, train, place, and recognize volunteer service. The Air Force Volunteer Excellence Award is a commander's program for recognizing volunteer contributions in the local civilian community or military community.

**Military Family Life Counselors.** The Department of Defense contracted Military Family Life Counselor Program provides Airmen and their dependents with confidential assistance for non-medical, short-term, solution focused counseling and briefings that augment counseling services provided by other agencies.

**Air Force Aid Society Assistance.** The Air Force Aid Society serves as the official charity of the USAF as a private, nonprofit organization that promotes the USAF mission by helping to relieve financial distress of USAF members and their families as a step toward a lasting solution to financial problems, enabling educational goals, and seeking opportunities to improve quality of life.

**Exceptional Family Member Program.** The Exceptional Family Member Program provides coordination of family support services on and off the installation to exceptional family members who have physical, developmental, emotional, or intellectual impairments or disabilities. Three components of support are medical, assignments, and family.

**Air Force Families Forever.** Air Force Families Forever provides immediate and long-term bereavement care, service, and support to identified family members of Airmen who die while serving on RegAF status.

**Voting Assistance Program.** The Voting Assistance Program ensures service members and their families understand their right to vote via absentee ballot. A&FRC staff operate the Installation Voter Assistance Office and serve as Voting Assistance Officers, responsible for providing accurate nonpartisan voting information and assistance. More information about the Voting Assistance Program can be found in DAFI 36-3107, *Voting Assistance Program*, 1 July 2021.

**Deployment Briefings.** Personnel and family readiness pre-deployment briefings are mandatory for individuals with a firm deployment tasking of 30 or more days. The briefings educate Airmen and their families on all phases of deployment and critical aspects of reunion and reintegration. Spouses are welcome and encouraged to attend. The briefings include information on preparing for deployment; sustainment, support, and services for family members including extended family; and mandatory reintegration briefings and continuing services that help Airmen prepare for reuniting with their families, friends, and communities, and for handling combat stressors.

**Employment Assistance.** Employment assistance supports Airmen and their families in achieving short- and long-term employment, referral for education and training, and development of career goals through employment skills counseling and skills development workshops to prepare customers for careers in the private and public sectors. They also offer resources for self-

employment, information on small business and entrepreneurial opportunities, and links to alternatives to paid employment, such as volunteerism and education.

**Personal Financial Readiness Services.** Personal financial readiness is an A&FRC program that offers information, education, and personal financial counseling to help individuals and families maintain financial stability and reach their financial goals. The program provides education to all personnel upon arrival at their first duty station. The program includes, at a minimum, facts about the personal financial management program, checkbook maintenance, budgeting, credit buying, state or country liability laws, and local fraudulent business practices. Personal financial readiness services are free.

**Military Child Education.** Civilian and military school liaison officers partner to provide information, referrals, resources, and advocacy for the educational needs of military-connected students by assisting Airmen and families regarding local school districts and other educational options, as well as educating school personnel on the unique issues impacting military children.

**Relocation Assistance.** Relocation assistance provides pre-departure and post-arrival services, allowing members to make informed decisions and preparations for their moves. Referrals will include, but are not limited to: temporary housing services, government or private home finding services, child care, medically-related services, spouse employment assistance, cultural and community orientation, schooling, legal assistance, personal property shipment, and information on educational and volunteer opportunities.

**Crisis Support.** Crisis support provides immediate, short-term information and referral to appropriate agencies or services to assist individuals and families facing crisis situations.

**Casualty Assistance.** Casualty assistance representatives and survivor benefit plan counselors provide counseling on benefits offered by a wide variety of programs including Department of Veterans Affairs, Social Security Administration, Internal Revenue Service, Department of Health and Human Services, as well as state and local agencies.

When a casualty occurs, the USAF will promptly notify the Primary Next of Kin (PNOK) in a dignified, professional, and understanding manner. Additionally, in cases where the military member is declared deceased, Duty Status Whereabouts Unknown (DUSTWUN), or missing, the USAF appoints a Casualty Assistance Representative (CAR) to advise and assist the PNOK. The CAR assists to meet very important timelines, such as the NOK notifications within 12 hours of a casualty. Therefore, when an Airman's Record of Emergency Data (RED) is current and has up-to-date information, beneficiaries receive timely notifications. As a result, the RED and the Service members' Online Election System (SOES) mentioned below are critically important for an Airman to understand, review, verify, and certify that they are up-to-date at least once a year.

**Emergency Data (DD Form 93).** Record of emergency data (RED) maintained initially on the DD Form 93 and ultimately input into the virtual record of emergency data (vRED) via vMPF enables Airmen to list those they wish to be notified should they become ill, injured, wounded, missing or deceased. Additionally, Airmen determine beneficiaries of Death Gratuity, Arrears of Pay, and designate the Person Authorized to Direct Disposition (PADD) of their remains. To update your vRED, log into vMPF: Select 'Self-Service Actions', select 'Personal Data' and then select 'Record of Emergency Data.' Service members are responsible for entering information, reviewing/submitting annually, or updating their vRED when there are life-changing events such

as marriage, divorce, births, before deployments, TDYs more than 30 days, and PCS. For more information go to myPers: [https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/48325](https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/48325)

**Service members' Online Election System (SOES).** The Service members' Group Life Insurance Online Enrollment System for the uniformed services (SOES), is an enterprise solution developed by the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Veteran Benefits Administration. SOES is a self- service based data system that centralizes Service members' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) and Family Service members' Group Life Insurance (FSGLI) information into one authoritative system capable of providing consistent information to authorized users. SGLI provides up to \$400,000 in life insurance coverage; FSGLI provides up to \$100,000 in coverage for the spouse and \$10,000 for dependent children. Service members can use the system to change the amount of SGLI or FSGLI coverage. You can view, save, print or email a SGLI coverage certificate. SOES Enables Airmen to make automated SGLI and FSGLI coverage/beneficiary elections 24/7/365. **NOTE:** Airmen married to other Airmen (military-to-military) who have not updated DEERS with their spouse's information will not be able to properly certify their SOES Record. Airmen meeting this criteria must go to the Customer Service Element or the nearest RAPIDS station to add their spouse as a dependent. Please note hard copy (SGLV Form 8286, Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance Election and Certificate) SGLI elections remain valid until superseded by a SOES election. SOES is available through DMDC's milConnect web application. After signing in, click on "SOES" under the "Benefits" tab. For more information go to myPers: [https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/34552/](https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/34552/)

**Emergency Assistance.** Emergency assistance provides immediate, short- and long-term assistance, promoting recovery and return to a stable environment and mission readiness status for Department of Defense personnel and their families following an all-hazards incident. When directed by wing leadership, assistance and support will be provided through the Emergency Family Assistance Center, which is the central point for delivery of services, coordination of family assistance services, and continuous family assistance information.

**Legal Services.** Legal offices provide legal assistance in connection with personal civil legal matters to support and sustain command effectiveness and readiness. The ability to offer legal assistance and legal services to the eligible categories of personnel is contingent upon the availability of legal staff resources and regulations as may be prescribed by the Secretary of the Air Force. Legal services are not performed by or within A&FRCs, this is performed by OSJA office on the installation.

#### **10.4. Warrior Wellness**

**Air Force Wounded Warrior Program.** The Air Force Wounded Warrior (AFW2) Program is a congressionally-mandated, federally funded program that provides personalized care, services, and advocacy to seriously or very seriously wounded, ill, or injured Total Force Airmen, their caregivers, and family members. AFW2 also provides the following support activities: Emergency Family Member Travel, Family Liaison Officer Program, Caregiver Support Program, Adaptive Sports & Resiliency Programs, Special Compensation for Assistance with Activities of Daily Living, Recovering Airman Mentorship Program, Empowerment through Transition, and the Ambassador Program. Anyone may refer an Airman to the AFW2 Program. The AFW2 website is: <http://www.woundedwarrior.af.mil/>, the e-mail address is: [wounded.warrior@us.af.mil](mailto:wounded.warrior@us.af.mil), and the toll-free number is: 1-800-581-9437.

**Invisible Wounds Initiative.** The Invisible Wound Initiative (IWI) is designed to provide centralized oversight, guidance, and advocacy to ensure wounded, ill, and injured service members and their families successfully reintegrate back to duty or into veteran status with dignity and respect. Developed as a quality of life initiative, senior leaders across the USAF assembled a core team to integrate warrior care efforts and improve processes associated with identification, diagnosis, treatment, and reintegration or transition of Airmen. The IWI is designed to build a developmental approach to mental fitness, improving evidence-based care for Total Force Airmen and their families experiencing invisible wounds (post-traumatic stress, traumatic brain injury, or other cognitive, emotional, or behavioral condition associated with a traumatic experience).

### **10.5. Family Care Plans**

According to AFI 1-1, the USAF must have people in the right place at the right time, ready to perform the jobs for which they have been trained. Unless specifically deferred or exempted, all USAF members must be available to perform military duties and assignments, including but not limited to, permanent change of station or assignment, unaccompanied tours, temporary duty, deployments, alerts, recalls, extended hours, or shift work. Single-member parents with custody of children who bear sole or joint responsibility, and military couples with dependents, must have a family care plan. Members who are solely responsible for the care of a spouse, elderly family member, or adult family member with disabilities who is dependent on the member for financial, medical, or logistical support, must also have a family care plan. This includes family members who have limited command of the English language, are unable to drive, or unable to gain access to basic life-sustaining facilities. Suitable arrangements must be planned in advance for a nonmilitary member to assume custody of dependents in the event the military member is unavailable to provide dependent care due to military obligations.

**Family Care Arrangements.** Each USAF 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 USAF member with dependents must take the initiative to use all available military and civilian resources, including other-than-immediate family members, to ensure dependents receive adequate care, support, and supervision that is compatible with the member's military duties. Dependent care plans must cover all possible situations in the short- and long-term, and must be sufficiently detailed and systematic for a smooth, rapid transfer of responsibilities to another individual during the absence of the military sponsor.

**Family Care Certification.** Commanders or first sergeants counsel all Airmen with family members on DoDI1342.19\_AFI36-2908, during inprocessing. During this counseling, commanders or first sergeants must stress the importance of, and confirm the need for, family care certification by completing AF Form 357, *Family Care Certification*. Also, commanders or first sergeants are required to annually brief all military members with family care responsibilities, individually. During this briefing, the commander or first sergeant signs the AF Form 357 each time the plan is reviewed and certified, determining the actual workability of the family care plan. The member signs and dates the AF Form 357 to document that the briefing was completed. In the event of geographical separation, commanders may delegate responsibility, in writing, to detachment and operating location chiefs to counsel members and certify the form. The original signed AF Form 357 will be filed with the member's administrative office and a copy will be sent to the commander for review and filing.

**Family Care Plan Changes.** Members must notify their commander or first sergeant immediately, or within 30 days (60 days for Selected Reserve) if changes in personal status or family circumstances require completion of an AF Form 357. Specific circumstances that may warrant development of a family care plan are provided in DoDI1342.19\_AFI36-2908. **Note:** Failure to produce a family care plan within 60 days of the discussion with the commander, supervisor, or commander's designated representative may result in disciplinary action or administrative separation. Duty deferments, primarily for a four-month period, when applicable, are offered to assist USAF military members in developing family care plans and establishing a pattern of childcare. DoDI1342.19\_AFI36-2908 provides more detailed information regarding duty deferments and to whom they may apply.

## **10.6. Veterans Affairs Benefits**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers a wide range of benefits to the nation's veterans, service members, and their families. VA benefits and services fall into the major categories of: disability benefits, education benefits, vocational rehabilitation and employment, home loans, burial benefits, dependents' and survivors' benefits, life insurance, and health care. Airmen requiring specific information on their VA benefits can retrieve information at: [www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov) or contact the closest VA department for eligibility requirements.

**Disability Compensation.** Disability compensation is a tax free monetary benefit paid to veterans with disabilities that are the result of a disease or injury incurred or aggravated during RegAF military service. Compensation may be paid for post-service disabilities that are considered related or secondary to disabilities occurring in service and for disabilities presumed to be related to circumstances of military service, even though they may arise after service. The degree of disability is designed to compensate for considerable loss of working time from exacerbations or illnesses. The benefit amount is graduated according to the degree of the veteran's disability on a scale from 10 percent to 100 percent (in increments of 10 percent). If you have dependents, an additional allowance may be added if your combined disability is rated 30 percent or greater. Compensation may be offset if you receive military retirement pay, disability severance pay, or separation incentive payments.

**Educational Benefits.** The VA offers a variety of educational benefits to service members and veterans to pursue a higher education during or following their service. Benefit programs include the Post-9/11 GI Bill, Montgomery GI Bill, Reserve Educational Assistance Program, and Survivors' and Dependents' Educational Assistance. The Yellow Ribbon GI Education Enhancement Program is a provision of the Public Law 110-252, *Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008*, 30 June 2008.

**Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment.** Airmen may receive services to help with job training, employment accommodations, resume development, and job seeking skills coaching through the VA Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program. Additional services may be provided to assist veterans in starting their own businesses or independent living services for those who are severely disabled and unable to work in traditional employment.

**Home Loans.** The VA helps service members, veterans, and eligible surviving spouses become homeowners by providing a home loan guaranty benefit and other housing-related programs to help Airmen buy, build, repair, retain, or adapt a home for their own personal occupancy. VA

home loans are provided by private lenders, such as banks and mortgage companies. VA guarantees a portion of the loan, enabling the lender to provide you with more favorable terms.

**Burial Benefits.** Burial benefits available include a gravesite in any of the 134 VA national cemeteries with available space, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a government headstone or marker, a burial flag, and a presidential Memorial Certificate, at no cost to the family. Some veterans may also be eligible for burial allowances. Cremated remains are buried or inurned in national cemeteries in the same manner and with the same honors as casketed remains. Burial benefits available for spouses and dependents buried in a national cemetery include burial with the veteran, perpetual care, and the spouse or dependent's name and date of birth and death will be inscribed on the veteran's headstone, at no cost to the family. Eligible spouses and dependents may be buried, even if they predecease the veteran.

**Dependency and Indemnity Compensation.** Dependency and indemnity compensation is a tax-free monetary benefit generally payable to a surviving spouse, child, or parent of service members, or to survivors of veterans who died from their service-connected disabilities. Dependency and indemnity compensation is an income-based benefit for parents who were financially dependent on a service member or veteran who died from a service-related cause.

**Life Insurance.** The VA provides valuable life insurance benefits to give service members and veterans the peace of mind that comes with knowing their family is protected. The VA life insurance programs were developed to provide financial security for service member families given the extraordinary risks involved in military service.

## **10.7. Veterans Health Administration**

The transition from receiving care within the military healthcare system into the Veterans Health Administration can be challenging and sometimes confusing. Military health care, known as TRICARE, is operated through the Department of Defense and provides medical care for service members and their dependents. The Veterans Health Administration provides health care for enrolled veterans and their eligible family members through a network of hospitals and clinics across the country. TRICARE and the Veterans Health Administration work together, but have different eligibility criteria, health benefits, and costs.

**TRICARE Program.** TRICARE is the worldwide health care program serving uniformed service members and retirees, their family members, survivors, and some former spouses entitled to TRICARE benefits. TRICARE programs are also available to Air Reserve Component members and their families. TRICARE is a force multiplier for the military health system that fills gaps in military health care using networks of civilian health care professionals, facilities, pharmacies, and suppliers. These civilian networks help enable the Department of Defense to provide beneficiaries with access to high-quality health care services even while uniformed medics are serving abroad in contingency operations. TRICARE is available in the United States and overseas. Each TRICARE region has a managed care support contractor that administers and coordinates health care services with network and non-network civilian hospitals and providers. Comprehensive, current information on TRICARE plans and programs can be found at: <https://www.tricare.mil>.

**TRICARE Plans.** Several TRICARE health plan options are available to eligible beneficiaries. The primary health care options offered to eligible beneficiaries are TRICARE Prime and TRICARE Select. Availability of the plans depends on the sponsor's military status and residence. Variations of TRICARE Prime are available, such as TRICARE Prime Remote, TRICARE Prime

Overseas, and TRICARE Prime Remote Overseas. Variations of TRICARE Select are available, such as TRICARE Select and TRICARE Select Overseas. Additional plans available include TRICARE For Life, TRICARE Reserve Select, TRICARE Retired Reserve, TRICARE Young Adult, and US Family Health Plan. The TRICARE plan finder at: <https://www.tricare.mil/Plans/PlanFinder> can be used to determine the best plan available.

**TRICARE Dental Plans.** TRICARE offers three dental plans, each with its own dental contractor. The three plans include the active duty dental program, the TRICARE dental program, and the TRICARE retiree dental program.

## 10.8. Retirement Benefits

Enlisted members are eligible to retire if they have 20 years of Total Active Federal Military Service (TAFMS) and there are no restrictions per AFI 36-3203, *Service Retirements*, 23 February 2021. Enlisted members must apply for retirement, otherwise they will separate on their date of separation. Officers must have 20 years of TAFMS and 10 years of total active federal commissioned service to be eligible to retire.

**Waivers to Retire.** AFI 36-3203, tables 3.1 and 3.2, identify restrictions to retirement. Some restrictions, such as not completing an active duty service commitment, may be waived if the member can provide sufficient justification to show the waiver is in the best interest of the USAF or that the member is experiencing an extreme personal hardship uncommon to other military members. Not all waivers are approved, so applicants should include detailed evidence to support their requests.

**Application Submission.** A retirement application can typically be submitted through the myPers website up to 12 months, but no less than 4 months before the desired retirement date. Airmen applying for retirement under the 7-day or 3-day option program may be able to submit an application more than 12 months in advance. DAFI 36-2110, chapters 5 and 7, outline information on those programs and the applicable exceptions. Before submitting any application, the member must request an eligibility review through the myPers website. The system will provide an automated response of the member's retirement eligibility status and identify any restrictions or waivable conditions at the time of submission. After receiving the eligibility results, the member may submit their application through the on-line submission process in myPers.

**Place of Retirement.** In general, a member retires at the current duty station and may travel to a home of selection anywhere in the United States. If the member is overseas, the member retires at that location when outprocessing facilities exist, and the member and family proceed to the final home of selection. When outprocessing facilities do not exist at the overseas location, the member may request travel to a separation processing base in the United States. If the member elects to retire overseas and live permanently in that country, he or she must comply with command and host government residency rules before the date of retirement.

**Retirement Pay Plans.** The Date Initially Entered Uniformed Service (DIEUS) normally determines which retirement pay plan applies to a member. DIEUS is the date an individual was initially enlisted, inducted, or appointed in a Regular or Reserve Component of a uniformed service as a commissioned officer, warrant officer, or enlisted member. The DIEUS is a fixed date that is not subject to adjustment because of a break in service. Current RegAF personnel will fall under one of the retirement plans described in Table 10.1.

**Table 10.1. Retirement Pay Plans.**

<b>Retirement Plan</b>	<b>Eligible (Note 1)</b>	<b>Pay Formula (Notes 2, 3, and 4)</b>	<b>Cost of Living</b>
Final Basic Pay	Entered Service prior to 8 September 1980	2.5% times the years of service times basic pay (see <b>Note 5</b> )	Full inflation protection based on Consumer Price Index.
High-3	Entered service between 8 September 1980 and 31 July 1986	2.5% times the years of service times the average of the highest 36 months of base pay (see <b>Notes 6, 7 and 8</b> )	
High-3 or  \$30K Career Status Bonus (CSB) or REDUX Instead of retiring under High-3, these members chose to receive a \$30K Service Bonus at 15 years of service in exchange for agreeing to serve a minimum of another five years and then retiring under the less generous REDUX plan	Entered the service between 1 August 1986 and 31 December 2017	High-3: 2.5% times the years of service times the average of the highest 36 months of base pay;  CSB or REDUX option: Each of the first 20 years of service is worth 2% toward the retirement multiplier. Each year after the 20th is worth 3.5%. A 30-year career is computed by 2% times 3.5% for the 10 years beyond 20, resulting in a maximum of 75%. The multiplier is applied to the average of the member's highest 36 months of basic pay (see <b>Notes 6, 7 and 8</b> )	High-3: Full inflation protection based on Consumer Price Index.  CSB or REDUX option: Annual cost of living adjustments of Consumer Price Index minus 1% are given based upon the Consumer Price Index of the High-3. Retired pay is recomputed at age 62 so that REDUX and High-3 retirement salaries are equal but REDUX cost of living adjustments for later years will continue to be Consumer Price Index minus 1%.
BRS	Entered the service on or after 1 January 2018 (See <b>Notes 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13</b> )	2.0% times the years of service times the average of the highest 36 months of base pay (see <b>Notes 6, 7, and 8</b> )	Full inflation protection based on Consumer Price Index.

**Notes:**

1. "Date entered service" means the date the person is enlisted, inducted, or appointed with the Armed Forces. This includes persons in the Delayed Entry Program, cadets at Service Academies, officer candidates in Officer Training School, students enrolled in an ARC in senior Reserve Officer Training Corps programs or other financial assistance programs, students in the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, and persons in the Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship program. By using "date entered service," AC members have been "grandfathered" under the plan in effect at the time when the member initially entered the service.
2. The maximum multiplier for 30 years TAFMS is 75% times the retired pay base; however, members who serve beyond 30 years earn an additional 2.5% each additional year and can max out at 100%.
3. The Uniformed Services Former Spouses Protection Act allows state courts to consider retired pay as divisible property in divorce settlements. The law does not direct state courts to divide retired pay; it simply permits them to do so.
4. Retired pay stops upon the death of the retiree.
5. Officers who retire and do not meet the requirements to retire in the officer's highest grade (Title 10 USC Section 1370) will be paid based on the retired grade (Title 10 USC Section 1407f). Officers retiring in an enlisted grade will have the member's pay calculated as determined by DFAS.

6. Officers who retire and do not meet the requirements to retire in the officer's highest grade (Title 10 USC Section 1370) will be paid based on the last 36-month average of the time served in the higher grade and the time served in the lower grade. **Exception:** Does not apply to officers who did not serve satisfactorily in the highest grade and such determination is the result of conduct occurring after 30 October 2000 (See **Note 5**).
7. Enlisted members demoted to a lower grade within three years and retired in that grade will not be paid based on the high 36-month average in the higher grades. The member's retired pay will be calculated using the multiplier percentage determined by the applicable retirement plan (High-3, REDUX or BRS) and the retirement pay base will be calculated under final basic pay rate for the lower grade. When an enlisted member's active service added to retired list service totals 30 years, the member may be advanced (on the retired list) and receive retired pay in the highest grade satisfactorily held on AD, as determined by the SecAF or designee (Title 10 USC Section 9344).
8. Officers who resign officer commissions and retire in enlisted status will have retired pay calculated in accordance with Title 10 USC Section 1407e. DFAS is required to calculate the high-36 month average as if the member held the retired grade for the last 36 months of active service.
9. Members entering the service prior to 1 January 2018, who have less than 12 years of service (calculated from the pay date) or less than 4,320 retirement points (for ARC members) as of 31 December 2017, may enroll in the BRS.
10. Members in the Delayed Entry Program, cadets at Service Academies, officer candidates in Officer Training School, students enrolled in an ARC in senior Reserve Officer Training Corps programs, entering the service prior to 1 January 2018, may enroll in the BRS following commissioning/accession into AD. Members commissioned or accessed AD after 2 December 2018 have 30 days from commissioning/entry into AD to enroll in the BRS.
11. Members with breaks in service reentering AD or the selected reserve on or after 1 January 2019, who originally entered the service prior to 1 January 2018, and have less than 12 years of service (calculated from the pay date) or less than 4,320 retirement points for ARC members as of reentry, may enroll in the BRS within 30 days of reentry.
12. Members enrolled in the BRS will have a Thrift Savings Plan established that includes automatic and matching government contributions. DoD begins an automatic contribution of one percent of base pay after 60 days of service (calculated from pay date). DoD begins matching contributions up to an additional four percent of base pay after 2 years of service (calculated from pay date). Automatic and matching contributions continue until the member separates, retires or completes 26 years of service (calculated from pay date). For members enrolling in BRS as outlined in **Notes 9** through **11**, government contributions begin the pay period following enrollment.
13. Airmen retiring under the BRS are eligible to elect a lump sum payment of a portion of the Airman's retirement pay. Requests for the lump sum election are documented on the DD Form 2656, *Data for Payment of Retired Personnel*, and must be submitted to the retirement approval authority no later than 90 days prior to the Airman's retirement effective date for regular retirement or the date upon which the Airman first becomes eligible to receive retired pay under the non-regular retirement program. The retirement approval authority will notify the Airman of the lump sum election at the time of retirement application or 90 days prior to the Airman's eligibility to receive retired pay. Airmen have the option of receiving the lump sum payment in up to four annual installments. Acceptance of the lump sum payment does not impact an Airman's eligibility to elect Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP); however, there may be required offsets or other considerations related to disability pay and other benefits from the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Airmen should seek counseling from the Airman and Family Readiness Center (A&FRC) prior to election.

## 10.9. Survivor Benefit Plan

Military pay stops when a member dies. The survivor benefit plan provides a monthly income to survivors of retired military personnel upon the member's death. The survivor benefit plan is a government program for retiring members to ensure their eligible survivors receive a portion of their military retired pay as a monthly annuity after their death. The plan was structured so a surviving spouse cannot outlive the annuity, and cost-of-living adjustments are incorporated to offset inflation. RegAF members with a spouse or dependent children are automatically covered by the survivor benefit plan at no cost while they remain on RegAF status.

The member's death must be classified in 'line of duty' for an annuity to be payable if the member is not yet retirement eligible (has not accrued 20 years of RegAF status) on the date of death. The

annuity payable is 55 percent of the retired pay the member would have been entitled to receive if retired with a total disability rating on the date of death. An annuity may also be payable if the member's death is classified 'not in line of duty' as long as the member was retirement eligible on the date of death. In this case, annuity payable is 55 percent of the retired pay the member would have been entitled to receive if retired for years of service on the date of death. The surviving spouse of a member who dies in the line of duty while on RegAF status may request the survivor benefit plan be paid only to the member's children, avoiding the reduction caused by a spouse's receipt of dependency and indemnity compensation, the survivor benefits paid by the VA when a member's death is determined to have resulted from a service-connected cause.

The survivor benefit plan is the only program that enables a portion of military retired pay to be paid to a member's survivors. Prior to retiring, each member must decide whether to continue survivor benefit plan coverage into retirement. If electing coverage, survivor benefit plan premiums are assessed and automatically deducted from the member's monthly retired pay. Premiums are government-subsidized and deducted from a participating member's retired pay before taxes.

Survivor benefit plan premiums and beneficiary annuity payments depend on what is called the "base amount" elected as the basis of coverage. A service member's base amount can be the full monthly retired pay or a portion of retired pay, down to \$300. Full coverage means full retired pay is elected as the base amount. The base amount is tied to a member's retired pay; therefore, when retired pay receives cost-of-living adjustments, so does the base amount, and as a result, so do premiums and annuity payments.

Under limited circumstances, Airmen may withdraw from the survivor benefit plan or change coverage. As a survivor benefit plan participant, individuals have a one-year window to terminate survivor benefit plan coverage between the second and third anniversary following the date beginning receipt of retired pay. The premiums paid will not be refunded, and an annuity will not be payable upon death. The covered spouse or former spouse must consent to the withdrawal. Termination is permanent, and participation may not be resumed under any circumstance barring future enrollment. The survivor benefit plan also has a "paid-up" feature that permits members who have attained age 70, and who have paid survivor benefit plan premiums for 360 months, to stop paying premiums but remain active participants in the plan.

#### **10.10. American Red Cross**

The American Red Cross offers unwavering commitment, free of charge, 365 days a year/24 hours a day, to members of the U.S. Armed Forces, veterans, and their families, to include: RegAF, National Guard, Reservists, Reserve Officer Training Corps, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, and U.S. Public Health Service. Red Cross support enhances morale and contributes to increased operational capability by linking military families during an emergency, connecting families with local community resources, providing resiliency training, and supporting wounded warriors and military hospitals, non-Federal entity program, service or award. The Red Cross toll free number for service members and families in the United States is: 1-877-272-7337. Military members and family members overseas may call base or installation operators or the American Red Cross office at the overseas location. Local overseas Red Cross contact information can be found online at: <http://www.redcross.org/>. **Note:** For the American Red Cross to provide expedient service, provide as much of the following information available as possible: full name, rank/rating,

branch of service, social security number or date of birth, military address, and information about the deployed unit and home base unit (for deployed service members only).

**Emergency Communication Services.** When a military family experiences a crisis, the American Red Cross is there to assist by providing emergency communications. The Red Cross relays urgent messages containing accurate, factual, complete, and verified descriptions of the emergency to service members stationed anywhere in the world, including ships at sea, embassies, and remote locations. Red Cross-verified information assists commanders in making decisions regarding emergency leave.

**Financial Assistance.** The American Red Cross works under partnership agreements with the Air Force Aid Society, Army Emergency Relief, Coast Guard Mutual Assistance, and Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society to provide quality, reliable financial assistance to eligible applicants. Types of assistance include financial assistance for emergency travel, burial of a loved one, and assistance to avoid privation or hardship.

**Coping with Deployments.** The psychological first aid course was designed specifically for spouses, parents, siblings, and significant others of service members. This Red Cross service provides useful information on how to strengthen the ability to successfully respond to challenges that military family members may encounter throughout the deployment cycle. The course also explains how to provide psychological first aid to others experiencing stressful feelings or events.

**Reconnection Workshops.** The reconnection workshops are designed for reintegration support for working through anger, communicating clearly, exploring stress and trauma, relating to children, and identifying depression. The workshops focus on individuals and small groups to help family members reconnect, and help service members reintegrate successfully. Led by licensed, specifically trained Red Cross mental health workers, each session addresses a topic military families have found relevant to the reunion adjustment.

**Veterans Claims for Benefits.** The American Red Cross provides assistance and information in preparing, developing, and obtaining sufficient evidence to support applicants' claims for veterans' benefits, and also assists claimants who seek to appeal to the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

**Information and Referral Services.** The American Red Cross offers confidential services to all military personnel and their families. Counseling, guidance, information, referrals, and other social services are available through the worldwide network of chapters and offices on military installations. As more and more National Guard and Reserve units are called to full-time duty status, counseling has become increasingly important to prepare the civilian-based military members and their families for the period of activation.

### **10.11. Recruiting Programs**

Airmen of all ranks can have a positive impact on recruiting and help recruiters make contacts and develop leads.

**Recruiter Assistance Programs.** The Recruiter Assistance Program (RAP) is a RegAF leave program, run by the Air Force Recruiting Service, where an Airman or Guardian directly supports an USAF recruiter. Members may request nonchargeable leave in accordance with AFI 36-3003, *Military Leave Program*, 7 April 2021. RAP is beneficial to the USAF and to participants because Airmen can be a major influence in bringing the USAF story to their hometown or place of

previous residence. RAP duties may include question-and-answer sessions, making presentations, or providing testimonials of their USAF experiences to high school and college students. For more information, visit: [www.recruiting.af.mil](http://www.recruiting.af.mil), and review the RAP Fact Sheet.

**We Are All Recruiters.** The We Are All Recruiters (WEAR) Program may grant individuals permissive temporary duty status if they participate in an event that directly enhances the recruiting mission. All Airmen, regardless of their USAF specialty, are recruiters. A WEAR event is an event where the interaction of USAF personnel educates and increases public awareness of the USAF and could potentially generate interest in new recruits.

Approval for WEAR is limited to those events where Airmen are directly speaking to potential applicants or influencers about USAF opportunities. Applicants are defined as individuals within the age range of 17 to 39. Influencers are defined as parents, community leaders, teachers, counselors, or coaches. For events where multiple Airmen are attending, each attendee must submit a package for approval. WEAR requests must be first approved by the individual's commander in accordance with AFI 36-3003. Requests are then routed to the Air Force Recruiting Service Public Affairs office via e-mail: [afreshqpa@us.af.mil](mailto:afreshqpa@us.af.mil). Members may request permissive temporary duty to attend a WEAR event. For more information about WEAR, visit: [www.recruiting.af.mil](http://www.recruiting.af.mil), review the WEAR Fact Sheet, and download the WEAR form.

## ***Section 10B—Leave and Authorized Absences***

### **10.12. Leave Management**

Annual leave programs/plans give members the opportunity to take leave within the constraints of operational requirements. Unit commanders establish leave programs and plans to encourage the use of leave for the maximum benefit of the member. Lengthy respites from the work environment tend to have a beneficial effect on an individual's psychological and physical status. Therefore, an effective leave program is an essential military requirement.

**Processing Leave Requests.** LeaveWeb is an automated method of requesting and processing leave. Under LeaveWeb, the member requests leave which generates an e-mail to the leave approval authority, as determined by the member's commander. While commanders have final approval authority, they may delegate this authority according to the needs of the organization, normally no lower than the first-line supervisor. The leave approval authority approves or disapproves the leave and, if approved, LeaveWeb sends the request to the unit leave monitor for validation. Once validated, the leave request is sent electronically to finance. The member prints a copy of the approved leave form to hand-carry during leave. Upon returning from leave, the member completes the necessary updates in LeaveWeb and forwards the e-mail to the leave approval authority for endorsement. In the event LeaveWeb is unavailable, appropriate procedures may require use of the AF Form 988, *Leave Request/Authorization*.

### **10.13. Beginning and Ending Leave**

Leave must begin and end in the local area. The term "local area" means the place of residence from which the member commutes to the duty station on a daily basis. This also applies to leave enroute to a permanent change of station or temporary duty (TDY) assignment. The old permanent duty station is for beginning leave and the new permanent duty station is for ending leave. When

members take leave enroute with permanent change of station or TDY travel, the financial service office uses the travel voucher to determine authorized travel and chargeable leave. Nonduty days and holidays are chargeable leave days if they occur during an authorized period of leave. If leave includes a weekend, a member cannot end leave on a Friday and begin leave again on Monday. Further, unit commanders will not approve successive Monday through Friday leaves (or periods of leave surrounding other nonduty days) except under emergency or unusual circumstances, as determined by the unit commander.

**Extensions and Recalls.** When an extension of leave is desired, the member must ask, orally or in writing, for an extension of leave. The extension must be requested sufficiently in advance of expiration of leave authorized to permit the member to return to duty at the proper time if the approval authority disapproves the extension. Unit commanders may recall members from leave for military necessity or in the best interest of the USAF. Refer to the Joint Travel Regulation to determine if travel and transportation allowances apply. If the unit commander authorizes the member to resume leave after the member completes the duty that resulted in recall, a new AF Form 988 or orders must be prepared.

#### **10.14. Accruing Leave**

Members accrue 2.5 days leave for each month of RegAF status. Members do not earn leave when they are absent without official leave, in an unauthorized leave status, in confinement as a result of a court-martial sentence, in an excess leave status, or on appellate leave. Members may accumulate a maximum of 60 days by the end of a fiscal year. There are certain circumstances when a leave balance of more than 60 days may be carried forward into a new fiscal year, but only when specifically authorized. By law, members may receive accrued leave payment up to a maximum of 60 days at certain points in their careers, such as reenlistment, retirement, separation under honorable conditions, or death. Department of Defense policy expresses concern that members use leave to relax from the pressures of duties and not as a method of compensation.

#### **10.15. Types of Leave**

AFI 36-3003, outlines many types of leave, as briefly described here.

**Annual Leave.** Another name for “ordinary” leave is annual leave. Normally, members use annual leave to take vacations, attend to family needs, celebrate traditional holidays, attend significant events, or as terminal leave with retirement or separation from RegAF status.

**Advance Leave.** Advance leave is granted based on a reasonable expectation that a member will accrue at least the amount of leave being requested during the remaining period of RegAF status. The purpose of advance leave is to enable members to resolve emergencies or urgent situations when they have limited or no accrued leave. When a member has taken all the advance leave that represents what he or she will accrue during the remaining period of RegAF service, commanders change the member’s leave status from advance to excess leave.

**Excess Leave.** Excess leave is normally used for personal or family emergency situations when members cannot request advance leave. Excess leave is a no-pay status; therefore, entitlement to pay and allowances and leave accrual stops on the member’s first day of excess leave. If injured, a member will not receive disability pay for time spent on excess leave. The period of excess leave will not count toward fulfillment of RegAF duty service commitment.

**Convalescent Leave.** Convalescent leave is an authorized absence normally for the minimal time needed to meet the medical needs for recuperation. Convalescent leave is not chargeable leave. Unit commanders normally approve convalescent leave based on recommendations by the medical treatment facility authority or the physician most familiar with the member's medical condition. When medical authorities determine a medical procedure is necessary, such as childbirth, and the member elects civilian medical care, with recommendation of the medical treatment facility, the commander may grant convalescent leave. Convalescent leave may also apply to paternal leave, spouse leave, and secondary caregiver leave, as applicable.

**Emergency Leave.** Emergency leave is chargeable leave granted for emergencies involving members of the immediate family. Unit commanders approve emergency leave and can delegate leave approval to no lower than the first sergeant for enlisted personnel. The official granting leave may request assistance from the military service activity nearest the location of the emergency or, when necessary, from the American Red Cross. The initial period of emergency leave is usually no more than 30 days with a possible 30 day extension with approval from the unit commander or first sergeant. Unit commanders should advise members to apply for a humanitarian or exceptional family member reassignment or hardship discharge if the leave period is more than 60 days.

**Enroute Leave.** Enroute leave is ordinary leave used during a permanent change of station. Normally, the losing unit commander approves up to 30 days enroute leave with any change of station move if it does not interfere with the reporting date of the new assignment. Members who complete basic or technical training may request 10 days of leave enroute if their first duty station is in the Continental United States, or 14 days for an overseas assignment. Members may request advance leave when they do not have enough leave accrued for enroute leave.

**Terminal Leave.** Terminal leave is chargeable leave taken in conjunction with retirement or separation from RegAF status. The member's last day of leave coincides with the last day of RegAF status. Normally, a member does not return to duty after terminal leave begins. The amount of leave taken cannot exceed the leave balance at the date of separation.

**Environmental and Morale Leave.** Environmental and morale leave is authorized overseas where adverse environmental conditions require special arrangements for leave in desirable places at periodic intervals. Funded environmental and morale leave is charged as ordinary leave and members are authorized military transportation (travel time is not charged as leave). Unfunded environmental and morale leave is charged as ordinary leave and members are authorized space-available air transportation to and from the duty locations (travel time is charged as leave).

#### **10.16. Permissive Temporary Duty**

Permissive TDY is an administrative absence for which funded TDY is not appropriate. Commanders may not authorize permissive TDY in place of leave or a special pass or in conjunction with special passes. Permissive TDY, if authorized, may include traveling to or in the vicinity of a new permanent duty station to secure off-base housing, accompanying a military or dependent patient to a designated medical treatment facility not in the local area, attending a Department of Defense sponsored assistance seminar under the Transition Assistance Program, or attending national conventions or meetings hosted by service-connected organizations.

### **10.17. Regular and Special Passes**

A pass period is an authorized absence from duty for a relatively short amount of time. There are no mileage restrictions; however, members may be expected to return to duty within a reasonable time due to an operational mission requirement, such as a recall, unit alert, or unit emergency.

**Regular Pass.** A regular pass normally begins at the end of work hours on Friday afternoon and continues until the beginning of normal work hours on the following Monday when non-duty days are Saturday and Sunday. A regular pass period on non-traditional work schedules (alternate or compressed schedules) may not exceed the four-day special pass limit. The combination of non-duty days and a public holiday may not exceed the four-day special pass limit. The combination of three non-duty days and a public holiday during a compressed work schedule is a regular pass period. Department of Defense or higher management may determine that a Monday or Friday is compensatory (comp) time off when a holiday is observed on a Tuesday or Thursday, in which case a regular pass may consist of a weekend, a comp day off, and a public holiday.

**Special Pass.** Unit commanders may award three- or four-day special passes for special occasions, circumstances, special recognition, or compensatory time off. Commanders may delegate approval to a level no lower than squadron section commander, deputies, or equivalents. Special passes start after normal work hours on a given day. They stop at the beginning of normal work hours on either the fourth day for a three-day special pass or the fifth day for a four-day special pass.

## Chapter 12 DEVELOPING ORGANIZATIONS

### *Section 12C—Change and Problem Solving*

#### **12.9. Change Management**

Change is inevitable. We know changes are taking place every day, all around us. Change is appropriate when there is a perceived gap between what the norms are and what they should be. Organizational change is not automatic. It is the deliberate adoption of a new idea or behavior by an organization and the establishment of new norms. These norms can involve technology, tasks, structure, and resources, including people. First, leaders must do their part to create an organizational climate conducive to change by explaining the limitations or shortfalls of the present process and the possibilities and benefits of the proposed change. Next, leaders must facilitate the change itself by walking Airmen through the change, explaining the details, and answering questions. Finally, leaders should show appreciation for those who contribute to the change and help refocus those who do not. Tough-minded, realistic optimism is the best quality a leader can demonstrate when coping with change.

**Resistance to Change.** The first reaction to change is often perceived as resistance. An essential element for preventing or overcoming resistance to change is establishing a well thought out plan. Planning enables the change agent (the person advocating for or leading the organizational change) to build confidence, anticipate questions, develop courses of action, and address opposing perceptions. Five of the most common responses to change are briefly described here.

- **Distrust.** Imposed change that significantly affects an organization will often be met with tough questions to ensure the change purpose and intent is clearly understood. Leaders who are not prepared to clarify or explain thought processes behind the change will not easily overcome employee doubt and will struggle to gain employee buy in.

- **Uncertainty.** When faced with impending change, people may experience fear of the unknown or see the change as a threat to organizational stability and their job security. Employees may wonder if they will still have a job, if they will be able to do the new job, or if they will have to learn a new program or process.

- **Self-interest.** People often consider the position they currently have or their role in the existing environment and question the direction and capabilities of those in positions of power after the change is implemented.

- **Different Perception/No Felt Need to Change.** Even if you think people recognize the need for change, they may see the situation differently, particularly if the change has been dropped on them. Maintain an environment of open communication to build support for the change and reduce the amount of employees who inwardly resist it.

- **Over-Determination.** Ironically, organizational structure may be a barrier to change. For example, a mechanistic structure that relies on strict procedure and lines of authority may be so rigid that it inhibits change and possibly damages professional relationships.

#### **12.10. Reducing Perceived Resistance to Change**

Successful change management depends on addressing causes of resistance and improving the

change implementation process. There are several approaches leaders can take to implement change successfully.

**Education and Communication.** Open communication is necessary throughout the change process and helps reduce uncertainty. Educating people about the need for and expected results of a change should reduce resistance.

**Participation and Involvement.** Leaders reduce resistance by actively involving those affected in designing and implementing change. Involving people in the change process helps generate ownership and commitment to the change.

**Facilitation and Support.** Leaders should introduce the change to employees gradually and provide additional training, if needed. Reinforcement and encouragement help facilitate the power of high expectations throughout the organization.

**Negotiation and Agreement.** Leaders may choose to offer incentives to those who continue to resist the change. In difficult times, negotiated agreements can help focus and remind employees of the changes agreed upon as the change process progresses.

**Coercion.** Coercion is a forcing technique used to make employees accept change. Coercion can negatively affect attitudes and can potentially cause long-term negative consequences. Coerced compliance is not recommended and requires constant leadership oversight to ensure the change remains in effect.

### **12.11. Three-Stage Change Process**

Although there are a wide range of various change processes, the change process model proposed by renowned social psychologist, Kurt Lewin, recommended leaders view change as a three-stage process: unfreezing, changing, and refreezing. In the three-stage change process, leaders (change agents) must analyze restraining or opposing forces and devise ways to reduce them to overcome resistance. At the same time, leaders must recognize and strengthen supporting forces, which are those forces pushing toward change. After analyzing the forces for and against change, and developing a strategy to deal with them, leaders can attend to the change itself.

**Stage 1: Unfreezing.** Once the need for change is recognized, the three-stage change process begins with unfreezing. Unfreezing is a deliberate management activity to prepare people for change by knowing and going where issues may exist. The most neglected, yet essential part of unfreezing is creating an environment where people feel the need for change. A key factor in unfreezing involves making people knowledgeable about the importance of a change and how it will affect their jobs or the overall organizational structure. By pointing out problems or challenges that currently exist in the organization, leaders are able to generate a need in the people who will feel the greatest effect of the change.

**Stage 2: Changing.** After unfreezing, the next stage in the three-stage change process is changing. The changing stage involves modifying technology, tasks, structure, or distribution of people. During the changing stage, the organization moves from the old state or the previous norms, to the new state by installing new equipment, restructuring work centers, or implementing procedures. In short, changing is anything that alters the previously accepted status quo. The change agent in this stage is essential.

Change needs to be monitored as it occurs by paying close attention to the people most affected by the change. Signs of implementing the change too early may include negative reactions from

employees. In some instances, systems are not completely ready and production may bog down. Be prepared to receive and respond to feedback in any number of forms to ensure the change unfolds as successfully as possible. Being involved and available throughout the process will allow leaders to react quickly to issues as well as provide support to employees who are dealing with the issues of the change firsthand. Encouragement and involvement in the changing stage may be very similar to that applied during the unfreezing stage. **Note:** It is a leader's responsibility to be receptive to the needs of the organization and its employees. Readdressing unfreezing techniques is better than forcing a change that causes more problems than it resolves.

**Stage 3: Refreezing.** The third and final stage in the three-stage change process is refreezing. After implementing a change, it is time to lock in (or refreeze) the desired outcomes and the new norms so they become permanent. Actively encouraging and reinforcing the use of new techniques is a way of helping the new behavior stick. A critical step in refreezing is remaining engaged and evaluating results to determine if the change reached the desired effect or if the new process needs more support, instruction, training, or time. Positively reinforcing desired outcomes is crucial during the refreezing stage. Rewarding people when they do something in alignment with the change emphasizes the value of the new procedures or behaviors and helps freeze them into place. Highlighting successful change helps reduce the desire to return to the old way of doing things. In many cases, the change agent can call attention to the success of the change and show where it works while also being receptive to feedback and areas that may cause lingering issues or continued frustration. In this case, the change agent must evaluate results, reinforce the desired outcomes, and make constructive modifications, as needed.

## 12.12. Continuous Improvement

The use of Continuous Improvement (CI) increases operational capabilities while reducing associated costs by applying proven methodologies to all processes associated with fulfilling the USAF mission. CI is a comprehensive philosophy of operations built around the concepts that there are always ways a process can be improved to better meet mission/customer requirements, organizations must constantly strive to make those improvements based on performance metrics that align to strategic objectives, and efficiencies should be replicated to the extent practical. CI is a hallmark of highly successful organizations, is an Airmen Leadership Quality, is a commander's responsibility (AFI 1-2, *Commander's Responsibilities*, 8 May 2014) and is a major graded area in the Air Force Inspection System (AFI 90-201, *The Air Force Inspection System*, 29 January 2021).

**Continuous Improvement Methodologies.** USAF CI incorporates aspects of four major methodologies to assist with organizational change. A practical problem solving method may simultaneously draw from more than one of these CI processes.

- **Lean.** Lean is a methodology focused on work flow, customer value, and eliminating process waste. Lean is unique from traditional process improvement strategies in that the primary focus is on eliminating non-value added activities.

- **Six Sigma.** Six sigma is a rigorous, data-driven methodology for process improvement focused on minimizing waste through identifying, controlling, and reducing process variation.

- **Business Process Reengineering.** Business process reengineering is a comprehensive process requiring a change in the fundamental way business processes are performed. Business process reengineering identifies unnecessary activities and eliminates them wherever possible.

- **Theory of Constraints.** Theory of constraints is a systematic approach to optimize resource utilization by identifying, exploiting, subordinating, elevating, and reassessing constraints (bottlenecks) in the process.

### 12.13. Practical Problem Solving Method

At the core of USAF CI is the practical problem solving method, a standardized and structured approach to problem solving used by global industry leaders, and adopted by DoD. The practical problem solving method, as shown in **Figure 12.1.**, is an eight-step process used to clarify problems, identify root causes, and develop appropriate countermeasures to achieve change. **Note:** The Osborn-Parnes convergent and divergent thinking techniques described in this handbook’s chapter on Developing Ideas can be useful during many steps in this process.

**Figure 12.1. Practical Problem Solving Method.**

<b>Practical Problem Solving Method</b>	
Step 1	Clarify and validate the problem
Step 2	Break down the problem and identify performance gaps
Step 3	Set improvement target
Step 4	Determine root cause
Step 5	Develop countermeasures
Step 6	See countermeasures through
Step 7	Confirm results and process
Step 8	Standardize successful processes

**Step 1—Clarify and Validate the Problem.** The first step to effective problem-solving is to clearly understand the problem, often best accomplished by developing a problem statement. A well-defined problem statement uses data to identify where the problem is occurring, determine the impact of the problem, and compare performance against a standard with scope and direction. A problem statement does not assume a root cause, solution, or countermeasure, but should include visual tools to depict the current state. The *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *significance* of the problem statement should be validated by data. This is done by collecting and analyzing data to validate the existence and magnitude of the problem. If data does not exist, the effort should be paused to collect and analyze the needed data before moving forward. This step incorporates the Mess Finding, Data Finding, and Problem Finding aspects of the Osborn-Parnes model.

**Step 2—Break Down Problem and Identify Performance Gaps.** Understanding what appropriate data is required and the ability to interpret that data is paramount to performance gap analysis. Step 2 effectively frames and supports the problem in Step 1. Once the problem statement has been identified and answers the *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *significance* of the problem,

further analyze the data in comparison to the expected outcome. The expected outcome is the objective from which to measure the gap between the current state and end state (the expected outcome) and highlight opportunities for improvements (also called the performance gap).

**Step 3—Set Improvement Targets.** USAF leaders establish a vision of what an organization will strive to become (the ideal state). In Step 3, process owners or project managers set improvement targets based on expected outcomes and strategic goals and objectives. Targets help define the required performance levels to achieve the desired end state. Targets should be challenging but achievable.

**Step 4—Determine Root Cause.** USAF leaders often find themselves addressing problems which have been solved many times when previous problem-solving efforts were directed at *symptoms* of a problem rather than *root causes*. Root cause analysis often involves applying a tradeoff between digging as deeply as possible as opposed to finding the deepest point within the team's sphere of influence. The correct root cause should be validated by using the same data used to define the problem in Step 1.

**Step 5—Develop Countermeasures.** Step 5 is where potential root causes are addressed with countermeasures. Consideration should be given to the most practical, efficient, and effective countermeasures. Valid countermeasures will close performance gaps and should move the organization closer to the ideal state. When developing countermeasures, strive for process improvement change that is sustainable and repeatable. At the end of Step 5, obtain a vector check to ensure strategic alignment with the desired outcome is still moving in the appropriate direction. Remember, the impact of a solution is a combination of the quality of the solution and the acceptance of the solution by people who implement it. Judiciously involving employees in the development of countermeasures generates buy-in and ownership of the solution and its success.

This step incorporates the Idea Finding, Solution Finding, and Acceptance Finding aspects of the Osborn-Parnes model. **Note:** Techniques discussed in this handbook's chapter on Developing Ideas can be particularly useful when developing countermeasures. Defer judgment and allow a period of time to let ideas flow freely (brainstorm potential countermeasures, even those that may seem odd or unusual) before evaluating and selecting a solution.

**Step 6—See Countermeasures Through.** Step 6 is seeing countermeasures through to execution and tracking detailed implementation plans for each countermeasure approved in Step 5. Reviews and progress checks should be updated regularly on all tasks until countermeasures have been implemented, or until deemed unnecessary.

**Step 7—Confirm Results and Process.** Step 7 compares the results of implemented countermeasures to the identified performance gaps, improvement objectives/targets, and the expected outcome. Sustainability and repeatability of the improved process should be verified. Results are measured by data and analyzed to confirm the project's intent. Processes should be monitored for performance relative to the baseline developed in Steps 1 and 2, relative to targets established in Step 3, and relative to the solution implementation. Illustrate confirmed results with appropriate data tools which link back to performance gaps and improvement targets. Incorrect root-cause determination is the most common mistake made during CI efforts. If targets are not met, it may be necessary to return to Step 4.

**Step 8—Standardize Successful Processes.** Step 8 is the most commonly neglected step of the entire practical problem solving method; however, it is important to ensure the results of the efforts made in previous steps are codified. In Step 8, consider the answers to following three questions:

**What is needed to standardize the improvements?** Possible answers may include a submission to the Airmen Powered by Innovation Program or change requests for technical orders, instructions, manuals, materiel, and suppliers.

**How should improvements and lessons learned be communicated?** The wing process manager should be made aware of the success. Inputting information into the USAF CI portal, conducting key meetings, writing publications, utilizing public affairs, informing the chain of command, or populating data collection sites.

**Were other opportunities or problems identified by the problem-solving model?** This project may have identified additional problem-solving opportunities that should be recognized and addressed.

#### **12.14. Levels of Problem Solving**

Consistently applied, the Practical Problem Solving Method provides an excellent tool for making data-driven decisions with regard to management, process change, and the sharing of best practices, ensuring actions lead to the desired results with minimal waste. It also ensures the results are aligned with the needs of the organization. Three different levels of effort are available for accomplishing this method initiative. As a standardized template for solving problems and performing process improvement initiatives, the Practical Problem Solving Method is flexible enough to be effective at any of the following three levels.

**Just Do It:** Also called point improvement, the ‘just do it’ approach involves one person (or a small team) and can be accomplished in less than a day. Examples could be using torque wrenches instead of adjustable wrenches or routing paperwork electronically rather than through physical distribution channels.

**Rapid Improvement Event:** A rapid improvement event consists of a small team of individuals, usually subject matter experts, and can be accomplished in less than a week. It is designed to develop and implement countermeasures after appropriate project preparations have been made. Examples could be improving aircraft servicing cycle times or improving first-time pass yields on task management tool tasks.

**Improvement Project:** The ‘improvement project’ setting requires a large team and is conducted over a longer period of time. Examples could be shortening aircraft annual overhaul cycle time or writing software to track annual overhauls.

#### **12.15. Project Management**

Although there are many definitions of project management, for the purpose of this reading project management is defined as the process of leading, coordinating, planning, and controlling a diverse and complex set of processes and people in the pursuit of achieving an established objective. With this definition in mind, it is important to emphasize that a project is not a program; programs are ongoing. A project is temporary, based on an established objective that has a generalized time frame attached to it.

**Project Management Steps.** Project management uses a unique array of terminology to identify and communicate its principles and uses. Basic terminology is primarily found in the steps of project management and is explained below.

- **Define the Project Objective.** Identify the objective or improvement to be achieved by the project. What is being satisfied by the project? What is the expected outcome?

- **Develop Solution Options.** How many ways might you go about solving the problem? Of the available alternatives, which do you think will best solve the problem?

- **Plan the Project.** Planning is nothing more than answering questions—what must be done, by whom, how, for how much, when, and so on.

- **Execute the Plan.** People sometimes go to great lengths and effort to put together a plan, but then fail to follow it. Follow your plan.

- **Monitor and Control Progress.** The project manager must monitor and control by being present and making appropriate decisions. This is where to determine whether or not the plan was sound and make adjustments. Are we on target? If not, what must be done? Should the plan be changed/modified? What else have we learned?

- **Close the Project.** Once the objective has been achieved, there is still a final step that should be taken. Document and discuss lessons learned—what went well, what didn't, and what should be addressed.

## 12.16. Project Management Constraints

Constraints are numerous for all activities we endeavor, but constraint consideration is crucial for project management. Quality, time, and cost are among the main constraints most often realized in project management.

**Quality.** Quality refers to being in accordance with the requirement - the specifications.

**Time.** Time refers to the amount of time you have to complete the project.

**Cost.** Cost refers to your resource constraints, to include: money, manpower, machinery, and materials.

One of the constraints (Quality, Time, or Cost) will be your driver for the project. The driving constraint for your project will have an impact on the other two constraints. Ensure you take this into consideration when making decisions about the project's objective and adjust the management of your project accordingly. It is incumbent upon a project manager to provide leadership and use good team-building techniques to establish a sound project objective and generate the solution options necessary to achieve those objectives.

## 12.17. Project Management Planning

Once options are developed, the most important and time-consuming aspect of project management must occur—planning the project. Planning a project involves activities that answer the questions who, what, when, where, and how. Techniques of special importance to use during planning are gathering important information, creating a work breakdown structure, and conducting a task analysis. Regardless of the method of planning used, the completion of the tasks in a sense of order and timeliness, made foreseeable through the task analysis, ensures project completion is more likely to succeed.

**Work Breakdown Structure.** A work breakdown structure is a technique based on dividing a project into sub-units or work packages. Since all the elements required to complete the project are identified in the work breakdown structure, the chances of neglecting or overlooking an essential step are minimized. A work breakdown structure is typically constructed with two or three levels of detail, although more levels are common, depending on the complexity of a project. Such a structure for your project will permit you and others who see the work breakdown structure to readily identify what needs to be done, spot omissions which might later affect the outcome of the project, and make suggestions for improving and expanding the work breakdown structure. The amount of breakdown is an element the project manager and the project team must decide upon.

**Task Analysis.** Similar to the work breakdown structure, the amount of detail needed for a task analysis depends on the task involved and the desires of the project manager and project team. The more complex the project, the greater the importance of detailed task analysis. Information contained in the task analysis, which is not depicted in a work breakdown structure, includes task milestones, how the milestones can be measured, and resources or requirements. Project managers may delegate the task analysis for each task to the appropriate person. Once compiled, final decisions on task assignments and budgetary concerns can be addressed. The task analysis is what provides the crucial information for determining how the tasks of the project interrelate. It is imperative to establish the proper sequencing of tasks prior to beginning a project to ensure the efficiency of the project.

## Chapter 13 DEVELOPING OTHERS

### *Section 13A—Teamwork*

#### **13.1. Team Building**

Dynamic is a way of describing elements of a process or system; it is a term used to recognize constant change, activity, or progress. Dynamic can also be used to describe a force that stimulates change or progress. As Airmen, we must know and understand our leaders, peers, and subordinates. In team environments, we must know the right approaches to building effective teams and cultivating a healthy, dynamic team spirit. The spirit in which a team operates will influence every stage of team development and can ultimately determine whether goals are met. Healthy teams are high performing teams that most often have a foundation of trust, communication, and cooperation. While each is essential in building a healthy team spirit, trust is at the core of all healthy team interaction. Team members must feel comfortable with, and confident in, one another to be able to fully participate. Positive group member behavior is essential for a team to accomplish its goals. Team members do not often immediately form strong bonds for trust, communication, and cooperation. There are typically stages that teams experience before rising to the level of becoming highly functional, productive teams.

**Trust.** Teamwork requires a high degree of trust. Team members must share mutual confidence in the integrity and ability of teammates. They also need to feel comfortable enough to take risks, think outside the box, and share their thoughts and ideas without fear of being shut down or discounted. Freedom to communicate openly, honestly, and directly within the group is the hallmark of a trust-based team. Individuals must understand the importance of utilizing effective communication skills to develop the level of trust needed for the teams to grow.

“Nothing reduces trust in a group faster than members saying one thing within the group and something else outside the group. When members are assertive enough to say what they need to say directly to the appropriate people and to refrain from talking behind each other’s backs, trust is enhanced.”

- Suzanne Zoglio, author of *Teams at Work*

Creating trust among team members requires professional working relationships, professional behavior, and a desire to achieve established objectives. Dialogue and feedback must be exchanged between members in an open and sincere manner without fear of harsh criticism. Team members should respond to one another with inclusion, receptivity to inputs, and information sharing. It’s true...there’s honesty and then there’s brutal honesty. Feedback, critical thinking, and disagreements can be exchanged among team members without being brutally honest or offensive. Leaders can promote a trusting atmosphere by valuing individual differences and encouraging open and honest communication. Leaders empower their teams to solve problems innovatively through a shared sense of collaboration that is free of self-preservation and personal bias. Leaders should focus their efforts on setting the right tone for developing trusting relationships, communicating openly and honestly, knowing and establishing a good rapport with team members, and discouraging cliques or divisions within the team. In other words, team leaders should set the example and lead by example.

**Communication.** Teams must communicate. Team members need to safely assert themselves and share their ideas. Teams that don't allow honest, open sharing quickly lose their effectiveness. As a result, some team members may purposely withhold vital information or disengage from the team. This may cause confusion, frustration, and the inability to complete tasks within teams. While sharing information between team members is essential in producing effective, well thought out plans, leaders must be willing to share information with team members. When leaders hold on to information, they can create an inaccurate, incomplete, or totally wrong picture of the expected outcome to team members. Information sharing yields better results. Leaders can increase team success by giving members complete access to all necessary data, discouraging the discounting of ideas and feelings, and encouraging the practice of active listening and valuing individual differences.

**Cooperation.** Cooperation is critical if teams are to combine diverse backgrounds, skills, and approaches to meet the challenges, customer requirements, and mission changes. Cooperation yields synergistic results and reduces the exerted effort it takes to reach a desired outcome. Leaders who encourage cooperation show team members that others have very important contributions to the goals of the team. Team members may also come to understand how dependent they are on one another in reaching mission objectives. Successful teams have few turf wars, little competitiveness, and an ability to forgive and forget. Cooperation breeds shared ownership for performance results, and achieving objectives increases team pride and a healthy team spirit. A sign that a team is not performing cohesively is when competition exists among team members. This may be observed when some team members attempt to outshine others to gain extra attention or credibility. When a member of a team demonstrates "all-starring" behavior, they may be experiencing a power struggle. To reduce power-play behavior, leaders should reemphasize each team member's specific roles and responsibilities, which eliminates potential barriers to cooperation.

### 13.2. Stages of Team Building

The typical stages or team dynamics that groups or teams experience are normal and often inevitable. The four stages most often experienced by teams are:

#### FORMING - STORMING - NORMING - PERFORMING

- **Forming.** Forming is the initial period of uncertainty in which individuals try to determine their place on a team and establish or accept the procedures and rules of the team. When a team is forming, members cautiously explore the boundaries of acceptable group behavior in various ways. The forming stage is when the transition from individual to member status occurs and when a leader's guidance is tested, both formally and informally.

- **Storming.** During the storming stage, conflicts begin to arise as members tend to resist the influence of the team and rebel against accomplishing the task. Storming is probably the most difficult stage when some team members begin to realize the task is different and more difficult than they initially expected. Impatient about the lack of progress, but still too inexperienced to know much about decision-making or the scientific approach, members argue about just what actions the team should take. Team members may try to rely solely on their experience, thus

resisting the need for collaboration with other team members. Regardless of tensions, during the storming stage, team members are beginning to understand one another.

- **Norming.** During the norming stage, team members establish cohesiveness and commitment, discovering new ways of working together and setting norms for appropriate behavior. During the norming stage, members reconcile competing loyalties and responsibilities and begin to accept the team, team ground rules (norms), their roles in the team, and the individuality of fellow members. Emotional conflict is reduced as competitive relationships become more cooperative. As the team begins to work out their differences, they focus more time and energy on the team objective.

- **Performing.** In the performing stage, the team develops proficiency in achieving its goals and becomes more flexible in its patterns of working together. By the performing stage, the team has settled its relationships and expectations and can begin diagnosing and solving problems and choosing and implementing changes. At last, team members have discovered and accepted each other's strengths and weaknesses and learned and embraced their roles. In the performing stage, the team can be considered to be an effective, cohesive, and productive unit.

### 13.3. Conflict Management

Conflict is inevitable in every organization, and is often necessary to reach high levels of performance. Conflict involves differences between parties that result in interference or opposition. Such differences can motivate for positive change or decrease productivity. Positive conflict results in addressing problems for a solution, greater understanding, and enhanced communication between individuals or groups. Conflict can be constructive when managed effectively. Conflict becomes destructive when it results in barriers to cooperation and communication, thus degrading morale and diverting attention away from tasks. At times, managers tend to avoid conflict because of its negative repercussions; however, managing conflict effectively benefits the organization by reducing ambiguity and stimulating productivity.

### 13.4. Sources of Conflict

Conflict is defined as frustration of an important concern, whether real or perceived. Many factors may result in or increase the probability of conflict within an organization. These factors manifest themselves in combination with other factors, making it potentially difficult to identify the specific source of the conflict. Conflict often originates with one or more of the following situations.

**Communication Factors.** Communication often gets the blame for problems that occur in the workplace; however, the real crux of the problem is more likely to be miscommunication. For example, communication may be occurring, sometimes even over-communication occurs within an organization, but when the communication is misinterpreted, inaccurate, or incomplete, this leads to frustration and stress. For personnel to perform at their very best, they need constructive, comprehensible, and accurate information.

**Structural Factors.** It is likely that the larger the organization, the more people there will be to potentially cause and participate in conflict. Resources, whether scarce or under high demand, may generate conflict as each party postures to compete for the resource. The more people interact, the more noticeable their differences become. When dealing with line-staff distinctions, this can lead to disputes, partly because although people may attempt to participate, it does not necessarily mean

their contributions are heard, valued, or accepted. Leaders should encourage employees to challenge the status quo, seek better ways of doing business, and continually improve processes. Also, rewards programs can potentially encourage and develop a healthy competition as long as the rewards aren't perceived as unfair, unjust, or biased in some way.

**Personal Behavior Factors.** Conflict can arise because of individual differences, such as goals and objectives, perceptions, values, and personalities. If we align our personal needs and values with the overall USAF mission, we will be more aptly willing to change, set aside self-interests, listen to the ideas of others, and reduce conflict. Although not always easy, striving to align personal values with USAF values can reduce conflict that arises based on differences that exist in the workplace. Differences can be perceived as threats, weaknesses, or stressors in the workplace. Focusing on diversity through strengths that contribute to the organization in different ways can help reduce criticism and avoid conflict. Addressing issues through a realistic or even positive perspective rather than being based on emotion will lead to less arguments and more professionally driven performance. Personality conflicts and differences among employees will always exist, but the way we respond to them does not have to be unprofessional or disruptive to the organization.

### 13.5. Conflict Management Techniques

There are a few techniques that can be used to minimize the impact that workplace conflict can have on individuals and on the organization. When considering the degree of cooperation, and the degree of assertiveness of those involved, leaders can determine how to categorize conflict and how to best manage it. Cooperation refers to how willing or unwilling a person or group is to satisfy the other's needs. Assertiveness refers to how passive or active a person is in addressing the conflict. Using an approach addressed by Dr. Kenneth Thomas, author of *Conflict and Negotiation Processes in Organizations*, there are five major conflict management styles and categories, defined based on the levels of cooperation and assertiveness associated with any given situation.

**Competing (Forcing).** (High assertiveness and low cooperativeness). The competing (forcing) style attempts to overwhelm an opponent with formal authority, threats, or the use of power.

**Collaborating.** (High assertiveness and high cooperativeness). The collaborating style uses an attempt to satisfy the concerns of both sides through honest discussion. Creative approaches to conflict reduction, such as sharing resources, may actually lead to both parties being materially better off. For the collaborating style to be successful, trust and openness are required of all participants. Collaborating involves behavior that seeks a 'win' position for both groups.

**Accommodating.** (Low assertiveness and high cooperativeness). The accommodating style often simply consists of giving in to another person's wishes.

**Avoiding.** (Low assertiveness and low cooperativeness). The avoiding style appears to indicate a neutral position of participants which can often lead to 'things working themselves out,' but can also result in an escalation of a situation by allowing it to go unresolved.

**Compromising.** (Some assertiveness and some cooperativeness). The compromising style requires a willingness of both parties to change, adjust, or give something up. Compromising involves behavior that seeks to partially satisfy both parties' desires and resolves the conflict.

**Note:** All situations are unique, depending on the individuals involved, the criticality of the issues,

and the urgency of the situations. When considering each of the conflict management styles, consider the *who*, the *stakes*, and the *situation* to determine the best approach to take to resolve conflict.

### ***Section 13B—Develops People***

#### **13.6. Leadership Responsibility**

As the old adage “a born leader” implies, there are individuals who were intended, inclined, or born to lead. On the other hand, leadership is often defined by a person’s title or position of authority. In all actuality, leadership is an ability we can all develop, cultivate, and expand upon. Merriam-Webster’s dictionary defines the word lead as, “to guide on a way especially by going in advance” or “to direct on a course or in a direction.” A military leader is considered to be, “a person who directs a military force or unit” or “one who has commanding authority or influence.” Leadership, as a moral quality put into action through a command or leadership role, can serve to move mountains...or move people over, around, or through mountains, whichever is required.

Another way of looking at leading in the USAF can be recognized as the art and science of accomplishing the USAF mission by motivating, influencing, and directing Airmen. This highlights two central elements, the mission, objective, or task to be accomplished; and the Airmen who will accomplish it. The science of leadership being observed and studied refers to the methods and understanding of what leadership is. The art of leadership, being personal and subjective, refers to the demonstration and application of leading.

#### **13.7. Leadership and Management**

While leadership and management are separate topics in many respects, they go hand in hand in producing elements that promote mission success. Organizations need a strong balance of both.

*“Management is getting people to do what needs to be done. Leadership is getting people to want to do what needs to be done.”*

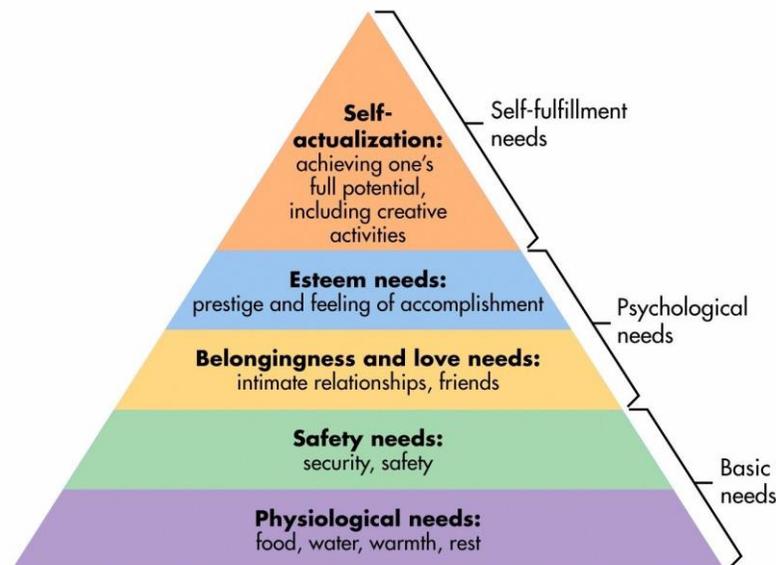
- Warren G. Bennis, Ph.D.

A leader is a person who leads or commands a group, organization, or country. Terms often associated with leadership roles include flight leader, team leader, and squad leader. Warren G. Bennis, Founding Chair, The Leadership Institute, University of Southern California, labeled three primary behavioral leader characteristics as the abilities to motivate, develop, and inspire. Under this model, leaders motivate and inspire people to interact and understand one another as they move in the right direction by satisfying human needs for a sense of belonging (belongingness and love), recognition (esteem), self-esteem (esteem), and control over their lives (safety and security) which can lead to a sense of achievement (self-actualization). The model developed by Warren Bennis echoes Abraham Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs theory (**Figure 13.1.**) for motivation which outlines the road to self-actualization.

Abraham Maslow was is a well-known psychologist who specialized in the theory of psychological health. He is most famous for his theory on the Hierarchy of Needs which outlines basic requirements that must be achieved before ultimately reaching self-actualization or fulfilling your highest potential. Based on Maslow’s theory, in order to attempt success at one level, you must be successful in the previous. For example, if you are hungry or thirsty (physiological needs), you would not be able to focus on building relationships (belongingness) until you have located food

and water. This theory translates to the work environment as the individual who is concerned about being kicked out of the USAF (security) will not be able to focus on striving for achievements, which will ultimately prevent him from reaching his full potential (self-actualization).

**Figure 13.1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.**



A manager is a person responsible for controlling or administering all or part of a company or organization. Terms often associated with managerial roles include career field managers, major command functional managers, program managers, and project managers. Bennis labeled three primary behavioral characteristics of managers as administrators, maintainers, and controllers. Under this model, managers focus on tasks and aim to assert a level of control to drive people in the right direction.

- Generally, managers ensure the resources needed are readily available and efficiently used. Leaders launch and steer the organization toward the pursuit of goals and strategies.
- Managers are responsible for organizing projects, staffing positions with qualified individuals, communicating plans, delegating responsibilities, and devising systems to monitor implementation. Leaders support these actions by aligning the personnel's needs, wants, emotions, and aspirations with the task.
- Good management brings a degree of order and consistency to key issues like readiness, availability, and sustainment. Good leaders lead people to accomplish the mission.
- The best managers tend to become good leaders because they develop leadership abilities and skills through practicing good management techniques. Similarly, often an effective leader will also be found to be a good manager.

### **13.8. Professional Associations**

Private organizations develop professional skills and associations for individuals in many career fields and technical specialties. Membership in such associations may provide additional opportunities for leadership roles, public speaking, and mentoring, as well as broaden technical expertise. Many units have unofficial organizations, such as the squadron booster club and event

planning committees. There are also organizations that allow members to join based on rank, such as the Junior Enlisted Airmen Council, 5/6 Counsel, Top III, and the Chiefs' Group. Taking an active role in these organizations is highly encouraged for personal and professional development.]

### ***Section 13C—Service Mindset***

#### **13.9. The Leader as a Mentor**

Mentoring is a process designed to help each individual reach his or her maximum potential. USAF leaders have an inherent obligation and responsibility to mentor future leaders. Through mentoring, senior leaders pass on their experience and wisdom to junior members as well as philosophy, traditions, shared values, quality, and lessons learned.

Commanders and supervisors must be positive role models and make themselves available to Airmen who seek career guidance, counsel, and mentorship. They must take an active role in their Airmen's professional development by continually challenging them to grow, develop, and improve. At a minimum, a supervisor's mentoring consists of a discussion of performance, potential, and professional development plans during performance feedback sessions. Conversations should include promotion, professional military education, advanced degree work, physical fitness, personal goals and expectations, professional qualities, future assignments, and long-range plans.

*“We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give.”*

- Winston Churchill

Mentoring is an ongoing process and perhaps the most powerful method leadership can use to shape the future. It helps prepare Airmen for the increased responsibilities they will assume as they progress in their careers. There are no limitations or stages of career development that would limit any individual from benefitting from the counsel of a mentor. Additionally, mentors are often appreciated by the mentees more than they will ever know.

#### **13.10. The Air Force Mentoring Program**

The Air Force mentoring program covers a wide range of areas, such as career guidance, professional development, leadership, USAF history and heritage, airpower doctrine, strategic vision, and contributions to joint warfighting. Foremost, individuals must focus on USAF institutional needs. The USAF must develop people skilled in the employment and support of airpower and how this meets national security needs.

Mentors must distinguish between individual goals, career aspirations, and realistic expectations. Each individual defines a successful career, goal, or life accomplishment differently. There are numerous paths to meet individual career and success goals. Although the immediate supervisor or rater is the primary mentor, coach, counselor, guide, or role model for Airmen, subordinates may seek additional counseling and professional development advice from other sources or mentors as well. While there are several approaches mentors can take in the form of coach, counselor, advisor, and advocate, USAF mentoring is governed by AFMAN 36-2643, *Air Force Mentoring Program*, 17 May 2019.

#### **13.11. The Mentoring Process**

The mentoring model described here, corresponds to the letters in the word itself.

## M – E – N – T – O – R – I – N – G

**Model.** An effective mentor, serving as a role model, understands that actions speak much louder than words. The protégé is constantly observing and learning from the mentor. The opportunity to see how the mentor deals with a variety of situations is an important part of the mentoring process.

**Empathize.** Mentoring requires the ability to empathize and show genuine compassion for protégés. Mentors who remember what it was like when they were new and inexperienced may be more effective in assisting others in their professional development. Empathy cultivates bonds between mentors and protégés and fosters the mutual commitment that exemplifies mentoring.

**Nurture.** Nurturing emphasizes a caring attitude. Like a farmer tends to the field, the mentor nurtures the protégé, by investing ample time, patience, and effort. Mentors must make the time and effort to effectively mentor their protégés and provide the appropriate amounts of attention, training, and time for them to apply, internalize, and value what they have learned.

**Teach.** The skill of teaching may not come naturally to everyone, but knowledge and experience are valuable as mentors. Consider these five simple steps when teaching and training protégés: (1) organize the material into logical, systematic units of manageable size; (2) correct errors immediately; (3) frequently review previously covered material and relate the material to the current lesson; (4) include practical exercises to help the protégé exercise the newfound knowledge; and (5) evaluate the protégés' progress and provide detailed feedback.

**Organize.** Mentors must first be organized before helping others become organized. An organized mentor knows from the very beginning what he or she wants to achieve, and focuses on this goal. The time and effort spent organizing thoughts and materials into a logical, sequential plan aimed at a precisely defined target pays big dividends in the form of improved learning and developmental experiences for the protégé.

**Respond.** Mentoring is a two-way communication process that requires mentors to actively listen to the protégés' questions and provide useful and timely responses. Effective mentors must remain alert to recognize nonverbal behaviors and subtle communication cues that indicate the protégés' interest in certain areas. Mentors should be proactive, anticipate the needs, problems, and concerns of protégés, and address them immediately.

**Inspire.** More than a good role model, teacher, or ally, a genuine mentor is an inspirational mentor. Inspirational mentors have a profound impact on protégés that encourages them to transform into a more improved being. Inspiration is a characteristic that distinguishes leaders from managers.

**Network.** A good mentor introduces and connects a protégé with others who can provide increased guidance, support, resources, and opportunities. Networking is a vital function that helps protégés establish themselves in their professional community through a solid network of friends, acquaintances, and associates.

**Goal-Set.** Sometimes people lack the experience to understand the importance of setting goals or the expertise to establish specific, achievable, and realistic goals. Mentors must help their protégés understand why goals are important; establish short- and long-term goals that are specific, achievable, and realistic; and be available to assist them in achieving their goals.

### 13.12. The Leader as a Counselor

Being involved in an Airman's development and growth is essential to a leader's influence and credibility. Leaders should seek to develop and improve counseling abilities to ensure effective

counseling is provided to Airmen. Counseling can be conducted for a number of reasons, ranging from something as simple as discussing steps made toward achieving a goal, to something as complex as addressing a significant life changing event.

### **13.13. When to Counsel**

The key to successful counseling is to conduct the counseling as close to the event as possible. Good leaders take advantage of naturally occurring events as opportunities for providing feedback. Leaders must be genuinely interested in Airmen and understand how involvement can help personally and professionally. Listening and providing assistance may greatly enhance an Airman's ability to deal with a situation. Professional growth counseling is often conducted while reviewing an Airman's duty performance during a certain period and setting standards for the next period, typically, but not only during Airman's Comprehensive Assessment (ACA) feedback sessions. Leaders may conduct counseling for superior or substandard duty performance or behavior. Leaders may conduct crisis counseling to help an Airman through the initial shock after receiving negative news. Referral counseling may follow crisis counseling, which can help Airmen work through a personal situation and may serve as preventive counseling before a situation becomes a problem. Referral counseling often involves agencies, such as legal services, religious affairs, or an alcohol and drug counselor.

### **13.14. Approaches to Counseling**

An effective leader approaches each Airman as an individual. Different people and different situations require different counseling approaches. Three approaches to counseling include nondirective, directive, and combined. The major difference between the approaches to counseling is the degree to which the Airman participates and interacts during a counseling session. **Figure 13.2.** summarizes the advantages and disadvantages of each approach.

**Nondirective.** The nondirective counseling approach is preferred for most counseling sessions. During the counseling session, the leader listens to the situation before helping the individual make decisions or giving advice. The leader encourages the Airman to explore and clarify important points to better understand the situation. During nondirective counseling, the leader should refrain from providing solutions or rendering opinions, instead, maintain focus on individual and organizational goals and objectives. Also, ensure the Airman's plan of action aligns with those goals and objectives.

**Directive.** The directive counseling approach works best to correct simple problems, make on-the-spot corrections, and correct specific aspects of duty performance. The leader using the directive style directs a course of action for the Airman. The directive approach is best when time is short, when the solution is clear, or if an Airman has limited problem-solving skills and needs guidance.

**Combined.** The combined counseling approach is a blend of both the directive and nondirective approaches, adjusting them to articulate what is best for the situation. With the combined approach, the leader emphasizes the Airman's planning and decision-making responsibilities by listening, offering options, helping analyze possible solutions, encouraging the Airman to decide which solution is best, and assisting with the development of a plan of action.

**Figure 13.2. Counseling Approach Summary Chart.**

<b>Approach</b>	<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
<b>Nondirective</b>	Encourages maturity Encourages open communication Develops personal responsibility	More time consuming Requires greatest counselor skills
<b>Directive</b>	The quickest method Good for people who need clear, concise direction Allows counselors to actively use their experience	Does not encourage Airmen to be part of the solution May treat symptoms, not problems May discourage Airmen from talking freely The counselor provides the solution, not the Airman
<b>Combined</b>	Moderately quick Encourages maturity Encourages open communication Allows counselors to actively use their experience	May take too much time for some situations

### **13.15. The Counseling Process**

One of the most important things a leader can do when conducting a counseling session, regardless of purpose, is to ensure the intent is established and the environment is appropriate. Although the length of time required will vary, when possible, conduct counseling during the duty day, aim for the counseling session to last less than one hour, and be prepared to schedule a second session, if necessary. Both the leader and the Airman should clearly understand why, where, and when the counseling session will take place and be prepared to discuss main points, pertinent information, and plausible, obtainable goals. Finally, the environment should have minimal interruptions and be free from distractions to show respect for the Airman and the conversation.

Even when you have not prepared for formal counseling, you can follow the four basic components of a counseling session: state the purpose, discuss the issues, develop a plan of action, and record the plan. These steps can be as simple or as elaborate as the situation requires. Also, schedule any future meetings, at least tentatively, before closing the session. Appropriate measures to consider following the counseling may include a follow-up session, making referrals, informing the chain of command, and taking corrective measures.

### **13.16. The Leader as a Coach**

Effective leaders often serve as coaches who must thoroughly understand the strengths, weaknesses, and professional goals of members of their teams. Leaders coach Airmen similar to the way athletic coaches improve their teams, by setting goals, developing and implementing plans of action, and providing oversight and motivation throughout the process.

### **13.17. Vision**

USAF leaders must have a collective vision - a vision that empowers, inspires, challenges, and motivates followers to the highest levels of commitment and a continuously improving

environment. Airmen are responsible for conducting and maintaining the asymmetric advantages and capabilities the USAF delivers in air, space, and cyberspace. We need to ensure we are also driving efficiencies and improvements across the board. Therefore, we must use the right tools and techniques to address problems, leverage opportunities for improvement, and employ our greatest resource - innovative, dedicated Airmen.

Vision is helping people believe they can accomplish goals in the anticipation of a better future as a result of their efforts. Inspiration is one way to convey vision. To better understand this concept, consider President John F. Kennedy's announcement in 1961 of the United States intention to put a man on the moon within the decade. Perhaps an impossible task by most standards, and yet it was achieved. The dramatic announcement and the infectious inspiration helped achieve the goal.

### **13.18. Implementing the Vision**

While senior leadership has the authority and responsibility to change the system as a whole, leaders at lower levels direct supervisors and subordinates to seek and perform tasks more appropriate to the challenges of the new age. To do this, leaders must communicate the vision, bolster Airmen's courage and understanding, and solicit ideas and suggestions.

*"A great leader's courage to fulfill his vision comes from passion, not position."*

- John C. Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*

Every leader needs to establish an enduring vision. As technology and our environment continue to evolve, our vision and leadership style must keep pace. A vision that meets the organization's needs at the time of implementation, over time is likely to require re-vision, therefore the vision forming process should be continual. On the other hand, the vision should not be arbitrarily modified. If the vision works and is aligned with environmental and technological developments, the vision should be affirmed and supported.

The ability to form mental images of a possible outcome and translate these images into a reality through leadership and action is a unique feature of the human brain. A leader should constantly anticipate the influences, trends, and demands that affect the vision over the next month, year, and even decade. To be of realistic value, the vision must be logical, deductive, and plausible. Vision must be specific enough to provide real guidance to people, but unbounded enough to encourage initiative and demonstrate relevancy to a variety of conditions. Leaders with vision are compelled to overcome complacency and refuse to accept the norm of doing things as they have always been done.

## ***Section 13D—Leadership***

### **13.19. Leadership Development**

Leaders must effectively influence others, whether through expectation, delegation, or empowerment. Qualities that facilitate followership and ensure credibility and mutual respect with Airmen are also important. Three qualities that help leaders gain respect and credibility and have a positive influence on others are self-awareness, cultural awareness, and empathy.

**Self-Awareness.** Leaders must be fully aware of their own values, needs, and biases before counseling Airmen. Self-aware leaders are more likely to act consistently with their own values and actions and are less likely to project their own biases onto Airmen.

**Cultural Awareness.** Leaders need to be aware of the similarities and differences between individuals of different cultural backgrounds and how these factors may influence values, perspectives, and actions, especially if they generate concerns within the organization.

**Empathy.** Showing empathy is being understanding of and sensitive to another person's feelings, thoughts, and experiences to the point that you can almost feel or experience them yourself. Leaders with empathy put themselves in another's shoes and see a situation from their perspective. Understanding another's position can help the development of a plan of action—one that works.

### **13.20. Leadership Self-Evaluation**

To successfully perform as a responsible leader, one must understand what is expected of them. The following is a list of questions that offer a perspective for what is expected of aspiring leaders in developing particular skills. Only the most honest responses will reveal one's definitive strengths and potential weaknesses. Pause and consider the importance of the following questions.

- Do I have the courage to make tough decisions and stand by them?
- Am I flexible when dealing with change?
- Can I remain enthusiastic and cheerful when I am confronted with seemingly impossible tasks?
- Am I willing to do my best with what seem to be inadequate means?
- Can I inspire people to achieve outstanding results?
- Am I willing to take reasonable risks to allow my Airmen to grow and become more productive?
- Am I willing to let my Airmen be creative?
- Does my manner invite communication?
- Do I really listen and withhold judgment until I have all the facts?
- Am I willing to accept my Airmen's failures as my own and recognize their successes as theirs?
- Am I able to do many things at one time to manage a complex job?
- Can I carry out orders as well as give them?

### **13.21. Leadership Milestones**

Life in the military incorporates a perpetual requirement for continued development. Effective leaders must accept the responsibility of being both a master student and a master teacher by embracing the role of both follower and leader. Setting high, attainable standards provides opportunities for continual growth, as well as guidance and feedback. Giving Airmen a goal and inspiration for developing and performing to their best ability is a leader's direct line to developing leaders of tomorrow. In business, successful corporations actively seek out people with leadership potential and expose them to career experiences designed to develop their skills. They also value a combination of maturity, experience, and untapped potential as a valuable asset to any organization.

**Valuing Experience.** Leaders foster professional growth by insisting their Airmen focus attention on the aspects of a situation, mission, or project they control, setting the stage for some adventure and providing challenging and enlightening experiences. As leaders progress and develop themselves, it is just as important to allow Airmen to do the same while growing a sense of

confidence in their skills and abilities.

**Fostering Growth.** The role of the leader in fostering growth is to identify and analyze knowledge and improvement opportunities. This will ensure advancements are permanent and pervasive, not temporary or limited. Leaders encourage the learning process by formally recognizing individual and unit successes, no matter how large or small.

**Facing Challenges.** Developing Airmen for leadership positions requires consistent exposure to challenges with gradual increases in responsibility over long periods of time. Identifying people with leadership potential early in their careers and then determining the appropriate developmental challenges for them is the first step. Leaders must recognize the capabilities of each Airman in their unit or organization. Those capabilities may include any skills, talents, or experiences the Airman may have that can contribute to current and future mission accomplishment.

**Professional Development.** Leaders must also diagnose the developmental needs of Airmen, then assist them with developmental needs that fulfill current or future jobs or roles and responsibilities. Professional development needs may include off-duty education, professional military education, specific skills training, professional development seminars, and communication skills.

**Personal Development.** Personal developmental needs may include relationships, interpersonal skills, and off-duty education. Today's effective leaders had opportunities early in their careers that required them to lead, take risks, and learn from their triumphs and failures.

**Dealing with Setbacks.** To learn and improve, people need to be encouraged to try new things. Airmen count on the experience and understanding of strong leaders in dealing with setbacks. An Airman's dedication to improving his or her abilities is quite a valuable asset to an organization. Followers must remain optimistic, even in times of adversity.

**Dealing with Change.** Leaders must learn as much as possible about a change before dealing with the change process. Furthermore, they must learn how to deal with emotions often associated with change. The people supporting these processes must be motivated to meet the challenge and support the change that is being implemented. To achieve that, leaders must maintain a clear understanding of the present and a clear focus on the future.

### 13.22. Leadership Styles

There are no secrets or magic formulas to successful leadership. Leadership is a responsibility that requires an active role in engaging with individuals and teams to align their efforts with personal as well as organizational success. Although the best advice is to just be yourself, ambitious and aspiring leaders can always benefit from the wise words of others. In 1976, as the Pacific Air Forces Command Commander, General Louis L. Wilson, Jr., provided some timeless advice.

**Be Tough.** Set your standards high and insist that your people measure up. Have the courage to correct those who fail to do so. In the long run, your people will be happier. Almost certainly morale will be higher, your outfit better, and your people prouder.

**Get Out from Behind Your Desk.** See for yourself what is going on in your work center. Your people will see that you are interested in their problems, work conditions, and welfare. Many of your people problems will go away if you practice this point.

**Search Out the Problems.** If you think there are no problems in your organization, you may be wrong. Your job is to find them. Foster an environment that encourages people to bring problems to you that they are unable to solve for themselves.

**Find the Critical Path to Success.** Get personally involved in issues on a priority basis. Let your influence be felt on make-or-break issues in your organization. Avoid the activity trap—do not spend your valuable time on inconsequential or trivial matters. Weigh in where it counts.

**Be Sensitive.** Listen to your people. Communicate with them and be perceptive to their needs. Learn to recognize problems and seek out ideas. Be innovative. Recognize that effective communication involves shared perceptions. Do not be afraid to empathize when necessary.

**Do Not Take Things for Granted.** Do not assume things have been fixed—look for yourself. Furthermore, the probability is high that fixed problems will recur, so monitor your processes.

**Do Not Alibi.** Remember, you and your people will never be perfect. People will make mistakes, so do not be defensive about things that are wrong. Nothing is more disgusting than the individual who can do no wrong and has an alibi for anything and everything that goes awry.

**Do Not Procrastinate.** Do not put off hard decisions, they will not be any easier tomorrow. This does not mean you should make precipitous or unreasonable decisions just to be prompt; however, once you have arrived at a decision, get on with it.

**Do Not Tolerate Incompetence.** Once people demonstrate laziness, disinterest, or an inability to do the job, you must have the courage to terminate their assignments. You cannot afford to do less. When your people do good work, recognize and encourage them. They will likely do even better.

**Be Honest.** You must create an atmosphere of trust and confidence. When talking to your people, be candid and insist that they do likewise. They set their behavior patterns based upon your example. Nothing is more disastrous than half-truths. Finally, be honest with yourself—do not gimmick reports and figures to make things look good on paper.

### 13.23. The Power of Leadership

The concept of power in the workforce has many positive aspects, and everyone can learn to harness different sources of individual power, particularly when in a leadership role. Taken from Ken Blanchard's *Points of Power, Situational Self Leadership*, developing one's own sources of power enables leaders to be less dependent on others, thus allowing them to take initiative and make greater contributions in their jobs. Although the concept of power sometimes brings to mind such associations as coercion, manipulation, and even corruption, this does not have to be the case when the right people are put in the right leadership positions. It is helpful to develop an understanding that "the sole advantage of power is the ability to do more good." Thus, if you want to do more good for the people around you and for the organization, rather than rely on one aspect of power where you are strongest, take advantage of opportunities to apply various aspects of power in varying circumstances where most appropriate.

**Position power.** Position power is inherent in the authority of the position you have. Your position power may be represented when your business card has a title printed on it that indicates you have the power to manage people or command resources.

**Task power.** Task power is power that stems from being good at a particular task and being able to help others with a process or procedure they may be responsible for.

**Personal power.** Personal power comes from your personal character attributes, such as strength of character, passion, inspiration, or a personal vision of the future. Personal power is further

enhanced by the strength of your interpersonal skills, such as your ability to communicate well and to be persuasive with others.

**Relationship power.** Relationship power comes from association with others through friendship, familiarity with a colleague, cultivation of a relationship, preferential treatment, or reciprocity (trading favors).

**Knowledge power.** Knowledge power is about having expertise in an area, often through a special skill or group of skills. It is also evidenced by having certain degrees or certifications indicating special training. Knowledge power can generally be transferred within jobs or organizations.

### **13.24. Full Range Leadership Development**

A full range of leadership behaviors is essential in today's complex world. Today's USAF depends on highly effective Airmen with the flexibility and capability to operate throughout a spectrum of leadership styles. Full Range Leadership Development (FRLD) requires leadership to be viewed as a system made up of three core elements: the leader, the follower, and the situation. Success of FRLD relies not only on the leader's actions, but also an accurate understanding of the follower and the situation, and requires today's leaders to be willing to engage in several ways.

- Develop relationships with leadership, peers, and subordinates.
- Take advantage of opportunities as they become available.
- Efficiently use available resources.
- Properly evaluate situations and the performance of followers.
- Reward appropriately (and discipline accordingly).
- Identify improvement areas in one's self, followers, and the work place.

### **13.25. Full Range Leadership Development Model**

The FRLD model includes leadership behaviors ranging from the passive, less effective laissez-faire behavior, to the more active and effective transformational leadership behavior. Developing leadership behaviors begins by understanding each of them and knowing when or when not to apply them. In addition, possessing the flexibility and capability to implement the appropriate leadership style successfully is critical to leading others.

**Laissez-Faire.** Laissez-faire leaders view the development and needs of their subordinates as someone else's concern. They tend to abandon their responsibilities and remain indifferent toward important issues. They are hesitant to make decisions and are usually absent from their place of work, which negatively affects relationships with peers and subordinates.

**Management by Exception-Passive.** Management by exception-passive is an "*if it's not broke, don't fix it*" leadership style. Here, leaders elect to sit back, observe, and wait for things to go wrong before taking action. They intervene only when policies or rules are broken. Management by exception-passive is a little more effective than laissez-faire, but only because subordinates know that leadership will hold them accountable if they fail to meet standards of performance or comply with policies and procedures.

**Management by Exception-Active.** Management by exception-active is a leadership style that aims to keep personnel and processes in control by monitoring and governing subordinates through forced compliance with rules, regulations, and expectations for meeting performance standards. Management by exception-active exists in a structured system with detailed instructions, careful observation, and very *active* supervision. Furthermore, this leadership behavior reduces organizational uncertainties, avoids unnecessary risks, and ensures important goals are being achieved. This transactional leadership behavior reduces the temptation for employees to avoid their duties or act unethically and aids members in meeting defined performance objectives.

**Contingent Rewards.** Contingent rewards is a transactional leadership style that involves the constructive *transaction* between leaders and followers. These transactions are contracts or agreements where the leader sets goals, identifies ways for the subordinate to reach these goals, and supports the follower along the way. The follower is then required to perform their assigned tasks to a specified performance level. When the follower achieves the leader's expectations, the leader reinforces the positive behavior by providing a reward. In other words, the reward is contingent upon the follower performing assigned tasks to expectations.

**Transformational Leadership.** Transformational leadership is a style of leadership that is defined by the application of offering followers a vision and inspiring their mission. This type of leadership inspires followers to exceed their goals and promotes positive, meaningful changes through intrinsic motivation and encourages others to act because they want to. To motivate intrinsically, a transformational leader must consider ways to get others to embrace ideas, strategies, and initiatives. There are four components of transformational leadership: individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, idealized influence, and inspirational motivation.

- **Individualized Consideration (*Nurturing*).** Individualized consideration is where leaders treat their followers as individuals with different needs, abilities, and aspirations and not just as a part of a group of subordinates. They empathize with and support each follower while maintaining healthy communication. Using individualized consideration, leaders 'nurture' followers by acting as mentor or coach.

- **Intellectual Stimulation (*Thinking*).** Intellectual stimulation is the degree to which leaders value their subordinates' rationality and intellect by seeking different perspectives and considering opposing points of view. Using intellectual stimulation, leaders stimulate and encourage creativity in their followers, encourage followers to be independent thinkers, and are not afraid to take risks and solicit ideas from their followers.

- **Inspirational Motivation (*Charming*).** Inspirational motivation is when leaders are involved with developing and articulating visions that paint an optimistic and enthusiastic picture of the future that is appealing and inspiring to followers. These visions elevate performance expectations and inspire followers to put forth extra effort to achieve the leader's vision.

- **Idealized Influence (*Influencing*).** Transformational leaders are charismatic and act as positive role models who "walk the walk." They exhibit high levels of moral behavior, virtues, and character strengths, as well as a strong work ethic. They represent the organization's values, beliefs, and purpose in both words and actions and set aside personal interests for the sake of the group.

### 13.26. Leadership Attributes

**Leading by Example.** Leadership is modeling and setting the example for others - in word and action. Effective leaders lead rather than drive people. They make fair and firm decisions that are in the best interest of good order, discipline, and successful accomplishment of the mission. While no one expects a leader to be perfect, a leader cannot demand the best from others if he or she cannot demonstrate that they are willing to do the same. Through positive behavior, leaders live by their values and become good role models. They reinforce their credibility when they do not dwell on the effort they have put forth.

**Involvement.** A leader's success is reflected in the efficiency, productivity, morale, and enthusiasm demonstrated by the followers, and a leader's involvement is essential to maximizing worker performance and success of the mission. Leaders become a positive influence when they are actively involved in their Airmen's careers.

**Learning from Failure.** Leadership is about risks and rewards, and effective leaders realize that failure is possibly one of the greatest learning tools an organization has for achieving success. With every risk there is the potential for failure; however, these are the moments which shed light on the faults that exist within an organization. Effective leaders realize that learning from failure empowers change and inspires efforts to improve. Therefore, leaders never fear failure.

**Transparency.** Direction, decisions, and actions are rarely challenged if the leader's intentions are transparent. Transparency is accomplished by integrating regular communication, shared decision-making, mutual consensus, and healthy debate. Airmen should know the reason decisions were made and how decisions will impact them and the organization.

**Flexibility.** Leaders who are flexible listen to other's points of view, bend when necessary, and are not afraid to change course if things are not going well. Flexibility is an especially valued leadership trait during times of change or improvement.

**Resilience.** Leaders at every level within an organization constantly face challenges, changes, and criticisms. Resilient leaders must possess a combination of compassion and grit to persevere during times of uncertainty, deviation, turmoil, and conflict.

**Accountability.** Promoting accountability in the workplace includes establishing clear roles and responsibilities, cultivating a sense of pride and ownership among the members within the organization, providing regular feedback to subordinates, leading with integrity, and setting a positive example. Accountability does not focus on the discipline and punishment associated with being unaccountable; but rather, concentrates on creating and sustaining a continuously learning and always improving organization.

**Positive Attitude.** Leaders must demonstrate the attitude they hope to see emulated by their followers. Positive enthusiasm is contagious and can deliver energy to all aspects of organizational operations. The inclination to encourage Airmen, as well as oneself, is a powerful motivator. Effective leaders constantly embrace positive goals and display a positive attitude.

**Values.** The degree to which the values of trust, loyalty, and integrity are present in leaders of an organization directly relates to the organization's effectiveness. Leadership is the capacity to generate and sustain organizational values, often dependent upon consistency and reliability. Establishing values must also be balanced with a willingness to remove people who do not align themselves with organizational values.

**Competence.** Competence is developed with training, education, and experience. The skills and abilities of a leader enable them to competently lead others to achieve the mission.

**Character.** Character is who a leader is as a person with regard to personality. Character is developed over time and through effort and ambition. For character to be effective, it must be coupled with competence. While competence and character are considered valuable leadership traits, a combination of both will often be required for individuals to be perceived as great leaders.

**Charisma.** Charisma is an energy that is emitted by leaders to inspire Airmen to perform a task or objective when aspects of a mission are not inherently motivating or compelling. While charisma can be effective at enhancing morale, it should not be contrary to authority or undermine commander intent.

**Compassion.** Compassion is the sympathy and concern for the misfortunes of others. Compassion promotes healthy, open, and honest communication, and provides the stimulus for Airmen to discuss and deal with personal issues.

**Courage.** Courageous leaders must demonstrate both moral and physical courage in combat and in high-risk situations, as well as in day-to-day life. Leadership requires the courage to address sub-standard performance or unacceptable behavior, welcome new ideas, do what is ethically right when others prefer to do otherwise, and be honest. Acts of courage inspire others to maintain composure in stressful situations, providing the stimulus and encouragement to endure hardships.

**Credibility.** Credibility is the quality of being trusted and believed in. Credible leaders must exercise and demonstrate humility, commitment to the organization and mission, and optimize operations by tapping into the unique strengths of each team member. Occasionally, leaders must be willing to work alongside their followers to get the job done. Credibility may take years to earn through persistent, consistent, and patient leadership and can easily be lost with one thoughtless action, decision, or behavior. Successful leaders earn credibility through leading by example and taking responsibility. A crucial element of a leader's credibility is taking responsibility not only for his or her individual actions, but also for those of the Airmen.

### ***Section 13E—Fosters Inclusion***

#### **13.27. Organizational Culture and Climate**

Every unit, business, or organization has a personality, temperament, and unique environment. Organizational culture is a way of describing an organizational environment. Dynamics within an organization are often driven by the way individuals behave based on perceptions of the organizational culture. This inherent system of cultural expectations and learned behaviors can greatly affect how well organizations perform. Leaders can be particularly effective in aligning the environment with employee needs when they understand the organization's culture and climate.

#### **13.28. Leveraging Diversity**

Our work environment today is more diverse than ever. Diversity is a military necessity. The USAF team is comprised of military, civilians, and contractors. USAF capabilities and warfighting skills are enhanced by diversity among military personnel. At the core, diversity provides collective strengths, perspectives, and capabilities that transcend individual contributions. USAF personnel who work in a diverse environment learn to maximize individual strengths and combine

individual abilities and perspectives for the good of the mission. Our ability to attract and retain a larger, highly talented, diverse pool of applicants for service with the USAF, both military and civilian, is a strength that will impact our future force. Diversity is about strengthening and ensuring long-term viability to support our mission.

### **13.29. Respecting Individuality**

The skilled leader deals effectively with all races, nationalities, cultures, disabilities, ages, and genders. In an effort to acknowledge the richness and benefits of diversity, we must increase awareness of individuality and expel stereotypes. Stereotypes regarding age, experience, background, or perspective are detrimental to organizations. Stereotypes ignore individual strengths and contributions and exploit generalized characteristics. The setbacks these issues cause are not only to the organization, but to the individuals within the organization who would otherwise contribute to the success of the mission. The workplace has no room for such stereotypes.

**Appreciate Differences.** The challenge is to incorporate everyone's talents into a cohesive and optimal workforce. We must recognize that people are vital to an organization's success. Leaders can find themselves dealing with a workforce ranging from 18-year-olds to those with 30 or more years of experience. Consequently, we need to understand the motivations and interests of this diverse workforce. What sparks interest and passion in one person does not necessarily ignite the next person. Effective leaders take time to recognize what excites others, leverage their talents, and cultivate a work culture that recognizes and appreciates differing perspectives and approaches to solving problems. The USAF attracts people from every aspect of society, culture, and social status, none of which are under a supervisor's direct control. Although supervisors cannot change someone's inherent characteristics, they can change how they lead people as a cohesive team. Foremost, leaders must create a hospitable climate that promotes respect and inclusion. This will reduce dysfunctional tension and increase team productivity.

**Establish Common Ground.** The first step in leading a diverse organization is to form a common ground or a shared set of assumptions to form the framework within which to communicate. The common ground is the organization itself - the vision, goals, rules, regulations, processes, and procedures that govern what the unit does to achieve mission requirements. Clear guidelines improve communication, reduce confusion, provide purpose, and define desired outcomes. A team must have a clear sense of direction to prevent mass confusion with everyone going in different directions.

Everyone's experience and background should be considered as a unique resource. Diversity of experience and background allows diverse ways of perceiving and resolving problems. Managing workforce diversity can result in higher productivity, improved performance, more creativity, more innovativeness, and reduced stress. Giving emphasis to diversity without threatening our unity is the proper way to strengthen the ties that bind a team together.

Industry studies have consistently revealed that heterogeneous or diverse groups are more innovative than homogeneous groups because they view improvement opportunities from multiple perspectives. Managing diversity is determining which differences matter in enriching a product or service. Productivity is an outcome of respect and inclusion.

### **13.30. Contemporary Motivation**

Contemporary motivation is a simple, three-phased approach to motivation. This approach states that people can be in one of three levels of commitment to the organization: the membership level (at the lowest end), the performance level, or the involvement level (highest level). A person's level of commitment determines how motivated he or she is to accomplish the mission. The more committed a person is to the organization, the more involved he or she will most likely be. Supervisors can help ensure the proper rewards are provided so individuals can move to, or remain in, a higher commitment level.

### **13.31. Organizational Norms**

Similar to recognizing employee commitment levels and organizational culture, organizational norms can affect employee motivation and behaviors. Understanding that norms exist, can help leaders address and determine how to adjust organizational norms that can in turn align employee's motivations on a behavioral level. Positive norms support the organization's goals and objectives and foster behavior directed toward achieving those goals. Norms that support hard work, loyalty, quality, and concern for customer satisfaction are examples of positive norms. Negative norms have just the opposite effect. They promote behavior that works to prevent the organization from achieving its objectives. Negative norms are those that sanction criticism of the company, theft, absenteeism, and low levels of productivity.

**Employee Motivation and Organizational Norms.** To be effective, operational managers, leaders, and supervisors must learn to instill positive norms to properly motivate Airmen. If a military member's behavior does not support positive organizational norms, the supervisor needs to determine the underlying reasons. The individual's behavior could be a result of unmet needs, a result of discipline problems, or both. Areas that affect the dynamic culture between employee motivation and organizational norms are covered here.

**Organizational and Personal Pride.** Organizational and personal pride norms are associated with an individual's feelings of identification and sense of pride regarding the organization. Positive norms lead individuals to see the organization as "his" or "hers." Negative norms are reflected in a "we" vs. "they" attitude toward the organization and its goals. Often friendly competition among military organizations can help units become better at their missions and exhibit greater morale and motivation in a positive way. However, if competition hampers the mission and leads to reduced morale and motivation, competition would be considered to be a negative norm.

**Teamwork and Communication.** Teamwork and communication norms are reflected in the visible behaviors where individuals work together and cooperate with one another. Positive norms promote sharing of information and working together to achieve common goals. Negative norms foster individuality, secrecy, and the belief that success is achieved by an attitude of "every man for himself."

**Leadership and Supervision.** Leadership and supervision norms can enhance or hinder organization contribution and productivity. Positive norms result in supervisors assuming the role of subordinate helpers, trainers, and developers. Negative norms cause supervisors to assume more active roles, like constantly policing and monitoring Airmen.

**Profitability and Cost Effectiveness.** Profitability and cost effectiveness norms determine behaviors with respect to profit and cost consciousness. Positive norms encourage people to save money and reduce costs. Negative norms foster a lack of concern for bottom line performance. The saying, “it’s good enough for government work,” is a negative norm that our USAF cannot accept.

**Customer Relations.** Customer relations norms result in individual behavior that affects the manner in which a customer is served. Positive norms are directed toward maximizing customer satisfaction. Negative norms lead to viewing the customer as an obstacle to be avoided. Each organization must cultivate a culture that helps develop positive customer relations to ensure our Nation can meet any challenge in the most effective manner.

**Innovativeness and Creativity.** Innovativeness and creativity norms determine, to a large degree, whether original and creative behaviors are supported and encouraged. Positive norms lead to the stimulation of new ideas and positive change. Negative norms support the status quo and discourage experimentation. In today’s environment, we all must encourage everyone to bring innovativeness and creativity to the table to meet the dynamic threats that terrorism has brought to our shores.

**Training and Development.** Training and development norms are essential throughout our careers as we grow and cultivate future leaders of our USAF. Positive norms in this group encourage training and view development as essential to the ongoing operation. Negative norms treat development as a nonessential aspect of the operation. Airmen are constantly training to become better equipped and prepared.

## Chapter 14 DEVELOPING SELF

### *Section 14A—Accountability and Self-Management*

#### **14.1. Accountability**

**Accountability** is defined as demonstrating reliability and honesty, and taking responsibility for the behaviors of self and team. Accountability is at the core of what it means to be an Airman. In surveys of USAF members, Accountability has been consistently rated as the most important foundational competency for success in an USAF career.

Accountability requires leading by example, admitting mistakes, and doing the right thing even when it is unpopular or difficult. Accountable Airmen embody the USAF Core Values of Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do—and take personal responsibility even when faced with the most challenging situations.

You may not always recognize the important role your actions (or inaction) can play in a situation. Taking personal responsibility requires:

- Understanding the **significance** and potential irreversibility of failing to act
- Recognizing your competence and ability to take the steps that are needed in a given situation (**self-efficacy**)
- Acting out of a sense of personal control (**autonomy**)

For example, imagine you are working in a nuclear facility. You find out that one of your friends, a nuclear weapons specialist, has been cheating on his exams to maintain weapons system certification. Do you report him? What if your supervisor tells you to ignore the issue?

Imagine you are working as a military training instructor. You observe one of your peers pushing his trainees too hard, yelling obscenities at them when they make mistakes, and forcing them to train more hours than is authorized. Will you say something? What if your immediate leadership is pressuring your peer to work his trainees more hours in order to meet training goals?

**Significance.** In each of these situations, try to understand the significance of the situation by thinking about the bigger picture.

1. What if the same way **you** responded to your co-worker in these situations was the way other people in the USAF were responding in similar situations?

That is, what would happen if not just one, but many, MTIs pushed their trainees too hard, to the point of physical injury? What would happen if not just one, but many, nuclear weapons specialists didn't have sufficient expertise to repair key equipment or correctly follow emergency procedures?

2. What does the way you would respond to these situations say about who you are as a person?

Are you someone who cheats and enables cheaters? Are you someone who looks the other way when there are potential risks to security? Are you someone who fails to stand up for the most junior and vulnerable Airmen among us?

**Self-Efficacy.** Self-efficacy is a person’s belief in their ability to address a situation, based on the skills they have and the circumstances they face. Recognize your own personal strengths and think about how you can bring your skills to bear on a situation.

For example, you can use your communication skills (reflection, active listening, and recognition of non-verbal cues) and influence your peers by appealing to reason or shared values. You can demonstrate perseverance and persist in addressing an issue with others. You can take initiative and try to help peers see situations as opportunities to learn. Try to make use of your unique strengths and talents—maybe you can teach your friend (the nuclear weapons specialist) better study techniques to help him learn the material needed to pass his weapons system exams; maybe you can show your friend (the MTI) better teaching techniques or coach him on how to exercise self-control and patience when correcting trainees. Have confidence in yourself and your abilities to address challenging situations.

**Autonomy.** Ultimately you are your own person. You make your own decisions on your actions or inactions. You have the freedom to choose how to respond to a situation. Even if so-called “leaders” or “friends” try to pressure you otherwise, you can act to support the greater good.

## 14.2. Perseverance

As Airmen, we understand that “Excellence in All We Do” entails striving for continual self-improvement. But too often the way we think about our abilities may hold us back.

Psychologists distinguish two mindsets regarding ability and other personal qualities. **Fixed mindset** refers to the belief that a person’s intelligence and other personal qualities are mostly permanent; that you are a certain kind of person, and there is not much that can be done to really change that. In contrast, **growth mindset** refers to the belief in the capacity to fundamentally improve and significantly change the kind of person you are. Growth mindset entails a recognition that past mistakes or failures don’t define who you are or who you can become.

People with a **fixed mindset** are likely to give up easily when things get hard. They are constantly trying to prove themselves (prove their intelligence, prove their natural talent) and if they don’t excel at first, may believe there is not much that can be done to change that. They tend to be overly sensitive about being wrong or making mistakes because they think their (initial) failures reflect a lack of ability that can’t be changed. They may view exerting effort as evidence of inability.

People with a **growth mindset** are likely to persist when learning new things, and persevere on even the most difficult tasks. They put in effort and focus on improving, recognizing that challenges are needed in order to develop and grow. They don’t get defensive about mistakes, failure, or negative feedback, and don’t feel threatened by the success of others, because they don’t view an initial lack of ability as permanent.

If you are someone who holds a fixed mindset, you can begin to change your perspective and become more perseverant:

1. Remind yourself of the differences between the fixed and growth mindsets every day. Remember that when people with a growth mindset set goals they:
  - a. Persist in the face of setbacks
  - b. Embrace challenges (actively seek out difficult tasks as an opportunity to learn)
  - c. Value effort as the path to mastery
  - d. Seek feedback and learn from criticism
  - e. Find lessons and inspiration in the success of others
2. Ask yourself, “What are the opportunities for learning and growth today?” then form a plan and begin to act on it.
3. As you encounter inevitable obstacles and setbacks, form a new plan to continue learning.
4. When you succeed, don’t forget to ask yourself: “What do I have to do to maintain and continue the growth?”

### 14.3. Self-Control

Airmen should recognize the need to exhibit self-control as part of the USAF Core Values of Integrity First and Service Before Self.

Self-control refers to a person’s ability to override or restrain their inner responses or impulses. This includes keeping emotions under control in difficult situations, handling temptations and avoiding inappropriate behavior (e.g., controlling one’s urges to overeat or smoke, or restraining a tendency to yell or curse when angry). Understanding both the limitations of one’s self-control and one’s ability to strengthen it may be important to consistently demonstrate self-control when needed.

**Self-Control is Limited.** Like a muscle, our self-control is limited and gets depleted with heavy use. Controlling strong urges is a heavy lift, and we can expend only so much effort before our efforts begin to fail.

As a result, changing the situation to reduce temptation is more likely to prevent inappropriate behavior than expending effort to try to internally control urges. For example, if you love potato chips and have a tendency to overeat, it will be more effective to keep chips out of the house altogether (“out of sight is out of mind”) than to try to “will” yourself to eat just one. Some self-control may be needed to pass up the chips aisle at the grocery store, but far stronger self-control would be needed to avoid eating an open bag of chips that has been sitting in front of you for hours at home.

The same principle applies to avoiding inappropriate behavior when angry or upset. Removing yourself from situations that are likely to cause you to become angry (avoiding potential “triggers”) will be more likely to prevent outbursts than simply exerting effort internally to try to control anger in difficult situations.

**Self-Control Can Become Stronger.** Like a muscle, self-control can be made stronger with practice. Regularly practicing small acts of self-control, interspersed with rest, can strengthen self-control over time. Further, improving self-control in one domain (e.g., controlling urges to overeat)

has been shown to improve self-control in other domains as well (e.g., controlling other impulses, such as the tendency to curse or yell when angry).

Studies have found that even two weeks of deliberate, daily practice to inhibit an urge or behavior can meaningfully improve impulse control:

- Set a target goal requiring self-control (e.g., avoiding sweets and desserts; holding a handgrip for as long as possible, despite physical discomfort)
- Keep a daily record of how much effort and self-control you exert (e.g., declined cookie when offered one that smelled delicious; held the handgrip for X minutes), and reflect on how practicing could improve self-control.

While some people naturally tend to have more self-control than others, with practice, even people with initially poor self-control can get better at exercising restraint, and avoiding temptations.

#### **14.4. Resilience**

How is it that some people seem to “bounce back” from negative experiences so quickly, while others tend to get caught in a rut, seemingly unable to recover and move on? While external factors such as support, relationships, and spirituality all impact resilience, our resilience can also be affected by how we think about stressful situations.

*Positive reappraisal* refers to the process of re-construing (re-interpreting) stressful events as non-threatening, meaningful, and even contributing to personal growth. This cognitive strategy can help us prepare for stressful events (by embracing challenge), and better cope with past events (by viewing them as opportunities for learning/growth).

**Embracing Challenge.** Imagine the following situation:

*You receive last-minute notice that you will need to give a presentation to an audience of high-ranking members. The stakes are high, and your ability (or inability) to convince the audience will have major consequences on your career.*

For most people, this can be a stressful situation. But studies have shown that our ability to manage potentially stressful events like this can be affected by how we frame the situation. Specifically, when we view a situation in terms of *threat* (e.g., focusing on task difficulty and how other people will evaluate us), our heart rate, pulse, and blood pressure increase and it takes us longer to calm down afterwards.

When we instead frame the same situation in terms of *challenge*, we tend to recover faster (heart rate, pulse, and blood pressure return to normal more quickly after the event). For example, before going into a stressful situation, you might tell yourself (or one of your Airmen):

*“Even though this is a difficult task, it is a challenge that can be met and overcome. I have overcome other challenges in the past, and if I try hard to do my best, I can meet this challenge as well.”*

When framed this way in terms of challenge, people report experiencing less anxiety about the task, and demonstrate faster recovery.

## **Viewing Negative Events as Opportunities for Growth.**

Sometimes negative events happen to everyone—your presentation went poorly and you received a poor performance evaluation. Or you experienced adversity outside of work-- you got divorced, were in an accident, experienced the death of a family member, etc.

Experts recommend reflecting on the problems and challenges we have faced. Try to make sense of the circumstances and ask yourself:

- Is there something you could learn from this situation?
- Can you envision something good coming out of dealing with this problem?
- How could the event change your life in a positive way?
- How could you find benefit in this situation in the long-term?

Some examples of cognitive reappraisal to learn or grow from otherwise negative events:

- Someone who has a heart attack might view the event as a “wake up call” and chance to modify their lifestyle and begin to change their diet.
- Someone whose spouse becomes seriously ill might view the need for caregiving as deepening their relationship and level of intimacy.
- Someone who has been abused might view their survival as evidence of their strength, and they might decide to dedicate their life to helping others make similar recoveries.

Importantly, there is often the opportunity to learn from even more mundane stressful events. For example, having been treated rudely by a supervisor, one might learn how to relate more effectively with one’s own subordinates in the future (i.e., having understanding of what type of supervisory behavior to avoid).

Rather than a wishful denial of reality, cognitive reappraisal allows us to actively find meaning in adversity so that we can flexibly grow and adapt longer term.

## ***Section 14B—Military Communication***

### **14.5. Communication as a Foundational Competency**

Communication (oral, written, and nonverbal) is critical throughout an USAF career. Recognized as a foundational competency, the USAF has defined effective communication to include diverse skills such as:

- Presenting complex information articulately and concisely
- Tailoring communication to address concerns of the audience
- Voicing differing opinions on contentious issues without triggering a defensive response
- Attending to non-verbal cues, and communicating with sensitivity to others’ needs

This chapter addresses communication in its many forms within the USAF, from high-level strategic communication to routine meetings and email writing. While some communication formats described in this chapter are specific to the military, many of the communication principles described later in this chapter will serve members well even when transitioning to civilian careers.

## 14.6 Strategic Communication

Airmen must ensure audiences know and understand what the USAF needs, where we are going, and how we can be positioned for success. *Air Force Communication Waypoints* provides the tools needed to clearly articulate the *Global Vigilance*, *Global Reach*, and *Global Power* of the future. Because communication can be broken into three parts: the sender, the message, and the audience, we must be aware of and responsible for how we communicate, including the way our communication is perceived by others. Strategic communication is viewed as an emerging and extremely important concept, resulting in strategic communication being designated as a special area of emphasis.

**Strategic Communication - Defined.** The Department of Defense broadly defines strategic communication as a process of purposefully using communication for the intent of advancing national interests and objectives through synchronized integration of information with other elements of national power. Communication synchronization entails focused efforts to create, strengthen, or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of national interests, policies, and objectives by understanding and engaging key audiences through the use of coordinated actions. In other words, strategic communication is implemented by aligning actions, words, and images with the purpose of obtaining a specific objective or objectives. Leaders use strategic messaging to advocate the unique functions and distinct capabilities of airpower to project national influence and respond to national defense requirements.

## 14.7. Enterprise Perspective

Having an enterprise perspective in strategic communication empowers USAF leaders to inform and appropriately influence key audiences by synchronizing and integrating communication efforts to deliver truthful, timely, accurate, and credible information, analysis, and opinion. Truth is the foundation of all public communications, both in terms of credibility and capability. Timely and agile dissemination of information is essential to achieving desired effects. Without appropriate information dissemination, strategic communication cannot maximize value or potential. It must be conducted at the time, level, and manner for which it is intended.

**Our USAF Story.** Effectively communicating who we are as Airmen underwrites our ability to be successful in all areas of engagement. USAF leaders want every Airman to be a communicator or spokesperson for the USAF, and through the enterprise perspective, be able to tell their USAF story. All Airmen need to know how to integrate their personal USAF story and experience into a message that adds credibility to USAF, Department of Defense, and national strategic communication.

## 14.8. Public Affairs

An important aspect of communication is speaking in public forums and recognizing the need for strategic communication alignment; this involves communication synchronization. As stated in AFI 1-1, the purpose of Public Affairs (PA) operations is to communicate timely, accurate, and useful information about USAF activities to Department of Defense, the USAF, as well as domestic and international audiences. The PA representative is the commander's principal spokesperson and advisor, and a member of the personal staff. PA advises the commander on the implications of command decisions, actions, and operations on foreign and domestic public perceptions. PA plans, executes, and evaluates activities and events to support overall operational

success. The PA representative must have the resources to provide information, including visual information, 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. Additional information regarding public affairs can be found in AFI 35-101, *Public Affairs Operations*, 20 November 2020. **Note:** Although briefly covered in standards of conduct and enforcing standards, propriety and perception, it is important to mention that any activity not in alignment with good order, discipline, and national security may intentionally or unintentionally generate a negative perception of the USAF. Commanders have the authority and responsibility to address situations that could be perceived negatively, while also being mindful of preserving the service member's right of expression within these interests. More specific restrictions on communications and unofficial publications can be found in AFI 51-508, *Political Activities, Free Speech and Freedom of Assembly of Air Force Personnel*, 12 October 2018.

#### **14.9. Social Media**

Airmen interact with individuals via face-to-face, telephone, written letter, e-mail, text messages, social networking services, and social media. Social networking include weblogs, message boards, video sharing, and services, such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat, used by individuals and communities to stay in touch.

**Appropriate Posts.** Individuals are responsible for what they say, share, or post on social networking services. Offensive and inappropriate communication must be avoided. Also, Airmen who provide commentary and opinions on 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. Additionally, it is important to recognize that social network "friends" and "followers" may potentially constitute relationships that could affect background investigations and periodic reinvestigations associated with security clearances. Additional information regarding social media can be found in: AFH 33-337, *Public Web and Social Communication*; 15 March 2017, and AFI 35-113, *Command Information*, 30 July 2018.

**Operational Security.** Operational security is vital to the accomplishment of the USAF mission. The use of social media and other forums that allow communication with large numbers of people brings with it the increased risk of magnifying operational security lapses. Classified, for official use only, and other official Department of Defense information and documents are prohibited from being posted on social networking services or transmitted via non-Department of Defense e-mail accounts without proper authority.

#### **14.10. Military References for Communicating**

JP 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 15 February 2016, supplements English-language dictionaries and standardizes terminology used within the Department of Defense, other federal agencies, and among the United States and its allies. It is a compilation of definitions, abbreviations, and acronyms applicable to the Department of Defense and its components, often used as a primary source for official correspondence and planning documents.

The *Air University Style Guide for Writers and Editors (AU-1)* provides guidance on writing, editing, and publishing matters related to official publications for the Air University. Also, AU-1 is a valuable reference for grammar, mechanics, and documentation of sources for those with an interest in military acronyms, ranks, and specialized military terms.

The *US Government Printing Office Style Manual* is the approved reference for all forms and styles of government printing. Essentially, the style manual is a standardization reference designed to achieve uniformity in word and type, aimed toward economy of word use.

*The Tongue and Quill* is not an all-inclusive reference, but provides valuable, detailed information on most presentations and papers produced in professional military education courses.

References, such as the *Modern Language Association (MLA) Style Guide*, the *Chicago Manual of Style*, and the *American Psychological Association (APA) Style Guide*, are widely recognized in the civilian sector and organizations following college and university writing standards. They provide useful information when conducting research or developing written products.

### 14.11. Military Phonetic Alphabet

All branches of the U.S. Government and military departments use the International Civil Aviation Organization alphabet for radio communication. This phonetic alphabet was adopted by the U.S. Armed Forces in 1956, and is currently used by North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries and civil aviation around the world. **Table 14.1.** shows the letters, code words, and pronunciation.

**Table 14.1. Military Phonetic Alphabet.**

A	Alfa	AL fah	N	November	NOH vem ber
B	Bravo	BRAH voh	O	Oscar	OSS car
C	Charlie	CHAR lee	P	Papa	PAH
D	Delta	DEL tah	Q	Quebec	Keh BECK
E	Echo	EKK oh	R	Romeo	ROW me oh
F	Foxtrot	FOKS trot	S	Sierra	See AIR ah
G	Golf	Golf	T	Tango	TANG go
H	Hotel	HO tell	U	Uniform	YOU nee form
I	India	IN dee ah	V	Victor	VIK ter
J	Juliet	JEW lee ett	W	Whiskey	WISS key
K	Kilo	KEY loh	X	X-ray	EKS ray
L	Lima	LEE mah	Y	Yankee	YANG kee
M	Mike	Mike	Z	Zulu	ZOO loo

### 14.12. Organizational Communication

Organizational communication refers to the strategic sharing of information, both internally and externally, within and across the organizational industry. Leaders must exhibit solid organizational communication skills to accomplish organization- and mission-related goals. Creating a culture of communication and maintaining relevance empowers people to own the organizational

communication message at every level. According to Caldwell, Stroud, and Menning, in *Fostering a Culture of Engagement*, to be effective, an organizational culture must be proactive, innovative, adaptive, leader driven, and sustainable.

**Proactive.** To be proactive means to seize the initiative and be agile in communicating the message. The capacity to be proactive enables leaders to get out front and communicate their perspectives and experiences on important topics.

**Innovative.** To be innovative means to exercise ingenuity in seeking new effective ways of communicating. Relying on more than raw creative thinking, innovation requires an understanding of the characteristics and capabilities of information sharing and the pace of change.

**Adaptive.** Adaptive, modern communication capabilities thrive in a fast-evolving, instantaneous, and interconnected information environment that presents challenges to rigid and inflexible organizations. The key to success in this environment is adjusting to changing circumstances on the run.

**Leader Driven.** USAF leaders must confront modern media realities by fostering a culture of engagement in their subordinates and commands. Leaders set the command climate by making themselves available for communication, especially during times of crisis.

**Sustainable.** Leadership is essential to instilling focus and function for the culture of engagement. Sustainability requires dedicated resources and manpower to build enduring capabilities to enable a culture of engagement.

### *Section 14C—Preparing to Communicate*

#### **14.13. Communicating Intent**

Like many things, good communication requires preparation. Preparation is the most important aspect, and sometimes the time best spent, with regard to good communication. By being prepared, speakers show audiences that they value their time as well as the topic of interest. Being prepared enhances a speaker's confidence as well as their credibility when communicating a message. Confidence will be a great factor in successful delivery of the message, along with additional aspects covered here for establishing strong spoken communication skills.

Success as a military leader requires the ability to think critically and creatively. It is also crucial to be able to communicate intentions and decisions to others. The ability to communicate clearly—to write, speak, and actively listen—greatly impacts the capacity to inform, teach, motivate, mentor, and lead others. Communicating intent and ideas so others understand the message and act on it is one of the primary qualities of leadership.

#### **14.14. Principles of Effective Communication**

Communication requires a combination of the appropriate quality and quantity of information sharing. While communication can be broken into three parts: the sender, the message, and the audience, for communication to be successful the audience must not only receive the message, but they must interpret the message the way the sender intended. This section addresses five core principles of communication: focused, organized, clear, understanding, and supported (FOCUS).

**Focused.** Being focused means understanding what the issue is, considering all aspects of the issue, and not straying from the issue. Address the issue, the whole issue, and nothing but the issue.

**Organized.** Good organization means presenting information in a logical, systematic manner. When information is not well organized, audiences may become confused, impatient, or inattentive. Even if you are providing useful, relevant information, the importance of your message may be lost to the audience if it is disorganized.

**Clear.** Communicate with clarity and make each word count. Clear communication occurs when the sender is able to properly articulate and formulate the message to the audience. To communicate clearly, be sure to understand the proper pronunciation of words and how to assemble and punctuate sentences. Also, clear communication often requires getting to the point.

**Understanding.** Understand your audience and its expectations. Understanding the audience's current knowledge, views, and level of interest regarding a topic helps when sharing ideas with others. Understanding expectations of format and length of response, due date, level of formality, and any staffing requirements helps when responding to a request for information.

**Supported.** Be sure to support your communication with information that substantiates your position, but does not bring the audience to question your message. Nothing cripples a clearly written, properly punctuated paper quicker than implied data or a distorted argument. Support and logic should be used to build credibility and trust with your audience.

#### **14.15. Seven Steps for Effective Communication**

As indicated in AFH 33-337, the seven steps for effective communication are fundamental to good speaking and writing skills. The first four steps lay the groundwork for the drafting process of effective communication, steps five through seven are where the communication takes the form of a well prepared message. The seven steps for effective communication and a brief explanation of what they entail are provided here.

**1. Analyze Purpose and Audience.** Be clear on your purpose and know and understand your audience when preparing to communicate your message. This is often accomplished by determining *what* your message is and *why* you are communicating it to your audience. In this step you will want to ask yourself, is your purpose for communicating to direct, inform, persuade, or inspire. Once you know your intent, you can design your message around your purpose statement or the intent you have in mind.

**2. Research Your Topic.** Be resourceful and informed when preparing to communicate your message. There may be experts in your workplace who you can talk to for insights and advice on researching your topic. Also, information is at our fingertips, so consider what you know and what you don't know, and gather data that is pertinent and relevant to your topic. AFH 33-337, Chapter 4, provides a comprehensive list of online sources, websites, and databases that will prove to be very helpful in gathering information for your topic. You may find it valuable to save many of the links as favorites in your web browser for quick access.

**3. Support Your Ideas.** Be sure to strengthen your communication by providing information that will support your message. There are a number of ways you can develop a strong message in your communication. It is essential to choose the methods that best enhance your credibility and portray your argument as valid and reliable. Depending on your message and your audience, you may choose to reinforce your position on an issue through evidence using definitions, examples, testimony, or statistics. Focus your approach using trustworthy, accurate, precise, relevant, and sufficient evidence that will support your ideas and gain the trust of your audience.

**4. Organize and Outline.** Be organized and purposeful in your approach to communicating your message. There are several ways to organize information; you will want to choose the one that allows your message to reach the audience in the best manner possible. There are several patterns available in AFH 33-337, Chapter 6. The pattern you choose will depend greatly on whether your intent is to direct, inform, persuade, or inspire. You may find that your topic is best presented chronologically, using an approach that covers pertinent information in a time-ordered sequence. Or, you may decide that a sequential approach is most appropriate that presents your information in a step-by-step manner.

**5. Draft.** Be willing to get your thoughts into a draft product. Your draft is just the beginning of formulating your communication into an organized, outlined, purposeful manner. It will not be perfect. As long as you follow the basic structure of having an introduction, body, and conclusion, you will have a template to work with while you sharpen your message, develop your thoughts, and clarify your approach. Keep in mind the structure of your communication and consider including key aspects, such as reaching your audience, following format, and ensuring your message flows with transitions between main points or main ideas. Your efforts will never be a waste of time as long as you remember that your draft is the essential step toward creating your final product. AFH 33-337, Chapter 7, provides several suggestions and examples of how to develop a draft of your message using recommended structure, verbiage, and phrases.

**6. Edit.** Following the first five steps of the effective communication process will set you up for success, but it will not guarantee a perfect product, and you should not expect your draft to be. That is what steps six and seven are for. Have your draft written early enough to give yourself time to take a break before looking it over through an editing lens. This will allow you to edit with fresh eyes. Think about what you would like to accomplish with your work and keep that in mind as you look over your draft. Consider how it may look or sound to the audience as you edit your work. Whether your communication is written or spoken, you may find value in reading your work out loud to catch areas for improvement that wouldn't have been readily identifiable otherwise. As you review, look for three main aspects of your draft product: 1) review for the big picture, main purpose, length, and flow of ideas; 2) review for paragraph structure, clarity, organization of material, and supporting ideas; then 3) review sentences, phrases, words, grammar, and consider how the audience will perceive or receive the message.

**7. Fight for Feedback and Get Approval.** Be receptive to feedback from others. Now that you've done your best at formulating your message, it's time to seek feedback. Even the best communicators can overlook key aspects of their messages. In this step, allow your pride in authorship to be set aside and seek pride in other's willingness to review and provide feedback on your work. Communicate up front with your reviewers what your strengths and weaknesses are and let them know why you selected them to provide feedback to you. To best utilize time, express what areas you most likely need feedback on. This will help reviewers know where to focus their efforts and it will enable them to be most helpful to you when providing feedback.

#### **14.16. Job Interview Preparation**

Before committing yourself to the effort required of applying and interviewing for a job, you need to understand the experience or skills required for the job and whether or not you possess those experiences or skills. One of the first steps in preparing for a job interview is carefully studying the job advertisement or position description so you understand the particular knowledge, skills,

and abilities required. Once you have successfully aligned your knowledge, skills, and abilities to the job, then gather all required information and documentation for the application process.

**Applying for the Job.** When applying for special duty, seeking employment, or simply gathering pertinent information to successfully build a resume or application package in the future, there are different employer expectations you will want to be familiar with. In many cases, you may need to submit an application package with various documents, such as recent performance reports, personnel documents, a resume, a job application, a curriculum vitae, a biography, letters of recommendation, a cover letter, and in some cases, college transcripts. Any of these documents submitted for a job application should be tailored to highlight your particular knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the position for which you are applying.

**Interviewing for the Job.** Many USAF positions require a job interview. Knowing how to prepare for and conduct yourself during an interview can go a long way toward helping you get selected for a special duty or other career broadening position in the USAF, not to mention being hired in the civilian sector. Prior to the interview, put yourself in the mindset that everything the interviewer sees or hears from you is part of the interview. The interview begins the moment you pick up the phone or enter the property of the organization. Think about how you will be perceived, how you will enter the conversation, how you will ask and answer questions, and anything else you think will occur before, during, or after the interview. If you are having a phone interview, ensure you will be in an environment where you can solely focus on the interview.

It is a good idea to research the mission and history of the hiring organization before the interview. The more you know about the organization, the better you will be at convincing potential employers that you care about the organization, as well as the job you're seeking. Information you can often find about the organization in advance might include who the commander and senior enlisted members of the organization are, how large the organization is, and what the mission and vision statements are. Interviewers expect candidates to ask intelligent, thoughtful questions concerning the organization and the nature of the work. The nature and quality of your questions will reveal your interest in the organization and the position you're seeking. When the interviewer asks if you have any questions or concerns about the job or the organization, be prepared with at least one or two things you'd like to talk about.

If you submitted an application package prior to the interview, there is a strong possibility that you will be asked questions about the information you provided. Review all of the documents you submitted, keep the documents nearby during the interview, and be prepared to highlight examples of your skills or experiences relating to the strengths you can contribute to the job. Examples of areas to concentrate on are: problem-solving skills, thoughts on organizational transformation, team-building skills, support for the organization's priorities, your leadership philosophy, your ability to adapt and work in fast-paced environments, and decision-making abilities. Also, be able to answer the following questions:

Why should I hire you?

How soon can you report?

How will this change affect your family?

What do you see as one of your biggest challenges with a job like this?

Where do you see yourself in two to three years?

Are there any issues to prevent you from accepting or performing in this position?

**Purpose of Interviews.** All job interviews are designed with one goal in mind - to find the right person for the right job. Employers may have to interview several individuals for a position, so keep your goal in mind and let the interviewer see what skills and experiences you can bring to the job. Also, not only are you interviewing for a job; you are interviewing the prospective employer to see if the job is right for you. Be sure you understand the conditions of the job and ask for clarification during the interview, if needed. It is important to determine whether you truly are interested in committing the next few years to the potential job or assignment. As the interview draws to a close, before the interview is over, take a brief opportunity to provide one or two main points that you want the interviewer to remember about you. In other words, have your walk-away points in mind so you end the interview on a positive note and reemphasize your interest in the position.

**Post-interview Actions.** In some cases it may be appropriate to follow up after an interview. A day or two after the interview you may choose to send a short thank-you note to the organization with which you interviewed to express your gratitude for the opportunity to interview for the job, restate your interest in the position, highlight any particularly noteworthy points, or address anything you wish to further clarify.

#### **14.17. Meetings**

Deciding how to communicate a message is important. If you have a message that can be sent clearly and accurately via e-mail, that is one of the quickest forms of sending a message. If you need to send a message that requires an immediate response or might need clarification or elaboration that could be lost in translation through e-mail, discussing the issue over the phone may be the best approach to take. If your message needs to involve multiple people or requires dialogue (sometimes on a recurring basis), you may need to have a face-to-face conversation.

Meetings can be used to share information, solve problems, plan, brainstorm, or motivate. Whatever their purpose, you need to know some basics about conducting an effective meeting. A way to determine whether a meeting is the most appropriate method of communicating a message is to consider if you want to address a group about information, advice, concerns, problem solving, or decision-making. Meetings allow for cross-talk to discuss these types of issues, whether within an organization or with outside agencies.

Once you have decided that a meeting is the most appropriate method of communicating the message or issue, the next step is to define the purpose of the meeting, decide who should be invited to participate or be a part of the conversation, decide where and when the meeting should occur, plan for capturing (recording) meeting information, send out an agenda so attendees can be prepared to discuss pertinent topics, and be flexible based on availability of attendees, information, or other considerations. Running the meeting requires that a few simple rules be followed, but not to the extent that the meetings are rigid, predictable, and non-productive. As long as you start and stay on time, follow the agenda, understand group dynamics, and follow up with well formatted meeting minutes, your meeting will have a good foundation for success.

## *Section 14D—Written Communication*

### **14.18. Writing Platforms**

The USAF has adopted common, basic formats of written communication for official and personal correspondence and memorandums. Understanding the purpose of these formats will best serve your superiors, yourself, and your subordinates in using the proper format for the intended purpose. AFH 33-337 outlines detailed instructions for written communication, while various organizations may have adopted internally preferred styles as well. One key aspect for choosing the appropriate format to use for written communication is consistency in your approach. Attention to detail, proper format, and pertinent information will ensure written communication serves as a professional representation of your organization.

### **14.19. Official Memorandum**

Official memorandums are used to communicate throughout the Department of Defense and other federal agencies. In addition, official memorandums are used to conduct official business outside the government with vendors or contractors when the personal letter is not appropriate. Memorandums may be addressed to specific officials, single offices, multiple offices, multiple offices IN TURN, or to DISTRIBUTION lists. Detailed information pertaining to the heading, text, and closing sections of the official memorandum, as well as additional information, attachments, and examples, are provided in AFH 33-337, Chapter 14.

### **14.20. Personal Letter**

Use the personal letter when communication needs a personal touch or when warmth or sincerity is preferred. The personal letter may be used to write to an individual on a private matter, such as for praise, condolence, or sponsorship. Keep the personal letter brief, preferably no longer than one page, and avoid using acronyms. Specific information pertaining to the heading, text, and closing sections of the personal letter, as well as forms of address, ranks, abbreviations, additional information, and examples, are provided in AFH 33-337, Chapter 15.

### **14.21. USAF Papers**

The USAF uses written products (papers) in many forms for everyday staff work to serve a variety of functions. The types of USAF papers include the point paper, talking paper, bullet background paper, background paper, position paper, and the staff study. Be sure that the type of format used is appropriate for the task. Samples, explanations, and examples of USAF papers are provided in AFH 33-337, Chapters 16.

**Point Paper.** The point paper is used when addressing a single issue that can be covered within a single page using bullets or phrases that require minimal data. The function of a point paper is to provide a memory jogger, a minimal text outline of a single issue, and to quickly inform others, often extemporaneously (with little or no-notice). It can be used to give the same short message many times, or to cue a speaker to recite something from memory.

**Talking Paper.** The talking paper is slightly more detailed than the point paper. It is used when addressing a single issue that can be covered within a single page using bullets or phrases that provide key reference data. The function of a point paper is to provide notes for a presenter or speaker used as an outline or narrative for a single issue to inform others during planned/scheduled oral presentations. It is used as a quick reference on key points, facts, or positions, such as frequently asked questions, and can stand alone for basic understanding of an issue.

**Bullet Background Paper.** The bullet background paper is used when addressing a single issue or several related issues that can be covered within a single page or multi-page format using bullet statements providing the background of a program, policy, problem, or procedure. Bullet background papers are developed using concise chronology of a program, policy, or problem, and can be used to explain or provide details regarding an attached talking paper.

**Background Paper.** The background paper is used when addressing a single issue or several related issues using a multi-page format including full sentences, details, and numbered paragraphs. It is often used as a multi-purpose staff communication instrument to express ideas or describe conditions that require a particular staff action. Background papers are developed using the detailed chronology of a program, policy, or problem, and can condense and summarize complex issues by providing background research for oral presentations or staff discussions. The background paper provides a means of informing decision-makers with important details.

**Position Paper.** The position paper is used when addressing a single issue or several related issues using a multi-page format including full sentences, details, and numbered paragraphs. It is often used when working with proposals for a new program, policy, procedure, or plan. Position papers are used to circulate a proposal to generate interest, evaluate a proposal, or advocate a position on a proposal to decision-makers.

**Staff Study.** The staff study is used when addressing a single issue or several related issues using a multi-page research paper including a detailed discussion with a conclusion and applicable recommendations. The purpose of the staff study is to analyze a problem, draw conclusions, and make recommendations. Format will vary for staff studies depending on the need or complexity of information required. Staff studies are used to assist decision-makers and leaders in initiating research, to inform and recommend change, and as a problem-solving thought process in written form. **Note:** Not all organizations routinely use the staff study, but it is an accepted format for a problem-solution report for both the USAF and Joint Staff. The value of using a staff study as a thought process often outweighs the particular format used to communicate findings. Understanding and applying the essential elements of problem analysis via a staff study will enable better application of any staff communication.

**The Staff Package.** The staff package is a writing format commonly used in the USAF for routing or coordinating correspondence through a staffing process. A widely recognized aspect of the staff package is the AF Form 1768, *Staff Summary Sheet*. The staff summary sheet, known as the “SSS”, the “Triple-S”, or the “e-SSS,” is the cover page (the first page) of a staff package. It provides a condensed summary of the purpose, background, discussion, view of others (when applicable), recommendation, signature blocks, and overall contents of the staff package.

## 14.22. Writing Bullet Statements

Bullet statements are required in many written USAF communication formats. Because there is very little text in a bullet, the text used must be unequivocal (accurate) while being as short as

possible (brief) to convey a tightly-focused (specific) point. The key to writing an effective bullet statement consists of three steps: extract the facts, build the structure, and streamline the final product, as briefly described here.

**Step 1: Extract the Facts.** Collect all the information relevant to the actual accomplishment. Identify the specific action performed. Determine applicable related numerical information associated with the accomplishment (number of items fixed, dollars saved, man-hours expended, people served, or pages written). Document how this accomplishment impacted the bigger picture and broader mission (unit, group, wing, installation, command, or USAF). Once captured, review to ensure the details are truly associated with the actual accomplishment.

**Step 2: Build the Structure.** The next step is to take the sorted information and organize it into an accomplishment-impact bullet. The accomplishment element should always begin with an action and focus on one single accomplishment. Most of the time this action takes the form of a strong action verb, such as conducted, established, or generated. If desired, adverbs, such as actively, energetically, or swiftly, can modify action verbs for an added boost. For a more complete list of verbs and adverbs, refer to AFH 33-337. The impact element explains how the person's actions have had an effect on the organization, such as the person's actions connected to significant improvements to a work center's mission, a unit's mission, or the entire USAF mission.

**Step 3: Streamline the Final Product.** Streamlining the final product is refining the bullet statement to make it accurate, brief, and specific. The bullet must be correct, include the clearest, yet most descriptive words, and convey the facts in detail. While maximizing the use of space is desired, developing bullet statements so they fill white space to the end of the bullet line is not required.

## *Section 14E—Spoken Communication*

### **14.23. Speaking Platforms**

Verbal communication includes every day interactions with coworkers, communicating up and down the chain of command, and sometimes speaking to audiences. Being aware of various verbal communication platforms can help ensure the message being communicated is delivered and received as intended.

### **14.24. Delivery Formats**

Your approach to delivery of the spoken message is usually affected by several factors, including the time you have to prepare and the nature of the message. Three common delivery formats are impromptu, prepared, and manuscript.

**Impromptu.** Impromptu speaking is when we respond during a meeting or “take the floor” at a conference. Speakers may do this when they have to speak publicly without warning or with only a few moments' notice. To do impromptu speaking well requires a great amount of self-confidence, mastery of the subject, and the ability to “think on your feet.” A superb impromptu speaker has achieved the highest level in verbal communications.

**Prepared.** Prepared speaking or briefing refers to those times when we have ample opportunity to prepare. This does not mean the person writes a script and memorizes it, but prepared delivery does require a thorough outline with careful planning and practicing. The specific words and

phrases used at the time of delivery; however, are spontaneous and sound very natural.

**Manuscript.** A manuscript briefing is the delivery format that requires every word spoken to be absolutely perfect. The disadvantage of a manuscript briefing is that people demonstrate a tendency to lack spontaneity, lack eye contact, and they stand behind the lectern with their script. These mannerisms may have a tendency of losing the audience's attention.

#### 14.25. Types of Speaking

Typically, the types of speaking used in the USAF include the briefing, the teaching lecture, and the formal speech.

**Briefing.** The major purpose of a briefing is to inform listeners about a mission, operation, or concept. Some briefings direct or enable listeners to perform a procedure or carry out instructions. Other briefings advocate, persuade, or support a certain solution and lead the audience to accept the briefing. Every good briefing has the qualities of accuracy, brevity, and clarity. Accuracy and clarity characterize all good speaking, but brevity distinguishes the briefing from other types of speaking. A briefer must be brief and to the point and should anticipate some of the questions that may arise. If a briefer cannot answer a question, he or she should not attempt an off-the-cuff answer. Instead, he or she should request an opportunity to research the question and follow-up with an answer at a later time.

**Teaching Lecture.** The teaching lecture is the method of instruction most often used in the USAF. As the name implies, the primary purpose of a teaching lecture is to teach an audience about a given subject. Teaching lectures are either formal or informal. Formal lectures are generally one-way with no verbal participation by the audience. Informal lectures are usually presented to smaller audiences and allow for verbal interaction.

**Formal Speech.** A formal speech generally has one of three basic purposes: to inform, persuade, or entertain. The informative speech is a narration concerning a specific topic, but it does not involve a sustained effort to teach. Orientation talks and presentations at commander's call are examples of informative speeches. The persuasive speech is designed to move an audience to believe in or take action on a topic, such as recruiting speeches to high school graduating classes. Entertaining speeches often include humor and wit to entertain listeners, such as a speech to entertain at a dining-out.

#### 14.26. Basic Communication Tips

Beginning any communication with basic communication tips in mind and being mindful of others when speaking and listening will enhance communication skills in any environment. Some basic military communication tips that can be used in any setting are provided here.

**Rank.** Differences in military rank can be a barrier (real or perceived) to communication in the USAF. Many of us instinctively communicate differently with those senior in rank than we do with those with those who are junior in rank. We must constantly strive to be candid, direct, and respectful with everyone we communicate with.

**Jargon.** Do not overestimate the knowledge and expertise of others when it comes to jargon. Be careful with excessive use of career-field specific jargon and acronyms, but feel free to use jargon when appropriate. As the speaker, it is your responsibility to ensure your communication is understandable.

**Be Inclusive.** Remember our diverse force. Sometimes we inadvertently exclude members of our audience by falling into communication traps involving references to race, religion, ethnicity, or sex. Remember this concept when designing visual support as well. Adhering to good taste and sensitivity will keep your message credible and ensure you reach your audience.

**Tone.** Tone is not just what you say, but how you say it. Use of tone can be valuable when enhancing a message, but it can be difficult to portray in written communication. Speakers use gestures, voice, and movements to communicate; writers do not. Emojis 😊 do not have a place in written formal communication. Recognize the limitations of expressing tone through written communication and pay close attention to how the message may be perceived.

**Courtesy.** The first rule of communicating courteously is being polite. Forego anger, criticism, and sarcasm, and strive to be reasonable and persuasive. Be patient and tactful, regardless of the challenges of delivering a message. If you have to, push back from the computer, take a deep breath, slowly count to 10, then review your message to ensure it is professional and courteous.

**Make it Personal.** When appropriate, use pronouns, such as *we*, *us*, and *our*, to create rapport and keep your audience involved. Using pronouns also keeps your message from being monotonous, dry, and abstract. Use *I*, *me*, and *my* sparingly, and be aware of how the use of *you* can be perceived in some situations.

**Formal.** “Good morning, Sir.” versus informal “Hey” or “What’s up?” is always the more professional approach to greeting or addressing someone. While in today’s USAF much communication among peers will be informal, it is essential to recognize, particularly during events and ceremonies, when formal, professional communication is appropriate.

**Be Positive.** Cultivate a positive message and give praise where praise is due. Rather than focusing on problem areas, optimism can encourage acceptance of a message. Also, encourage and be receptive to criticism in the form of helpful questions, suggestions, requests, recommendations, or information. Audiences often sense and appreciate sincerity and honesty.

#### 14.27. Communication Delivery

An effective voice drives home ideas; however, communication experts believe over half of the meaning of any message may be communicated nonverbally. Several suggestions for effective verbal and nonverbal communication are provided here.

**Rate.** There is no correct speed for every speech. However, consider that people can listen four to five times faster than the normal spoken rate of 120 words a minute. So, if you speak too slowly, you may lose the interest of an audience who is processing information much faster than you are delivering it. Also, consider speaking at a faster rate to indicate excitement or sudden action, or at a slower rate to hint at a calm or more serious message.

**Volume.** Volume is a verbal technique that can be used to give emphasis to your speech. Consider speaking louder or softer to emphasize a point—a softer level or lower volume is often the more effective way to achieve emphasis. Depending on the type of room, it may be necessary to talk louder in front of a large crowd to ensure everyone in the room can hear the message. When possible, use a portable microphone, particularly in large auditoriums. If the audience must strain to hear you, they will eventually tune you out from exhaustion, but the front row will not want to feel like they are being yelled at the entire time either.

**Pitch.** Pitch is the use of higher or lower notes in voice range. Using variety in speech pitch helps to avoid monotone delivery and capture the listener's attention. Starting with a voice range that is comfortable for you and then adjusting pitch for emphasis may help make communication more interesting. You can use a downward (high to low) inflection in a sentence for an air of certainty and an upward (low to high) inflection for an air of uncertainty.

**Pause.** Pause gives a speaker time to catch their breath and the audience time to absorb ideas. Short pauses usually divide points within a sentence, while long pauses note the ends of sentences. Longer pauses can be used for breaks between main points or transitions between an introduction, body, and conclusion. Another use for the pause is to 'pause for effect' or to set off an important point worthy of short reflection. Sometimes a pause may seem long to the speaker, but allow time for a true (one Mississippi, two Mississippi, three...) pause for emphasis.

**Articulation and Pronunciation.** Articulation and pronunciation reflect mastery of the spoken English language. Articulation is the art of expressing words distinctly. Pronunciation is the ability to say words correctly. Unfortunately, and unfairly, people may consider word pronunciation or mispronunciation as a reflection of your message. Listen to yourself, better yet if possible, ask someone to listen to you for practice, and make your words are distinct, understandable, and appropriate to your audience.

**Length.** In our military environment, you must be able to relay your thoughts and ideas succinctly. A key rule in verbal communication is to keep it short and sweet. Know what you want to say, and say it with your purpose and the audience in mind.

**Eye Contact.** Eye contact is one of the most important factors in nonverbal communication. Eye contact lets listeners know the speaker is interested in them, allows the speaker to receive nonverbal feedback from the audience, and enhances the credibility of the speaker.

**Gestures.** Gestures are the purposeful use of the hands, arms, shoulders, and head to reinforce what is being said. Effective gestures are natural and should not be distracting to the audience. Purposeful, effective body movement can be described as free, yet deliberate movement.

## **14.28. Overcoming Anxiety**

Public speaking is often one of the biggest self-induced fears we experience in the workplace. Some individuals appear to be immune to stage fright, while others are paralyzed with fear prior to stepping onto a stage, up to a podium, or speaking from any platform. Most Airmen are exposed to public speaking opportunities in academic environments. Additional speaking opportunities can help individuals begin to feel more comfortable in the spotlight, such as small, localized events (awards ceremonies and commander's calls) where the audience is familiar. To prepare for these events, a draft script may be available to practice with. Having a wingman as a supporter and a 'fan' in the audience can be a big confidence booster while developing public speaking skills.

Having anxiety about public speaking can hinder the ability to get a message across successfully; however, appearing too relaxed on stage may give the impression that the speaker is not fully committed to the presentation or to the audience. To overcome anxiety, try to think of it this way, most often those in the audience are really just glad it's not them up there on the stage. And for you, you're on your way to becoming a more confident, competent public speaker by accepting the opportunity for personal and professional growth.

Whether you are engaging in public speaking for the first time or if you have been on the stage

several times before, here are some simple steps to remember to ensure your message is received clearly and as intended.

- Know the material, the script, or topic to be covered at the event.
- Analyze your audience to reduce your fear of the unknown.
- Envision yourself having a successful experience in front of the audience.
- Practice using a recording device, video camera, full-length mirror, or an audience of your peers.
- Be prepared to allow yourself to mentally feel confident about the experience.
- Present a professional image to build self-confidence and credibility with the audience.
- Smile, your audience wants you to succeed. Chances are your audience won't know how nervous are if you don't mention it.
- Take a short walk right before you go on stage to help release nervous energy.
- When it comes time for the event, it's time to deliver. Focus your attention on the purpose of the event, not on yourself. Connect with your audience.
- When possible, encourage audience interaction, such as head nods or reassuring affirmations.

#### **14.29. Common Nonverbal Quirks**

While seeking opportunities to sharpen public speaking skills, practice to eliminate some of the crutches or habits that speakers sometimes fall into. Tips on overcoming nervous habits are included here to help public speakers become consciously aware of them and work to overcome them before stepping into the spotlight.

**Life raft.** The life raft is a term used when a speaker seeks the safety and security of a podium as though his or life depends upon it. Sometimes standing at the podium is necessary when using a stationary microphone, a script, or notes. While this is an acceptable place for a speaker to stand, when possible, try to venture away from the podium to connect better with the audience.

**Awkward hands.** Awkward hands is typically more of a feeling the speaker has than it is an observation of the audience. Simply allowing hands to hang naturally may feel awkward, but it's perfectly natural from the audience's perspective. Practice allowing your hands to hang naturally and it'll eventually begin to feel natural.

**Caged tiger.** The caged tiger is a term used when a speaker paces across a stage from one side to the other without stopping. Using the width of a stage to connect with an audience is a good idea, just be sure not to pace back and forth to where the audience feels like they're watching a tennis match. Relax and settle into a natural rhythm of using the stage purposefully.

**Rocker.** Rockers are caged tigers on the road to recovery. Rockers have settled their nervous energy somewhat, but still have not become completely comfortable with standing still and simply talking. As you practice, make a conscious effort not to fall into the habit of rocking on your heels or swaying side to side. Much like allowing your hands to hang naturally at your side, with practice you will become more comfortable simply standing confidently and addressing an audience.

**Too Cool.** Some speakers overcompensate for a fear of speaking by trying to look extremely comfortable. It is a good idea to appear relaxed, but not at the expense of appearing unengaged or disinterested in speaking to your audience. You may have conquered your nerves, but keep in mind

that you want to reach your audience and keep their attention.

### **14.30. Effective Listening**

Gaining a better understanding of the listening process begins with understanding the difference between hearing and listening. Hearing occurs when ears pick up sounds being transmitted by a speaker or another source. Listening, on the other hand, involves hearing, while also paying attention to and giving consideration to what is heard. In other words, listening involves thinking about and making sense of the message. Effective, active listening involves engaging verbally and nonverbally in the listening process to appropriately respond, comprehend, evaluate, and remember a message. Effective listening helps build trust and mutual respect. Leaders with good listening skills often make better decisions.

**Informative Listening.** In informative listening, the listener's primary concern is to understand information exactly as transmitted. Successful (effective) listening occurs when the listener understands the message exactly as the sender intended. Suggestions for improving informative listening are to keep an open mind and set aside bias, listen as if you had to teach it, take notes to help recall the main points, ask questions to clarify or confirm your understanding of the message, and maximize the use of the time by mentally repeating the message and absorbing the information in a way that makes the information more pertinent and applicable to you.

**Critical Listening.** Critical listening is usually thought of as the sum of informative listening and critical thinking because the listener is actively analyzing and evaluating the message the speaker is sending. Critical listening is appropriate when seeking input to a decision, evaluating work or a subordinate's capabilities, or conducting research. Suggestions for improving critical listening are to listen as if you had to grade it, take notes to help recall the main points, ask questions to evaluate the intellectual content of the message, and maximize the use of the time by first understanding the message and then evaluating the information.

**Empathic Listening.** Empathic listening is often useful when communication is emotional or when the relationship between speaker and listener is just as important as the message. Use this type of listening as somewhat of a prerequisite to informational or critical listening. Empathic listening is often appropriate during mentoring and counseling sessions and is very helpful when communicating with family members.

## ***Section 14F—Electronic Messaging***

### **14.31. E-mail Etiquette**

E-mail is defined as the electronic transmission of information over computer-based messaging systems. Technological advancements have increased opportunities for more timely, efficient, and effective communications, resulting in the explosive growth of e-mail use throughout the USAF. To uphold a commitment to secure messaging, the USAF has established guidelines to be used by all USAF members.

**Rule 1—Be Clear and Concise.** Make sure the subject line communicates your purpose. Be specific and avoid ambiguous titles. Lead with the most important information. If the goal is to answer a question, then reiterate the question the question at the top of the page. Use topic sentences if the e-mail has multiple paragraphs. Be brief and to the point. Use bold, italic, or color when necessary to emphasize key points. Choose readable fonts, 12 point or larger when possible.

**Rule 2—Watch Your Tone.** Be polite. Think of the message as a personal conversation. Be careful with humor, irony, and sarcasm. Electronic postings are perceived much more harshly than they are intended, mainly because the receiver cannot see the sender’s body language, hear the tone of voice, or observe any other nonverbal cues that could help interpret the intent of the communication. Do not write using all CAPITAL letters—this is the e-mail equivalent of shouting and is considered rude. Keep the e-mail clean and professional. E-mail is easily forwarded. Harassing, intimidating, abusive, or offensive material is unacceptable.

**Rule 3—Be Selective About What Message You Send.** Do not discuss controversial, sensitive, for official use only, classified, personal, Privacy Act, or unclassified information that requires special handling. Remember operations security, even unclassified information, when brought together with other information, can create problems when in the wrong hands. Do not create or forward junk mail, do not create or send chain letters, and do not use e-mail for personal ads.

**Rule 4—Be Selective About Who Gets Your Message.** Reply to specific addressees to give those not interested a break, in other words, only use “reply all” sparingly. Get permission before using large mail groups. Double-check the address before mailing, especially when selecting from a global list where many people have similar last names.

**Rule 5—Check Your Attachments and Support Material.** Ensure all information is provided as intended in your message to keep from having to send a follow-up e-mail. Before sending, ensure you have attached the attachments; this is a very common mistake. When applicable, cite all quotes, references, and sources, as required under copyright and license agreements.

**Rule 6—Keep Your E-mail Under Control.** Lock or sign off the computer when you leave your workstation. If possible, create mailing lists to save time. Read and delete files daily. Create an organized directory on your hard drive to keep mailbox files at a minimum. Ensure record copies are properly identified and stored in an approved filing system. Acknowledge important or sensitive messages with a courtesy reply to sender. When away from your e-mail for an extended period of time, consider setting up an “auto reply” message.

### **14.32. Government Communication Systems**

Government-provided messaging systems are for official use and limited authorized personal use only. All government communications systems are subject to monitoring, interception, search, and seizure for all authorized purposes. Individuals must understand that they may be held responsible for the content of their electronic messages and must ensure that messages adhere to acceptable use of internet-based capabilities. Individuals are responsible for maintaining sent and received information according to USAF records management directives. Electronic messages may be subject to requests under the Freedom of Information Act, litigation, and court orders. Be sure to adhere to local policy when sending electronic messages to mail distribution lists. Do not auto-forward electronic messages from the .mil domain to a commercial internet service provider and do not indiscriminately release electronic messaging addresses to the public.

**Identity Management.** A vital element for messaging security is the implementation of public key infrastructure and common access cards for identity management. Public key infrastructure allows for the authentication of the sender identity using a digital signature and the encryption/decryption of the message. Users of Department of Defense electronic messaging are directed to follow current guidance for the use of public key infrastructure to sign and encrypt e-mail.

**Defense Message System.** The defense message system is the core messaging system of record for the Department of Defense and the USAF. The defense message system is a flexible, commercial, off-the-shelf based application that provides messaging services to all Department of Defense users (including deployed tactical users), and interfaces with other U.S. Government agencies, branches of service, and defense contractors.

**Air Force Organizational Messaging.** Organization simple mail transfer protocol mailboxes may be used for all organizational messaging requirements unless usage of the defense message system is required in support of combatant command responsibilities.

**Privacy Act Information.** The Privacy Act of 1974 requires agencies to provide safeguards to ensure the security and confidentiality of records and to protect individuals against an invasion of personal privacy. Exercise caution before transmitting personal information over e-mail to ensure the message is adequately safeguarded. When information is sensitive and personal, e-mail is not the proper way for transmitting this information. When sending personal information over e-mail within the Department of Defense, ensure there is an official need, and all addressees are authorized to receive personal information under the Privacy Act. "For official use only" is added to the beginning of the subject line, followed by the subject. The following statement is applied at the beginning of the e-mail: "This e-mail contains for official use only information which must be protected under *The Privacy Act* and AFI 33-332." Do not indiscriminately apply this statement to e-mails. Use only in situations when you are actually transmitting personal information.

### **14.33. The Internet**

Use of the web or web-based technologies is a technique for obtaining and disseminating information worldwide. The web or internet provides the capability of quickly and efficiently disseminating information to, and accessing information from, a variety of governmental and nongovernmental sources. Web content must be managed in compliance with all information management policies and procedures.

**Use of Internet Resources by Government Employees.** The internet provides an indispensable source for information from a variety of governmental and nongovernmental sources. The USAF's goal, within acceptable risk levels, is to provide maximum accessibility to internet resources for personnel requiring access for official business.

**Appropriate Use.** Government-provided hardware and software are for official use and limited authorized personal use only. Limited personal use must be of reasonable duration and frequency, approved by the supervisor, and not adversely affect performance of official duties, overburden systems, or reflect adversely on the USAF or the Department of Defense.

**Inappropriate Use.** Using the internet for other than official or authorized purposes may result in adverse administrative or disciplinary action. The following uses are specifically prohibited.

- Use of federal government communications systems for unauthorized personal use.
- Uses that would adversely reflect on the Department of Defense or the USAF, such as chain letters, unofficial soliciting, or selling except on authorized internet-based capabilities established for such use.
- Unauthorized storing, processing, displaying, sending, or otherwise transmitting prohibited content: pornography, sexually explicit or sexually oriented material, nudity, hate speech or ridicule of others on the basis of protected class (e.g., race, creed, religion, color, age, sex,

disability, national origin), gambling, illegal weapons, militancy/extremist activities, terrorist activities, use for personal gain, and any other content or activities that are illegal or inappropriate.

- Storing or processing classified information on any system not approved for classified processing.
- Using copyrighted material in violation of the rights of the owner of the copyrights. Consult with the servicing Staff Judge Advocate for fair use advice.
- Unauthorized use of the account or identity of another person or organization.
- Viewing, changing, damaging, deleting, or blocking access to another user's files or communications without appropriate authorization or permission.
- Attempting to circumvent or defeat security or modifying security systems without prior authorization or permission (such as for legitimate system testing or security research).
- Obtaining, installing, copying, storing, or using software in violation of the appropriate vendor's license agreement.
- Permitting an unauthorized individual access to a government-owned or government-operated system.
- Modifying or altering the network operating system or system configuration without first obtaining written permission from the administrator of that system.
- Copying and posting of for official use only, Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI), critical information, and/or personally identifiable information on Department of Defense owned, operated, or controlled publicly accessible sites or on commercial internet-based capabilities.
- Downloading and installing freeware/shareware or any other software product without designated accrediting authority approval.

**Malicious Logic Protection.** Protect information systems from malicious logic (virus, worm, Trojan horse) attacks by applying a mix of human and technological preventative measures. Scan approved removable media devices for viruses before and after use if scans are not automated. Report any suspected information system abnormalities (antivirus errors, virus alerts, unexpected file size increases, unexpected disk access, strange activity by applications) immediately to the organizational information assurance officer.

**Operations Security and the Internet.** When accessing internet-based capabilities using federal government resources in an authorized personal or unofficial capacity, individuals shall comply with operations security guidance as stated in AFI 10-701, *Operations Security (OPSEC)*, 9 June 2020, and shall not represent the policies or official position of the USAF or the Department of Defense.



## Chapter 17 SECURITY

### *Section 17B—Operations Security*

#### **17.7. USAF Operations Security Program**

The purpose of operations security is to reduce the vulnerability of USAF missions by eliminating or reducing successful adversary collection and exploitation of critical information. Operations security uses a cycle to identify, analyze, and control critical information that applies to all activities used to prepare, sustain, or employ forces during all phases of operations. USAF personnel can be under observation at their peacetime bases and locations, in training or exercises, while moving, or when deployed and conducting combat operations. USAF units utilize a profiling process to identify vulnerabilities and indicators of their day-to-day activities. With this understanding, operations security program managers and signature managers use the signature management methodology to apply measures or countermeasures to hide, control, or simulate indicators. Operations security signature managers also recommend modifying the day-to-day activities at an installation or organization to create variations in the status quo. Operations security involves attentiveness to:

- Identify those actions that can be observed by adversary intelligence systems.
- Determine what specific indications could be collected, analyzed, and interpreted to derive critical information in time to be useful to adversaries.
- Select and execute measures that eliminate or reduce to an acceptable level the vulnerabilities of friendly actions to adversary exploitation.

**Operational Effectiveness.** Operations security involves a series of analyses to examine the planning, preparation, execution, and post-execution phases of any operation or activity across the entire spectrum of military action and in any operational environment. Operations security analysis provides decision-makers with a means of weighing the risk to their operations. Decision-makers must determine the amount of risk they are willing to accept in particular operational circumstances in the same way as operational risk management allows commanders to assess risk in mission planning. Operational effectiveness is enhanced when commanders and other decision-makers apply operations security from the earliest stages of planning.

**Operations Security Principles.** Operations security principles must be integrated into operational, support, exercise, acquisition planning, and day-to-day activities to ensure a seamless transition to contingency operations. The operations security cycle consists of the following distinct actions:

- Identify critical information.
- Analyze threats.
- Analyze vulnerabilities.
- Assess risk.
- Apply appropriate operations security countermeasures.

## 17.8. Operations Security Indicators

Operations security indicators are friendly, detectable actions and open-source information that can be interpreted or pieced together by an adversary to derive critical information. The five basic characteristics of operations security indicators that make them potentially valuable to an adversary are briefly described here.

**Signatures.** A signature is a characteristic of an indicator that is identifiable or stands out. Signature management is the active defense or exploitation of operational profiles at a given military installation. Defense of operational profiles is accomplished by implementing measures to deny adversary collection of critical information.

**Associations.** An association is the relationship of an indicator to other information or activities.

**Profiles.** Each functional activity generates its own set of more-or-less unique signatures and associations. The sum of these signatures and associations is the activity's profile. A profiling process is used to map the local operating environment and capture process points that present key signatures and profiles with critical information value.

**Contrasts.** A contrast is any difference observed between an activity's standard profile and most recent or current actions.

**Exposure.** Exposure refers to when and for how long an indicator is observed. The longer an indicator is observed, the better chance an adversary can form associations and update the profile of operational activities.

### *Section 17C—Information Protection*

## 17.9. Information Protection Procedures

Information protection is a subset of the USAF security enterprise and consists of the core security disciplines (personnel, industrial, and information security) used to determine military, civilian, and contractor personnel eligibility to access classified information, ensure the protection of classified information released or disclosed to industry in connection with classified contracts, and protect classified information and CUI that, if subject to unauthorized disclosure, could reasonably be expected to cause damage to national security.

## 17.10. Information Security

All personnel in the USAF are responsible for protecting classified information and CUI under their custody and control. DoDM5200.01V1\_AFMAN16-1404V1, *Information Security Program: Overview, Classification, and Declassification*, 10 January 2021, provide the guidance for managing classified information and CUI.

**Classified Information.** Classified information is designated accordingly to protect national security. There are three levels of classification: Top Secret, Secret, and Confidential. Each individual is responsible for providing the proper safeguards for classified information, reporting security incidents, and understanding the sanctions for noncompliance.

**Top Secret.** Top Secret shall be applied to information that the unauthorized disclosure of which reasonably could be expected to cause exceptionally grave damage to the national security that the original classification authority is able to identify or describe.

**Secret.** Secret shall be applied to information that the unauthorized disclosure of which reasonably could be expected to cause serious damage to the national security that the original classification authority is able to identify or describe.

**Confidential.** Confidential shall be applied to information that the unauthorized disclosure of which reasonably could be expected to cause damage to the national security that the original classification authority is able to identify or describe.

### 17.11. CUI

CUI is information that requires access and distribution controls and protective measures, and may be referred to accordingly as: for official use only, law enforcement sensitive, Department of Defense unclassified controlled nuclear information, and limited distribution. Requirements, controls, and protective measures developed for these materials are found in DoDI 5200.48, *Controlled Unclassified Information*, 6 March, 2020.

**Original Classification.** Original classification is the initial decision by an original classification authority that an item of information could reasonably be expected to cause identifiable or describable damage to the national security subjected to unauthorized disclosure and requires protection in the interest of national security. Only officials designated in writing may make original classification decisions.

**Derivative Classification.** USAF policy is to identify, classify, downgrade, declassify, mark, protect, and destroy classified information consistent with national policy. CUI will also be protected per national policy. Within the Department of Defense all cleared personnel are authorized to derivatively classify information, if: 1) they have received initial training before making derivative classification decisions, and 2) they have received refresher training at least once every two years. Derivative classification is the incorporating, paraphrasing, restating, or generating classified information in a new form or document. Derivative classifiers must use authorized types of sources for making decisions. One of the most important responsibilities of the derivative classifier is to observe and respect the classification determinations made by an original classification authority.

**Marking Classified Information.** All classified information shall be clearly identified by marking, designation, or electronic labelling in accordance with DoDM5200.01V2\_AFMAN16-1404V2, *Information Security Program: Marking of Classified Information*, 6 January 2021. Marking classified information serves to: alert holders to the presence of classified information; identify the information needing protection; indicate the level of classification assigned to the information; provide guidance on downgrading (if any) and declassification; give information on the sources of and reasons for classification; notify holders of special access, control, or safeguarding requirements; and promote information sharing, facilitate judicious use of resources, and simplify management through implementation of uniform and standardized processes.

**Specific Markings on Documents.** Every classified document must be marked to show the highest classification of information contained within the document. The marking must be conspicuous enough to alert anyone handling the document that the document is classified. Every document will contain the overall classification of the document, banner lines, portion markings indicating the classification level of specific classified information within the document, the classification authority block, date of origin, and downgrading instructions, if any, and declassification instructions. The three most common markings on a classified document are the

banner lines, portion markings, and the classification authority block. Refer to DoDM5200.01V2\_AFMAN16-1404V2, for additional information and marking illustrations.

**Safeguarding Classified Information.** Everyone who works with classified information is personally responsible for taking proper precautions to ensure unauthorized persons do not gain access to classified information. Before granting access to classified information, the person must have: (1) security clearance eligibility, (2) a signed Standard Form (SF) 312, *Classified Information Non-Disclosure Agreement*, and (3) a need-to-know. The individual with authorized possession, knowledge, or control of the information must determine whether the person receiving the information has been granted the appropriate security clearance access by proper authority. An authorized person shall keep classified material removed from storage under constant surveillance. The authorized person must place coversheets on classified documents not in secure storage to prevent unauthorized persons from viewing the information. The following forms will be used to cover classified information outside of storage: SF 703, *Top Secret (Cover Sheet)*, SF 704, *Secret (Cover Sheet)*, and SF 705, *Confidential (Cover Sheet)*.

**End-of-Day Security Checks.** Use SF 701, *Activity Security Checklist*, to record the end of the day security checks. This form is required for any area where classified information is used or stored. Ensure all vaults, secure rooms, and containers used for storing classified material are checked. Classified information systems should specifically be stored in a general services administration approved safe or in buildings or areas cleared for open storage of classified.

## 17.12. Security Incidents Involving Classified Information

Anyone finding classified material out of proper control must take custody of and safeguard the material and immediately notify their commander, supervisor, or security manager. The terms associated with security incidents are formally defined in DoDM5200.01V3\_AFMAN16-1404V3, *DoD Information Security Program: Protection of Classified Information*, 22 December 2020. The general security incident characteristics are briefly described here.

**Infraction.** An infraction is a security incident involving failure to comply with requirements which cannot reasonably be expected to, and does not, result in the loss, suspected compromise, or compromise of classified information. An infraction may be unintentional or inadvertent, and does not constitute a security violation; however, if left uncorrected, could lead to a security violation or compromise. Infractions require an inquiry to facilitate immediate corrective action.

**Violation.** Violations are security incidents that indicate knowing, willful negligence for security regulations, and result in, or could be expected to result in, the loss or compromise of classified information. Security violations require an inquiry or investigation.

**Compromise.** A compromise is a security incident (violation) in which there is an unauthorized disclosure of classified information. This could include the disclosure of information to a person(s) who does not have a valid clearance, authorized access, or a need to know.

**Loss.** A loss occurs when classified information cannot be physically located or accounted for. This could include classified information/equipment being discovered as missing during an audit and cannot be immediately located.

**Data Spills.** Classified data spills occur when classified data is introduced either onto an unclassified information system, to an information system with a lower level of classification, or to a system not accredited to process data of that restrictive category.

**Information in the Public Media.** If classified information appears in the media or public internet sites, or if approached by a media representative, personnel shall not confirm or verify the information. Immediately report the matter to a supervisor, security manager, or commander, but do not discuss with anyone without an appropriate security clearance and a need to know.

### **17.13. Industrial Security**

USAF policy is to identify, in classified contracts, specific information and sensitive resources that must be protected against compromise or loss while entrusted to industry. Security policies, requirements, and procedures are applicable to USAF personnel and on-base Department of Defense contractors performing services under the terms of a properly executed contract and associated security agreement or similar document, as determined by the installation commander.

### **17.14. Personnel Security**

The Personnel Security Program entails policies and procedures that ensure military, civilian, and contractor personnel who access classified information or occupy a sensitive position are consistent with interests of national security. For most personnel, this involves procedures for obtaining proper security clearances required for performing official duties. It involves the investigation process, adjudication (approval) for eligibility, and the continuous evaluation for maintaining eligibility. Commanders and supervisors must continually observe and evaluate their subordinates with respect to these criteria and immediately report any unfavorable conduct or conditions that might bear on the subordinates' trustworthiness and eligibility to occupy a sensitive position or have eligibility to classified information.

**Adjudicative Guidelines.** The Department of Defense Central Adjudication Facility is the designated authority to grant, deny, and revoke security clearance eligibility using the Department of Defense 13 adjudicative guidelines, while applying the whole person concept and mitigating factors. Individuals are granted due process and may appeal if the security clearance eligibility is denied or revoked. For additional details, refer to the DoDM 5200.02\_AFMAN 16-1405, *Air Force Personnel Security Program*, 31 July 2018. The 13 Adjudicative Guidelines include:

Allegiance to the United States	Drug Involvement
Foreign Influence	Psychological Conditions
Foreign Preference	Criminal Conduct
Sexual Behavior	Handling Protected Information
Personal Conduct	Outside Activities
Financial Considerations	Use of Information Technology
Alcohol Consumption	

## ***Section 17D—Information Access, Cyber Security, and Mobility***

### **17.15. The Privacy Act**

The Privacy Act of 1974 (as amended) establishes a code of fair information practices that govern the collection, maintenance, use, and dissemination of personal information about individuals that is maintained in a system of records by federal agencies. The Privacy Act provides individuals

with a means by which to seek access to and amend their records, and sets forth agency record-keeping requirements.

**Disclosure of Information.** Privacy Act rights are personal to the individual who is the subject of the record and cannot be asserted derivatively by others. The Privacy Act prohibits the disclosure of information from a system of records without the written consent of the subject individual. Individuals have the right to request access or amendment to their records in a system. The parent of any minor, or the legal guardian of an incompetent, may act on behalf of that individual.

**Collection of Information.** The Privacy Act limits the collection of information to what the law or executive orders authorize. System of records notices must be published in the federal register allowing the public a 30-day comment period. Such collection must not conflict with the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. A Privacy Act statement must be given when individuals are asked to provide personal information about themselves for collection in a system of records.

**System of Records Maintenance.** Privacy Act system of records is a group of any records under the control of any agency from which information is retrieved by the individual's name, number, or unique identifier. **Note:** Department of Defense personnel may disclose records to other offices in the Department of Defense when there is "an official need to know" and to other federal government agencies or individuals when a discloser of record is a "routine use" published in the system of records notices or as authorized by a Privacy Act exception. In addition, information may be released for a disclosed specified purpose with the subject's consent. The office of primary responsibility of the data should keep an account of all information they've released.

**Personally Identifiable Information.** Personally identifiable information in a system of records must be safeguarded to ensure "an official need to know" access of the records and to avoid actions that could result in harm, embarrassment, or unfairness to the individual. The Office of Management and Budget defines a personally identifiable information breach as, "A loss of control, compromise, unauthorized disclosure, unauthorized acquisition, unauthorized access, or any similar term referring to situations where persons other than authorized users and for an other than authorized purpose have access or potential access to personally identifiable information, whether physical or electronic." For further information, definitions, exemptions, exceptions, or responsibilities and procedures for safeguarding and reporting of personally identifiable information breaches, refer to AFI 33-332.

## **17.16. Freedom of Information Act**

The Freedom of Information Act provides access to federal agency records (or parts of these records) except those protected from release by specific exemptions. Freedom of Information Act requests are written requests that cite or imply the Freedom of Information Act. The law establishes rigid time limits for replying to requesters and permits assessing fees in certain instances. The Freedom of Information Act imposes mandatory time limits of 20 workdays to either deny the request or release the requested records. The law permits an additional 10-workday extension in the event that specific unusual circumstances exist. **Note:** Denials require notification of appeal rights. Requesters can file an appeal or litigate. Refer to DoDM 5400.07-R\_AFMAN 33-302 for specific policy and procedures on the Freedom of Information Act and for guidance on disclosing records to the public.

### 17.17. Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity is defined as the prevention of damage to, protection of, and restoration of computers, electronic communications systems, electronic communications systems, wire communication, and electronic communication, including information contained therein, to ensure its availability, integrity, authentication, confidentiality, and nonrepudiation. Cybersecurity disciplines include: Air Force Risk Management Framework, IT controls/countermeasures, communications security, TEMPEST (formerly known as emissions security), AF Assessment and Authorization (formerly known as Certification and Accreditation Program), and Cybersecurity Workforce Improvement Program. AFI 17-130, *Cybersecurity Program Management*, 13 February 2020, describes risk management and cybersecurity as representations of dynamic, multi-disciplinary sets of challenges. Processes and practices must continuously evolve and improve to match the ever-changing threat environment.

**Cybersecurity Program Risk Management Strategy.** The USAF's Cybersecurity Program's risk management strategy must ensure that the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of all information owned or held in trust by the USAF is protected. The program strategy must also be integrated into all key mission and business processes. To ensure operational agility, cybersecurity capabilities will be balanced to include safety, reliability, interoperability, and ease of use, while maximizing performance, as well as promoting transparency and interoperability with USAF mission partners. All USAF personnel are required to complete Information Assurance Awareness training prior to system access and annually thereafter.

**Five Functions of the USAF Cybersecurity Program.** The USAF Cybersecurity Program encompasses the five functions briefly described here.

- **Identify.** Develop and maintain the organizational understanding required to manage cybersecurity risk.
- **Protect.** Implement controls to ensure the delivery of mission critical infrastructure services.
- **Detect.** Possess the ability to detect cybersecurity events when they occur.
- **Respond.** Possess the ability to take action regarding detected cybersecurity events.
- **Recover.** Possess the ability to remain operationally resilient and to restore capabilities or services that were impaired due to cybersecurity events.

### 17.18. Computer Security

Computer security consists of measures and controls that ensure confidentiality, integrity, and availability of information systems assets including: hardware, software, firmware, and information being processed, stored, and communicated.

**Limited Authorized Personal Use.** Government-provided hardware and software are for official use and limited authorized personal use only. Limited personal use must be of reasonable duration and frequency that has been approved by the supervisor and does not adversely affect performance of official duties, overburden systems, or reflect adversely on the USAF or the Department of Defense. Internet-based capabilities include collaborative tools, such as simple notification service, social media, user-generated content, e-mail, instant messaging, and online discussion forums. When accessing internet-based capabilities using federal government resources in an authorized personal or unofficial capacity, individuals shall comply with operations security guidance in AFI 10-701, and must be consistent with the requirements of DoD 5500.07-R.

### **17.19. Information Systems**

An information system is a discrete set of information resources organized for the collection, processing, maintenance, use, sharing, dissemination, or disposition of information. Information systems also include specialized systems, such as industrial/process controls, telephone switching and private branch systems, and environmental controls. All authorized users must protect information systems against tampering, theft, and loss. Protection occurs by controlling physical access to facilities and data; ensuring user access to information system resources is based upon a favorable background investigation, security clearance, and need to know (for classified); and ensuring protection of applicable unclassified, sensitive, and classified information through encryption, according to the applicable Federal Information Processing Standard (FIPS) Publication 140-2, *Security Requirements for Cryptographic Modules*, 25 May 2001.

**Countermeasures.** A countermeasure is any action, device, procedure, or technique that meets or opposes (counters) a threat, vulnerability, or attack by eliminating, preventing, or minimizing damage, or by discovering and reporting the event so corrective action can be taken.

**Threats.** Every USAF information system has vulnerabilities and is susceptible to exploitation. Threats to information systems include, but are not limited to, any circumstance or event with the potential to adversely impact any operation or function through an information system via unauthorized access, destruction, disclosure, modification of information, or denial of service. There are three steps involved in protecting information systems from viruses and other forms of malicious logic. These steps include a combination of human and technological countermeasures to ensure the protection is maintained throughout the lifecycle of the information system.

**Infection.** Infection is the invasion of information system applications, processes, or services by a virus or malware code causing the information system to malfunction.

**Detection.** Detection is a signature or behavior-based antivirus system that signals when an anomaly caused by a virus or malware occurs.

**Reaction.** When notified of a virus or malware detection, react by immediately notifying your information system security officer and following local procedures.

### **17.20. Mobile Computing Devices**

Mobile computing devices are information systems, such as portable electronic devices, laptops, smartphones, and other handheld devices that can store data locally and access USAF managed networks through mobile access capabilities. All wireless systems (including associated peripheral devices, operating systems, applications, network connection methods, and services) must be approved prior to processing Department of Defense information. The information systems security officer will maintain documented approval authority and inventory information on all approved devices. All mobile computing devices not assigned or in use must be secured to prevent tampering or theft. Users of mobile devices will sign a detailed user agreement outlining the responsibilities and restrictions for use.

### **17.21. Public Computing Facilities or Services**

Do not use public computing facilities or services, such as hotel business centers, to process government-owned unclassified, sensitive, or classified information. Public computing facilities or services include any information technology resources not under your private or U.S.

Governmental control. Use of e-mail applications, messaging software, or web applications to access web-based government services constitutes a compromise of login credentials and must be reported as a security incident.

## **17.22. Communications Security**

Communications security refers to measures and controls taken to deny unauthorized persons information derived from information systems of the U.S. Government related to national security and to ensure the authenticity of such information systems. Communications security protection results from applying security measures to communications and information systems generating, handling, storing, processing, or using classified or sensitive information, the loss of which could adversely affect national security interests. Communications security also entails applying physical security measures to communications security information or materials.

**Cryptosecurity.** Cryptosecurity is a component of communications security resulting from the provision and proper use of technically sound cryptosystems.

**Transmission Security.** Transmission security is a component of communications security resulting from the application of measures designed to protect transmissions from interception and exploitation by means other than cryptanalysis. Examples of transmission security measures include using secured communications systems, registered mail, secure telephone and facsimile equipment, manual cryptosystems, call signs, or authentication to transmit classified information.

**Physical Security.** Physical security is communications security resulting from the use of all physical measures necessary to safeguard communications security material from access by unauthorized persons. Physical security measures include the application of control procedures and physical barriers. Physical security also ensures continued integrity, prevents access by unauthorized persons, and controls the spread of communications security techniques and technology when not in the best interest of the United States and our allies. Common physical security measures include verifying the need to know and clearance of personnel granted access, following proper storage and handling procedures, accurately accounting for all materials, transporting materials using authorized means, and immediately reporting the loss or possible compromise of materials.

## **17.23. TEMPEST**

TEMPEST, formerly known as emissions security, is protection resulting from all measures taken to deny unauthorized persons information of value that may be derived from the interception and analysis of compromising emanations from cryptographic equipment, information systems, and telecommunications systems. The objective of TEMPEST is to deny access to classified, and in some instances unclassified, information that contains compromising emanations within an inspectable space. The inspectable space is considered the area in which it would be difficult for an adversary with specialized equipment to attempt to intercept compromising emanations without being detected. TEMPEST countermeasures, such as classified and unclassified equipment separation, shielding, and grounding, are implemented to reduce the risk of compromising emanations.

## *Section 17E—Antiterrorism*

### **17.24. Antiterrorism Efforts**

The USAF seeks to deter or limit the effects of terrorist acts by giving guidance on collecting and disseminating timely threat information, providing training to all USAF members, developing comprehensive plans to deter and counter terrorist incidents, allocating funds and personnel, and implementing antiterrorism measures.

**HAF.** At the strategic level, the Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (Air Force/A2) and the Director for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Strategy, Doctrine and Force Development (Air Force/A2D), are responsible for ensuring the timely collection processing, analysis, production, and dissemination of foreign intelligence, current intelligence, and national-level intelligence information concerning terrorist activities, terrorist organizations, and force protection issues.

**The Air Force Office of Special Investigations.** Air Force Office of Special Investigations (AFOSI) is the lead USAF agency for collection, investigation, analysis, and response for threats arising from terrorists, criminal activity, foreign intelligence, and security services. AFOSI is primarily focused on countering adversary intelligence collection activities against U.S. Armed Forces and will act as the USAF single point of contact with federal, state, local, and foreign nation law enforcement, counterintelligence, and security agencies.

**Commanders.** Commanders at all levels who understand the threat can assess their ability to prevent, survive, and prepare to respond to an attack. A terrorism threat assessment requires the identification of a full range of known or estimated terrorist threat capabilities (including the use or threat of use of chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or high-yield explosives and weapons of mass destruction). In addition to tasking appropriate agencies to collect information, commanders at all levels should encourage personnel under their command to report information on individuals, events, or situations that could pose a threat to the security of Department of Defense personnel, families, facilities, and resources.

**Antiterrorism Training.** At least annually, commanders conduct comprehensive field and staff training to exercise antiterrorism plans, to include antiterrorism physical security measures, continuity of operations, critical asset risk management, and emergency management plans. Antiterrorism training should include terrorism scenarios specific to the location and be based on current enemy tactics, techniques, procedures, and lessons learned. Additionally, the current baseline through force protection condition ‘Charlie’ measures shall be exercised annually at installations and self-supported separate facilities.

### **Random Antiterrorism Measures Program**

Installation commanders shall develop and implement a random antiterrorism measures program that will include all units on the installation. The intent of the program is to provide random, multiple security measures that consistently change the look of an installation’s antiterrorism program.

Random antiterrorism measures introduce uncertainty to an installation’s overall force protection program to defeat surveillance attempts and to make random antiterrorism measures difficult for a terrorist to accurately predict our actions. The program shall be included in antiterrorism plans and tie directly with all force protection conditions, including force protection condition ‘normal’, to

ensure continuity and standardization, should threats require USAF-wide implementation. Random antiterrorism measures times for implementation, location, and duration shall be regularly changed to avoid predictability. Random antiterrorism measures execution shall be broad based and involve all units and personnel.

### **17.25. Ground Transportation Security**

Criminal and terrorist acts against individuals usually occur outside the home and after the victim's habits have been established. Your most predictable habit is the route you travel on a regular basis. Always check for fingerprints, smudges, or tampering of the interior and exterior of your vehicle, including the tires and trunk. If you detect something out of the ordinary, do not touch anything. Immediately contact the local authorities. When overseas, travel with a companion. Select a plain car and avoid using government vehicles, when possible. Do not openly display military equipment or decals with military affiliations. Keep doors locked at all times. Do not let someone you do not know direct you to a specific taxi. Ensure taxis are licensed and have safety equipment (seat belts at a minimum). Ensure that the face of the taxi driver and the picture on the license are the same.

### **17.26. Commercial Air Transportation Security Overseas**

Before traveling overseas, consult the Foreign Clearance Guide to ensure you meet all requirements for travel to a particular country. Get the required 'area of responsibility' threat briefing from your security officer, antiterrorism officers, or the appropriate counterintelligence or security organization within three months prior to traveling overseas. Use office symbols on travel documents if the word description denotes a sensitive position. Use military contracted flag carriers. Avoid traveling through high-risk areas. Do not use rank or military address on tickets. Do not discuss military affiliation. Have proper identification to show airline and immigration officials. Do not carry classified documents unless absolutely mission essential. Dress conservatively. Wear clothing that covers military or United States-affiliated tattoos. Carry plain civilian luggage. Do not wear or carry distinct military items.

### **17.27. Suspicious Packages or Mail**

Look for an unusual or unknown place of origin; no return address; excessive amount of postage; abnormal size or shape; protruding strings; aluminum foil; wires; misspelled words; differing return address and postmark; handwritten labels; unusual odor; unusual or unbalanced weight; springiness in the top or bottom; inflexibility; crease marks; discoloration or oily stains; incorrect titles or title with no name; excessive security material; ticking, beeping, or other sounds; or special instruction markings, such as "personal, rush, do not delay, or confidential" on any packages or mail received. Be vigilant for evidence of powder or other contaminants. Never cut tape, strings, or other wrappings on a suspect package. If the package has been moved, place the package in a plastic bag to prevent any leakage of contents. If handling mail suspected of containing chemical or biological contaminants, wash hands thoroughly with soap and water. Report suspicious mail immediately and make a list of personnel who were in the room when the suspicious envelope or package was identified.

### **17.28. General Antiterrorism Personal Protection**

Individual vigilance is integral to the antiterrorism program, whether stateside or overseas. Several actions are provided here to help ensure individual protection.

- Dress and behave in a way that does not draw attention.
- Be inconspicuous and avoid publicity.
- Travel in small groups.
- Avoid spontaneous gatherings or demonstrations.
- Be unpredictable.
- Vary daily routines to/from home and work.
- Be alert for anything suspicious or out of place.
- Avoid giving unnecessary personal details to anyone unless their identity can be verified.
- Be alert to strangers who are on government property for no apparent reason.
- Refuse to meet with strangers outside your workplace.
- Always advise associates or family members of your destination and anticipated time of arrival.
- Report unsolicited contacts to authorities.
- Do not open doors to strangers.
- Memorize key telephone numbers and dialing instructions.
- Be cautious about giving information regarding family travel or security measures.
- When overseas, learn and practice a few key phrases in the local language.

### **17.29. Home and Family Security**

Spouses and children should always practice basic precautions for personal security. Familiarize family members with the local terrorist threat and regularly review protective measures and techniques. Ensure family members know what to do in any type of emergency. Several actions are provided here to help ensure home and family security.

- Restrict the possession of house keys.
- Lock all entrances at night, including the garage.
- Keep the house locked, even if you are home.
- Destroy all envelopes or other items that show your name, rank, or other personal information.
- Remove names and rank from mailboxes.
- Watch for unfamiliar vehicles cruising or parked frequently in the area, particularly if one or more occupants remain in the vehicle for extended periods.
- Post or preprogram emergency telephone numbers for immediate access. Report all threatening phone calls to security officials and the telephone company, making note of any background noise, accent, nationality, or location.

### **17.30. Human Intelligence and Counterintelligence**

Human intelligence is a category of intelligence derived from information collected and provided by human sources and collectors, and where the human being is the primary collection instrument.

Counterintelligence is information gathered and activities conducted to protect against such threats. A few primary human intelligence collection efforts are briefly described here.

**Interrogation.** Interrogation is the systematic effort to procure information to answer specific collection requirements by direct and indirect questioning techniques of a person who is in the custody of the forces conducting the questioning. Proper questioning of enemy combatants, enemy prisoners of war, or other detainees by trained and certified Department of Defense interrogators may result in information provided either willingly or unwittingly.

**Source Operations.** Designated and fully trained military human intelligence collection personnel may develop information through the elicitation of sources, to include: “walk-in” sources who, without solicitation, make the first contact with human intelligence personnel; developed sources who are met over a period of time and provide information based on operational requirements; unwitting persons with access to sensitive information.

**Debriefing.** Debriefing is the process of questioning cooperating human sources to satisfy intelligence requirements, consistent with applicable law. The source usually is not in custody and is usually willing to cooperate. Debriefing may be conducted at all echelons and in all operational environments. Through debriefing, face-to-face meetings, conversations, and elicitation, information may be obtained from a variety of human sources.

**Document and Media Exploitation.** Captured documents and media, when properly processed and exploited, may provide valuable information, such as adversary plans and intentions, force locations, equipment capabilities, and logistical status. The category of “captured documents and media” includes all media capable of storing fixed information, as well as computer storage material. This operation is not a primary human intelligence function, but may be conducted by any intelligence personnel with appropriate language support.

**Human Intelligence Threat Areas.** A few primary threat areas are briefly described here.

**Espionage.** The act of obtaining, delivering, transmitting, communicating, or receiving information about national defense with intent or reason to believe the information may be used to the injury of the United States or to the advantage of any foreign nation.

**Subversion.** An act or acts inciting military or civilian personnel of the Department of Defense to violate laws, disobey lawful orders or regulations, or disrupt military activities with the willful intent, thereby to interfere with or impair the loyalty, morale, or discipline of the U.S. Armed Forces.

**Sabotage.** An act or acts with intent to injure, interfere with, or obstruct the national defense of a country by willfully injuring or destroying, or attempting to injure or destroy, any national defense or war material, premises, or utilities, as well as human and natural resources.

**Terrorism.** The calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear intended to coerce or intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.

### **17.31. Incident Reporting**

AFI 71-101, Volume 4, *Counterintelligence*, 2 July 2019, requires individuals who have reportable contacts or acquire reportable information, to immediately (within 30 days of the contact) report the contact or information either verbally or in writing to AFOSI. The AFOSI initiates and

conducts all counterintelligence investigations, operations, collections, and other related activities for the USAF. When appropriate, or when overseas, AFOSI coordinates these activities with the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The AFOSI is also the installation-level training agency for counterintelligence awareness briefings, and is the sole USAF repository for the collection and retention of reportable information.

Contact is defined as any exchange of information directed to an individual, including solicited or unsolicited telephone calls, e-mail, radio contact, and face-to-face meetings. Examples include: contact with a foreign diplomatic establishment; a request by anyone for illegal or unauthorized access to classified or unclassified controlled information; personal contact with any individual who suggests that a foreign intelligence or any terrorist organization may have targeted him or her or others for possible intelligence exploitation; or receipt of information indicating military members, civilian employees, or Department of Defense contractors have contemplated, attempted, or effected the deliberate compromise or unauthorized release of classified or unclassified controlled information.

AFI 10-245, *Antiterrorism (AT)*, 25 June 2015, The Eagle Eyes program is a USAF Antiterrorism initiative that enlists the eyes and ears of all AF military, civilians, contractors, and dependents. The Eagle Eyes program is a reporting mechanism for the base community on how to report suspicious behavior or possible terrorist activity. Each installation shall outline procedures in the installation AT plan on how to receive and log suspicious activity reports and suspicious incident reports and to pass those reports expeditiously to their servicing Air Force Office of Special Investigations

### **17.32. Protection of the President and Others**

As stated in AFI 71-101, Volume 2, *Protective Service Matters*, 21 May 2019, as a result of a formal agreement between the Department of Defense and U.S. Secret Service, individuals affiliated with the U.S. Armed Forces have a special obligation to report information regarding the safety and protection of the U.S. President or anyone else anyone under the protection of the U.S. Secret Service. This includes the Vice President, the President- and Vice President-elect, and visiting heads of foreign states or foreign governments. In most cases, former Presidents and their spouses are also afforded lifetime protection of the U.S. Secret Service.

## Chapter 18 STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

### *Section 18A—Way of Life*

#### **18.1. USAF Way of Life**

USAF employees are required to comply with prescribed standards of conduct in all official matters, as well as when off-duty. This means military and civilian Airmen (RegAF, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard) are all expected to maintain high standards of honesty, responsibility, and accountability, as well as adhere to the USAF core values of *Integrity First*, *Service Before Self*, and *Excellence In All We Do*. As Airmen, we are proud of our high standards, adhere to them, and hold our fellow Airmen accountable.

**Air Force Standards.** The USAF's mission is critical to national security, global stability, and international relations. Each member has specific responsibilities for accomplishing his or her part in the mission. AFI 1-1, states the importance of the USAF's mission and inherent responsibility to the nation requires its members to adhere to higher standards than those expected in civilian life. While current Department of Defense and USAF policies provide specific guidance on standards, leaders must ensure employees are kept informed of the USAF standards and take timely and appropriate actions to ensure employee standards meet the spirit and intent of USAF policy on proper conduct.

#### **18.2. USAF Publications Process**

The USAF shall prepare all publications in accordance with DAFI33-360\_DAFGM2021-01. This includes, but is not limited to, policy directives, instructions, manuals, mission directives and operating instructions. Additional guidance regarding the drafting of mission directives and operating instructions found in this guidance memorandum does not apply to mission directives, which are governed by Headquarters Operating Instruction (HOI) 90-1, *Headquarters Air Force Mission Directives and Department Of Defense Issuances Program*, 10 January 2018 or AFI 38-101.

**DAF Policy Directive (DAFPD).** DAFPDs are orders of the Secretary of the Air Force and contain directive policy statements that guide Department of the Air Force implementation of Department of Defense issuances or other authorities outside but binding on the Department of Air Force that require Department of Air Force action. They also initiate, govern, delegate authorities/responsibilities, and/or regulate actions within specified areas of responsibility by Department of Air Force activities. DAFPDs are written clearly and concisely and in a manner that an average Air and Space Professional can understand

**DAFIs, AFIs, and Space Force Instructions (SPFIs).** DAFIs, AFIs, and SPFIs are orders of the Secretary of the Air Force and are certified and approved at the HAF level. DAFIs, AFIs, and SPFIs generally instruct readers on "what to do," i.e., direct action, ensure compliance to standard actions across the DAF. DAFIs, AFIs, and SPFIs are written clearly and concisely and in a manner that an average Air and Space Professional can understand. DAFs, AFIs, and SPFIs may be supplemented at any level below the DAF unless otherwise stated in the publication.

**DAF Manual DAFMAN, AFMAN or Space Force Manual (SPFMAN).** DAFMANs, AFMANs, and SPFMANs are Orders of the Secretary of the Air Force and generally instruct readers on “how to” and may be either: 1) an extension of an DAFI, AFI, or SPFI, providing detailed procedure and additional technical guidance for performing standard tasks, or supporting education and training programs, or 2) an alternative to an DAFI, AFI, or SPFI, if appropriate. DAFMANs, AFMANs, and SPFMANs intended for use only by Air and Space Professionals who have graduated from special schools (such as flight training, intelligence or maintenance schools) may include more specialized and technical language. The writer should use good judgment on the use of acronyms and technical language to ensure audience comprehension.

**Publication Series Numbers.** Series numbers of publications are organized based on USAF Specialty Code. **Table 18.1.** is provided here as a quick reference.

**Table 18.1. Publication Series Numbers**

1—Air Force Culture	40—Medical Command
10—Operations	41—Health Services
11—Flying Operations	44—Medical
13—Nuclear, Space, Missile, or C2 Operations	46—Nursing
14—Intelligence	47—Dental
15—Weather	48—Aerospace Medicine
16—Operations Support	51—Law
17—Cyberspace Operations	52—Religious Affairs
20—Logistics	60—Standardization
21—Maintenance	61—Scientific Research and Development
23—Materiel Management	62—Developmental Engineering
24—Transportation	63—Acquisition
25—Logistics Staff	64—Contracting
31—Security	65—Financial Management
32—Civil Engineering	71—Special Investigations
33—Communications and Information	84—History
34—Services	90—Special Management
35—Public Affairs	91—Safety
36—Personnel	99—Test and Evaluation
38—Manpower and Organization	

**Nondirective Publications.** Nondirective publications are informational and suggest guidance that may be modified appropriately to fit existing or forecasted circumstances. Complying with publications in this category is expected, but not mandatory. USAF personnel use these publications as reference aids or guides. Nondirective publications include pamphlets; basic and

operational doctrine; tactics, techniques, and procedures documents; directories; handbooks; catalogs; visual aids; and product announcements.

### **18.3. On Duty Twenty-Four/Seven**

As stated in AFI 1-1, 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. Airmen, if so directed by a competent authority, must report for duty at any time, at any location, for as long as necessary. For the mission to succeed, we must always give our best. We must strive to be resilient—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually—and be prepared to meet the challenges inherent to being a member of a fighting force, both in the deployed environment and at home station. Due to the importance of the USAF mission, the dangers associated with military service, national and international influences, and potential implications relevant to global operations, the USAF enforces more restrictive rules and elevated standards than those of the civilian community.

**General Orders.** 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. We must respect and abide by these restrictions to preserve relations with our host nation and 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. Members who fail to comply with General Orders may be subject to punishment under the Uniform Code of Military Justice or adverse administrative actions

### **18.4. Responsibility**

USAF standards must be uniformly known, consistently applied, and non-selectively enforced. Accountability is critically important to good order and discipline of the force. Failure to ensure accountability will hinder the trust of the American public, the very people living under the Constitution we swore to support and defend, and who look to us, the members of their nation's USAF, to embrace and live by the standards that are higher than those in the society we serve. Airmen have a responsibility to learn these standards well enough not only to follow them, but to articulate them clearly to subordinates and enforce proper observation by other members. For additional information on standards of conduct, refer to DoD Directive 5500.07, *Standards of Conduct*, 29 November 2007, DoD 5500.07-R, and AFI 1-1.

### ***Section 18B—Law of War***

#### **18.5. Law of War Defined**

The law of war, also called the Law of Armed Conflict (LOAC), is defined by the Department of Defense as the treaties and customary international law binding on the United States, that regulate: the resort to armed force; the conduct of hostilities and the protection of war victims in international and non-international armed conflict; belligerent occupation; and the relationships between belligerent, neutral, and non-belligerent states.

**Purpose of the Law of War.** The law of war arises from civilized nations' humanitarian desire to lessen the effects of conflicts. The law of war protects combatants and noncombatants, including

civilians, from unnecessary suffering, and provides fundamental protections for persons who fall into the hands of the enemy, particularly prisoners of war, civilians, and military wounded, sick, and shipwrecked. The law of war aims to keep conflicts from degenerating into savagery and brutality, thereby helping restore peace. The law of war also serves to assist commanders in ensuring the disciplined and efficient use of military force and preserving the professionalism and humanity of combatants

**Law of War Training.** Department of Defense Directive (DoDD) 2311.01, *Department of Defense Law of War Program*, 2 July 2020, requires each military department to implement effective programs that ensure law of war observance, prevent violations, ensure prompt reporting of alleged violations, and appropriately train all forces. Law of war training is an obligation of the United States under provisions of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, other law of war treaties, and customary international law. USAF personnel receive law of war training commensurate with their duties and responsibilities. Certain groups, such as aircrews, medical personnel, and security forces, receive specialized training to address unique situations they may encounter.

**Law of War Treaty Obligations.** Article six of the U.S. Constitution states that treaty obligations of the United States are the “supreme law of the land,” and the U.S. Supreme Court has held that international legal obligations, to include custom, is part of U.S. law. This means that treaties and international agreements to which the United States is a party, enjoy equal status to laws passed by Congress and signed by the President. Therefore, all persons subject to United States law must observe law of war obligations, as well as military personnel, civilians, and contractors authorized to accompany the U.S. Armed Forces when planning or executing operations.

## 18.6. Law of War Principles

Five important law of war principles govern armed conflict, and are addressed here:

**Military Necessity.** Military necessity is the law of war principle that justifies the use of all measures needed to defeat the enemy as quickly and efficiently as possible, that are not prohibited by the law of war. Attacks must be limited to military objectives. Combatants, unprivileged belligerents, and civilians taking a direct part in hostilities, are military objectives and may be made the object of attack. Military objectives, insofar as objects are concerned, include objects which by their nature, location, purpose, or use make an effective contribution to military action and whose total or partial destruction, capture, or neutralization, at the time, offer a definite military advantage.

Examples of these objects generally include tanks, military aircraft, bases, supplies, lines of communication, and headquarters. Military necessity does not authorize all military action and destruction. Under no circumstances may military necessity authorize actions specifically prohibited by the law of war, such as the murder of prisoners of war, ill treatment of prisoners of war or internees, the taking of hostages, or execution or reprisal against a person or object specifically protected from reprisal.

**Humanity.** The law of war principle of humanity forbids the infliction of suffering, injury, or destruction unnecessary to accomplish a legitimate military purpose. Although military necessity justifies certain actions necessary to defeat the enemy as quickly and efficiently as possible, military necessity cannot justify actions not necessary to achieving this purpose. Moreover, once a military purpose has been achieved, inflicting more suffering is unnecessary and should be avoided. For example, if any enemy combatant has been placed *hors de combat* (in other words,

taken out of the fight) through incapacitation by being severely wounded or captured, no military purpose is served by continuing to attack him or her. Similarly, the principle of humanity has been viewed as the source of the civilian population's immunity from being made the object of attack because their inoffensive and harmless character means there is no military purpose served by attacking them.

**Distinction.** The law of war principle of distinction imposes a requirement to distinguish (discriminate) between the military forces and the civilian population, and between unprotected and protected objects. Military force may be directed only against military objectives, and not against civilian objects. Civilian objects, such as places of worship, schools, hospitals, and dwellings, are protected from attack. A defender has an obligation to separate civilians and civilian objects (either in the defender's country or in an occupied area) from military objectives. However, civilian objects can lose their protected status if they are used to make an effective contribution to military action. Employment of voluntary or involuntary human shields to protect military objectives or individual military units or personnel is a fundamental violation of the law of war principle of distinction. Parties to a conflict must not disguise their military forces as civilians or as other protected categories of persons to kill or wound opposing forces.

**Proportionality.** Proportionality, as a principle of the law of war, may be defined as the expectation that even where one is justified in acting, one must not act in a way that is unreasonable or excessive. Proportionality generally weighs the justification for acting against expected harms to determine whether the latter are disproportionate in comparison to the former. In war, incidental damage to the civilian population and civilian objects is unfortunate and tragic, but often inevitable. Applying the proportionality rule in conducting attacks does not require that no incidental damage result from attacks. Rather, this rule creates obligations to refrain from attacks where the expected harm incidental to such attacks would be considered excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage anticipated to be gained, and to take feasible precautions in planning and conducting attacks to reduce the risk of harm to civilians and other protected persons and objects.

**Honor.** Honor is a principle of the law of war that requires a certain amount of fairness in offense and defense and a certain mutual respect between opposing military forces. In doing so, honor reflects the principle that parties to a conflict must accept certain limits on their ability to conduct hostilities. Honor also forbids the resort to means, expedients, or conduct that would constitute a breach of trust with the enemy. Enemies must deal with one another in good faith in their non-hostile relations.

Even in the conduct of hostilities, good faith prohibits: (1) killing or wounding enemy persons by resort to perfidy (treachery), (2) misusing certain signs, (3) fighting in the enemy's uniform, (4) feigning non-hostile relations to seek a military advantage, and (5) compelling nationals of a hostile party to take part in the operations of war directed against their own country. Honor; however, does not forbid parties from using ruses and other lawful deceptions against which the enemy ought to take measures to protect itself.

## **18.7. The Protection of War Victims and Classes of Persons**

The Geneva Conventions of 1949 consist of four separate international treaties that aim to protect all persons taking no active part in hostilities, including members of military forces who have laid down their arms and those combatants placed out of the fight due to sickness, wounds, detention,

or any other cause. These treaties also seek to protect civilians and private property. The Geneva Conventions also distinguish between combatants, noncombatants, and civilians. Should doubt exist as to whether a captured individual is a lawful combatant, noncombatant, or an unprivileged belligerent, the individual will receive the protections of the Geneva Prisoner of War Convention until their actual status is determined.

**Combatants.** Lawful or “privileged” combatants are: (1) members of the military forces of a state that is a party to a conflict, aside from certain categories of medical and religious personnel; (2) under certain conditions, members of militia or volunteer corps who are not part of the military forces of a state, but belong to a state; and (3) inhabitants of an area who participate in a kind of popular uprising to defend against foreign invaders, known as a *levée en masse*. A combatant is commanded by a person responsible for subordinates, wears fixed distinctive emblems/uniforms recognizable at a distance, carries arms openly, and conducts his or her combat operations according to the law of war. Lawful combatants are subject to capture and detention as prisoners of war by opposing military forces. Combatants have a special legal status, as well as certain rights, duties, and liabilities. They have the right to prisoner of war status if they fall into the power of the enemy during international armed conflict. Combatants have legal immunity from domestic law for acts done under military authority and in accordance with the law of war.

**Noncombatants.** Noncombatants include certain military personnel who are members of the military forces not authorized to engage in combatant activities, such as permanent medical personnel and religious affairs personnel. Noncombatants must be respected and protected and may not be made the object of attack.

**Civilians.** Civilians, a type of non-combatants, are protected persons and may not be made the object of direct attack. They may, however, suffer injury or death incident to a direct attack on a military objective without such an attack violating the law of war, if such attack is on a lawful target by lawful means and adheres to the principal of proportionality. With the exception of the *levée en masse*, the law of war does not authorize civilians to take an active or direct part in hostilities.

**Unprivileged Belligerents: A Distinction Not Made by the Geneva Conventions.** The term unprivileged belligerent is not used in the Geneva Conventions, but is defined in the DoD Law of War Manual to include “lawful combatants who have forfeited the privileges of combatant status by engaging in spying or sabotage, and private persons who have forfeited one or more of the protections of civilian status by engaging in hostilities.” An unprivileged belligerent is an individual who is not authorized by a state that is party to a conflict to take part in hostilities but does so anyway.

## 18.8. Military Objectives

Military objectives include any object which by its nature, location, purpose, or use, makes an effective contribution to military action and whose total or partial destruction, capture, or neutralization in the circumstances ruling at the time, offers a definite military advantage.

**Protection of Civilians and Civilian Objects.** Military objectives may not be attacked when the expected incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians, and damage to civilian objects would be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage expected to be gained. In general, military operations must not be directed against civilians. In particular, civilians must not be made the object of attack and must not be used as shields or hostages. Measures of intimidation

or terrorism against the civilian population are prohibited, including acts or threats of violence with the primary purpose of spreading terror. The principle, that military operations must not be directed against civilians, does not prohibit military operations, short of violence, that are militarily necessary. For example, such operations may include: stopping and searching civilians for weapons and verifying that they are civilians; temporarily detaining civilians for reasons of mission accomplishment, self-defense, or for their own safety; collecting intelligence from civilians, including interrogating civilians; restricting the movement of civilians, or directing their movement away from military operations for their own protection; or seeking to influence enemy civilians with propaganda.

Feasible precautions to reduce the risk of harm to civilians and civilian objects must be taken when planning and conducting attacks, and in connection with certain types of weapons. Also, feasible precautions should be taken to mitigate the burden on civilians when seizing or destroying enemy property. Commanders and other decision-makers must make decisions in good faith and based on the information available to them. Even when information is imperfect or lacking, as will frequently be the case during armed conflict, commanders and other decision-makers may direct and conduct military operations, so long as they make a good faith assessment of the information that is available to them at the time. Judge advocates, intelligence, and operations personnel play a critical role in determining the propriety of a target and the choice of weapon to be used under the particular circumstances known to the commander when planning an attack.

**Protected Objects.** The law of war provides specific protection to certain objects, including medical units or establishments; transports of wounded and sick personnel; military and civilian hospital ships; safety zones established under the Geneva Conventions; religious, cultural, and charitable buildings; monuments; and prisoner of war camps. However, if these protected objects are used for military purposes, they may lose their protected status. An attack on protected objects near lawful military objectives, that suffer collateral damage when the nearby military objectives are lawfully engaged, does not violate the law of war, subject to adherence to the principle of proportionality.

**Enemy Aircraft and Aircrew.** Enemy military aircraft may be attacked and destroyed, unless in neutral airspace or territory. Airmen who parachute from a disabled aircraft and offer no resistance may not be attacked. Airmen who resist in descent or are downed behind their own lines and who continue to fight may be subject to attack. The rules of engagement for a particular operation often include additional guidance for attacking enemy aircraft consistent with law of war obligations. An enemy's public and private nonmilitary aircraft are generally not subject to attack unless used for a military purpose.

If a civil aircraft initiates an attack, it may be considered an immediate military threat and may be lawfully attacked (on the basis it qualifies as a military objective). An immediate military threat justifying an attack may also exist when reasonable suspicion exists of a hostile intent, such as when a civil aircraft approaches a military base at high speed or enters enemy territory without permission and disregards signals or warnings to land or proceed to a designated place.

Military medical aircraft are used exclusively for the removal of the wounded and sick and for the transport of medical personnel and equipment. Military medical aircraft are entitled to protection from attack by enemy combatants while flying at heights, times, and on routes specifically agreed upon between the parties to the conflict. Under the law of war, a military medical aircraft found to be in violation of established agreements could be lawfully attacked and destroyed.

## 18.9. Enforcing Law of War Rules

All Department of Defense personnel, including contractors when assigned to or accompanying deployed armed forces, comply with the law of war during all armed conflicts and military operations. Law of war principles and rules are consistent with military doctrine for a profession of arms that is the basis for effective combat operations. Following doctrinal guidance, such as accuracy of targeting, concentration of effort, maximization of military advantage, conservation of resources, avoidance of excessive collateral damage, and economy of force, is consistent with the law of war and reinforces compliance. Each member of the armed services has a duty to comply with the law of war, which includes the refusal to comply with clearly illegal orders to commit law of war violations. For law of war violations, members may be prosecuted by courts-martial under the Uniform Code of Military Justice or through an international military tribunal.

**Reporting Violations.** Department of Defense personnel who suspect or have information which might reasonably be viewed as a violation of the law of war committed by or against U.S. personnel, enemy personnel, or any other individual, shall promptly report the violation to their immediate commander or the proper authority. This includes violations by the enemy, allies, U.S. Armed Forces, or others. If the allegation involves or may involve a U.S. commander, the report should be made to the next higher United States command authority. Particular circumstances may require that the report be made to the nearest judge advocate, inspector general, a special agent in the Office of Special Investigations, or a security forces member.

## 18.10. Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement exist to ensure use of force in an operation occurs according to national policy goals, mission requirements, and the rule of law. In general, rules of engagement set parameters for when, where, how, why, and against whom commanders and their Airmen may use force. All Airmen have a duty and a legal obligation to understand, remember, and apply rules of engagement. The standing rules of engagement are approved by the U.S. President and Secretary of Defense, and are issued by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They provide implementation guidance on the inherent right of self-defense and the application of force for mission accomplishment. **Note:** Mission-specific rules of engagement present a more specific application of law of war principles tailored to the political and military nature of a mission which are contained in execution orders, operations plans, and operations orders. Commanders at every echelon have an obligation to ensure that all operations comply with the mission rules of engagement and with the standing rules of engagement.

**Self Defense.** The fundamental U.S. policy on self-defense is repeatedly stated throughout the standing rules of engagement, “These rules do not limit a commander’s inherent authority and obligation to use all necessary means available to take all appropriate actions in self-defense of the commander’s unit and other U.S. Armed Forces in the vicinity.” Self-defense methods include national, collective, unit, and individual levels of action. Several elements must be considered before undertaking the use of force in self-defense.

**De-escalation.** When time and circumstances permit, the forces committing hostile acts or hostile intent should be warned and given the opportunity to withdraw or cease threatening actions.

**Necessity.** Rules of engagement provide more specific guidance to operations and are guided by the law of war; therefore, the principle of necessity applied to the rules of engagement focuses on

the threat perceived by an individual, or if a hostile act is committed, or hostile intent is demonstrated against U.S. Armed Forces or other designated persons or property. Necessity requires that no reasonable alternative means of redress are available. Hostilities are defined as forces or threats of force used against the United States, U.S. Armed Forces, designated persons and property, or intended to impede the mission of U.S. Armed Forces.

**Proportionality.** Proportionality in the context of self-defense under the rules of engagement relates to the reasonableness of the response to a threat. In self-defense, U.S. Armed Forces may only use the amount of force necessary to decisively counter a hostile act or a demonstration of hostile intent, and ensure the continued safety of U.S. Armed Forces or other designated persons and property. Force used must be reasonable in intensity, duration, and magnitude compared to the threat based on facts known to the commander at the time.

**Pursuit.** U.S. Armed Forces can pursue and engage a hostile force that has committed a hostile act or demonstrated a hostile intent if those forces continue to commit hostile acts or demonstrate hostile intent. Applicable rules of engagement may restrict or place limitations on U.S. Armed Forces' ability to pursue or engage a hostile force across an international border.

### *Section 18C—Code of Conduct*

#### **18.11. Responsibilities under the Code of Conduct**

The Code of Conduct is a moral code designed to provide U.S. military personnel with a standard of conduct that all members are expected to measure up to. The six articles of the Code of Conduct were designed to address situations that any member could encounter to some degree. It includes basic information useful to prisoners of war to help them survive honorably while resisting captors' efforts to exploit them. It is also applicable to service members subject to other hostile detention, such as hostage scenarios. Survival and resistance in hostile situations requires knowledge and understanding of the six articles. Violations of the Code of Conduct are not criminally punishable per se, but actions that also violate the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) may subject members to disciplinary action.

**Code of Conduct Training.** Department of Defense personnel who plan, schedule, commit, or control members of the U.S. Armed Forces must fully understand the Code of Conduct and ensure personnel have the training and education necessary to abide by it. The level of knowledge members need depends on how likely they are to be captured, their exposure to sensitive information, and how useful or valuable a captor considers them to be. Code of Conduct training is conducted at three levels, briefly described here.

**Level A—Entry Level Training.** Level A training represents the minimum level of understanding needed for all members of the U.S. Armed Forces. This level is imparted to all personnel during entry training.

**Level B—Training After Assumption of Duty Eligibility.** Level B training is an enhanced version of training from Level A. It is the minimum level of understanding needed for service members whose military jobs, specialties, or assignments entail moderate risk of capture, such as members of ground combat units. Training is conducted for such service members as soon as their assumption of duty makes them eligible.

**Level C—Training Upon Assumption of Duties or Responsibilities.** Level C training is an enhanced version of training from Levels A and B. It is the minimum level of understanding

needed for military service members whose military jobs, specialties, or assignments entail significant or high risk of capture and whose position, rank, or seniority makes them vulnerable to greater-than-average exploitation efforts by a captor. Examples include aircrews and special mission forces, such as pararescue teams. Training for these members is conducted upon their assumption of the duties or responsibilities that make them eligible.

## **18.12. The Articles of the Code of Conduct**

President Dwight D. Eisenhower first published the Code of Conduct for members of the U.S. Armed Forces on 17 August 1955. In March 1988, President Ronald W. Reagan amended the code with gender-neutral language. The six articles of the Code of Conduct are listed below, followed by an explanation of each article and significant aspects of that article.

### **ARTICLE I**

*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 II**

*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 III**

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

### **ARTICLE IV**

*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 V**

*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 VI

*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.*

**ARTICLE I.** Article I applies to all members at all times. A member of the U.S. Armed Forces has a duty to support U.S. interests and oppose U.S. enemies regardless of the circumstances, whether in active combat or captivity. Past experiences of captured Americans reveals that honorable survival in captivity requires a high degree of dedication and motivation. Maintaining these qualities requires knowledge of and a strong belief in the advantages of American democratic institutions and concepts. Maintaining these qualities also requires a love of and faith in the United States and a conviction that the United States' cause is just. Honorable survival in captivity depends on faith in, and loyalty to, fellow prisoners of war. **Note:** Possessing the dedication and motivation fostered by such beliefs and trust may help prisoners of war survive long, stressful periods of captivity, and has helped many return to their country and families with their honor and self-esteem intact.

**ARTICLE II.** Members of the U.S. Armed Forces may never surrender voluntarily. Even when isolated and no longer able to inflict casualties on the enemy or otherwise defend themselves, their duty is to evade capture and rejoin the nearest friendly force. Surrender is the willful act of giving oneself up to the enemy. In contrast, capture occurs when a member has no means to resist, evasion is impossible, and further fighting would lead to death of the U.S. member with no significant loss to the enemy. Capture dictated by overwhelming enemy strength and the futility of fighting is not dishonorable. Service members must understand and have confidence in search and recovery forces rescue procedures and techniques, and proper evasion destination procedures. **Note:** Under the UCMJ, a U.S. commander who shamefully surrenders to the enemy, any command or place that is his or her duty to defend, is subject to punishment. In addition, any person subject to the UCMJ who compels or attempts to compel a commander of any place, vessel, aircraft, or other military property, or of any body of members of the Armed Forces, to give it up to an enemy or to abandon it, or who strikes the colors or flag to an enemy without proper authority, is subject to punishment.

**ARTICLE III.** A U.S. Armed Forces member's duty to continue to resist enemy exploitation by all means available is not lessened by the misfortune of capture. Contrary to the 1949 Geneva Conventions, enemies that United States forces have engaged since 1949 have treated the prisoner of war compound as an extension of the battlefield. The prisoner of war must be prepared for this. Enemies have used a variety of tactics to exploit prisoners of war for propaganda purposes or to obtain military information, in spite of Geneva Convention prohibitions. Physical and mental harassment, general mistreatment, torture, medical neglect, and political indoctrination have all been used, and the enemy has tried to tempt prisoners of war to accept special favors or privileges in return for statements or information, or for a pledge by the prisoner of war not to attempt escape. A prisoner of war must not seek special privileges or accept special favors at the expense of fellow prisoners of war. Under the guidance and supervision of the senior military person, the prisoner of war must be prepared to take advantage of escape opportunities. In communal detention, the welfare of the prisoners of war who remain behind must be considered. Additionally, prisoners of war should not sign or enter into a parole agreement. Parole agreements are promises the prisoners

of war make to the captor to fulfill stated conditions, such as not to bear arms, in exchange for special privileges, such as release or lessened restraint.

Members should understand that captivity involves continuous control by a captor who may attempt to use the prisoner of war as a source of information for political purposes or as a potential subject for political indoctrination. Members must familiarize themselves with prisoner of war and captor rights and obligations under the Geneva Conventions, understanding that some captors have accused prisoners of war of being war criminals simply because they waged war against them. Continued efforts to escape are critical because a successful escape causes the enemy to divert forces that may otherwise be fighting, provides the United States valuable information about the enemy and other prisoners of war, and serves as a positive example to all members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

**ARTICLE IV.** Officers and enlisted members continue to carry out their responsibilities and exercise authority in captivity. Informing, or any other action detrimental to a fellow prisoner of war, is despicable and expressly forbidden. Prisoners of war must avoid helping the enemy identify fellow prisoners of war who may have valuable knowledge to the enemy. Strong leadership is essential to discipline. Without discipline, camp organization, resistance, and even survival may be impossible. Personal hygiene, camp sanitation, and care of the sick and wounded are imperative. Wherever located, prisoners of war must organize in a military manner under the senior military prisoner of war, regardless of military service. If the senior prisoner of war is incapacitated or otherwise unable to act, the next senior prisoner of war assumes command.

Members must be trained to understand and accept leadership from those in command and abide by the decisions of the senior prisoner of war, regardless of military service. Failing to do so may result in punishment under the UCMJ. Additionally, a prisoner of war who voluntarily informs or collaborates with the captor is a traitor to the United States and fellow prisoners of war, and after repatriation, is subject to punishment under the UCMJ. Service members must be familiar with the principles of hygiene, sanitation, health maintenance, first aid, physical conditioning, and food utilization.

**ARTICLE V.** When questioned, a prisoner of war is required by the Geneva Conventions, and permitted by the UCMJ, to give name, rank, service number, and date of birth. Under the Geneva Conventions, the enemy has no right to try to force a prisoner of war to provide any additional information. However, it is unrealistic to expect a prisoner of war to remain confined for years reciting only name, rank, service number, and date of birth. Many prisoner of war camp situations exist in which certain types of conversation with the enemy are permitted. For example, a prisoner of war is allowed, but not required by the Code of Conduct, the UCMJ, or the Geneva Conventions, to fill out a Geneva Conventions capture card, to write letters home, and to communicate with captors on matters of health and welfare. The senior prisoner of war is required to represent prisoners of war in matters of camp administration, health, welfare, and grievances. A prisoner of war must resist, avoid, or evade, even when physically and mentally coerced, all enemy efforts to secure statements or actions that may further the enemy's cause. Examples of statements or actions prisoners of war should resist include giving oral or written confessions, answering questionnaires, providing personal history statements, and making propaganda recordings and broadcast appeals to other prisoners of war to comply with improper captor demands. Additionally, prisoners of war should resist appealing for United States surrender or parole; engaging in self-criticism; or providing oral or written statements or communication that are harmful to the United States, its allies, the U.S. Armed Forces, or other prisoners of war. Experience has shown that, although

enemy interrogation sessions may be harsh and cruel, a prisoner of war can usually resist if there is a will to resist. The best way for a prisoner of war to keep faith with the United States fellow prisoners of war, and him or herself, is to provide the enemy with as little information as possible.

Service members familiarize themselves with the various aspects of interrogation, including phases, procedures, methods, and techniques, as well as the interrogator's goals, strengths, and weaknesses. Members should avoid disclosing information by such techniques as claiming inability to furnish information because of previous orders, poor memory, ignorance, or lack of comprehension. They should understand that, short of death, it is unlikely that a prisoner of war will prevent a skilled enemy interrogator, using all available psychological and physical methods of coercion, from obtaining some degree of compliance. However, the prisoner of war must recover as quickly as possible and resist successive efforts to the utmost.

**ARTICLE VI.** A member of the U.S. Armed Forces remains responsible for personal actions at all times. When repatriated, prisoners of war can expect their actions to be subject to review, including both circumstances of capture and conduct during detention. The purpose of such a review is to recognize meritorious performance and, if necessary, investigate any allegations of misconduct. Such reviews are conducted with due regard for the rights of the individual and consideration for the conditions of captivity. Members should understand the difference between the Code of Conduct as a moral code and the UCMJ as a legal code. Members should understand that failure to follow the Code of Conduct could ultimately lead them to commit misconduct punishable under the UCMJ. Members should also understand that the U.S. Government will use every available means to establish contact with prisoners of war, to support them, and to obtain their release. Furthermore, U.S. laws provide for the support and care of dependents of the U.S. Armed Forces, including prisoners of war family members. Military members must ensure their personal affairs and family matters are up to date at all times. **Note:** No United States prisoner of war will be forgotten. Every available means will be employed to establish contact with, support, and obtain the release of all our U.S. prisoners of war.

### **18.13. Detention of U.S. Military Personnel in Operations Other than War**

U.S. military personnel isolated from U.S. control are still required to do everything in their power to follow Department of Defense and USAF policy and survive with honor. Basic protections available to prisoners of war under the Geneva Conventions may not be adhered to during operations other than war; thus, personnel detained may be subject to the domestic criminal laws of the detaining nation. These personnel should use the Code of Conduct as a moral guide to assist them to uphold the ideals of Department of Defense policy and survive their ordeal with honor.

**Rationale.** Because of their wide range of activities, U.S. military personnel are subject to detention by unfriendly governments or captivity by terrorist groups. When a hostile government or terrorist group detains or captures U.S. military personnel, the captor is often attempting to exploit both the individual and the U.S. Government for its own purposes. As history has shown, exploitation can take many forms, such as hostage confessions to crimes never committed, international news media exploitation, and substantial ransom demands, all of which can lead to increased credibility and support for the detainer.

**Responsibility.** U.S. military personnel detained by unfriendly governments or held hostage by a terrorist group must do everything in their power to survive with honor. Furthermore, whether United States military personnel are detained or held hostage, they can be sure the U.S.

Government will make every effort to obtain their release. To best survive the situation, military personnel must maintain faith in their country, in fellow detainees or captives, and most importantly, in themselves. In any group captivity situation, military captives must organize to the fullest extent possible under the senior military member present. If civilians are part of the group, they should be encouraged to participate. United States military personnel must make every reasonable effort to prevent captors from exploiting them and the U.S. Government. If exploitation cannot be prevented, military members must attempt to limit it. If detainees convince their captors of their low propaganda value, the captors may seek a quick end to the situation. When a detention or hostage situation ends, military members who can honestly say they did their utmost to resist exploitation will have upheld Department of Defense policy, the founding principles of the United States, and the highest traditions of military service.

**Military Bearing and Courtesy.** U.S. military personnel shall maintain military bearing, regardless of the type of detention or captivity, or brutality of treatment. They should make every effort to remain calm and courteous, and project personal dignity, particularly during the process of capture and the early stages of internment when captors may be uncertain of their control over the captives. Discourteous, nonmilitary behavior seldom serves long-term interests of a detainee or hostage and often results in unnecessary punishment that serves no useful purpose. Such behavior may jeopardize survival and complicate efforts to gain release of the detainee or hostage.

**Guidance for Detention by Governments.** Detainees in the custody of an unfriendly government, regardless of the circumstances that resulted in the detention, are subject to the laws of that government. Detainees must maintain military bearing and avoid aggressive, combative, or illegal behavior that may complicate their situation, legal status, or efforts to negotiate a rapid release. As American citizens, detainees should ask immediately and continually to see United States embassy personnel or a representative of an allied or neutral government. United States military personnel who become lost or isolated in an unfriendly foreign country during operations other than war will not act as combatants during evasion attempts. During operations other than war, there is no protection afforded under the Geneva Convention. The civil laws of that country apply.

A detainer's goal may be maximum political exploitation. Detained U.S. military personnel must be cautious in all they say and do. In addition to asking for a U.S. representative, detainees should provide name, rank, service number, date of birth, and the innocent circumstances leading to their detention. They should limit further discussions to health and welfare matters, conditions of their fellow detainees, and going home.

Detainees should avoid signing documents or making statements. If forced, they must provide as little information as possible. U.S. military detainees should not refuse release, unless doing so requires them to compromise their honor or cause damage to the U.S. Government or its allies. Attempting to escape by unfriendly governments is not recommended by Department of Defense policy except under life threatening circumstances. This is because attempted or actual escape from a government confinement facility will likely constitute a violation of the unfriendly government's criminal law and may subject the escapee to increased criminal prosecution.

**Terrorist Hostage.** Capture by terrorists is generally the least predictable and structured form of operations. Capture can range from a spontaneous kidnapping to a carefully planned hijacking. In either situation, hostages play an important role in determining their own fate because terrorists rarely expect to receive rewards for providing good treatment or releasing victims unharmed. U.S. military members should assume their captors are genuine terrorists when it is unclear if they are

surrogates of a government. A terrorist hostage situation is more volatile than a government detention, so members must take steps to lessen the chance of a terrorist indiscriminately killing hostages. In such a situation, Department of Defense policy accepts and promotes efforts to establish rapport between United States hostages and the terrorists to establish themselves as people in the terrorist's mind, rather than a stereotypical symbol of a country the terrorist may hate. Department of Defense policy recommends U.S. personnel stay away from topics that could inflame terrorist sensibilities, such as their cause, politics, or religion. Listening can be vitally important when survival is at stake. Members should not argue, patronize, or debate issues with the captors. During rescue attempts, hostages should take cover, remain stationary when practicable, and not attempt to help rescuers. Hostages may experience rough handling from the rescuers until the rescuers separate the terrorists from the hostages.

## Chapter 19 ENFORCING MILITARY STANDARDS

### *Section 19B—Individual Accountability*

#### **19.9. Enforcing Standards**

Enforcing military standards begins with individual accountability. There are some activities and behaviors that, while arguably not illegal, are nevertheless inconsistent with maintaining good order and discipline. Understanding the restrictions and our responsibilities for adhering to USAF standards will help prevent the need to reinforce these standards.

**The Air Force Complaints Resolution Program.** The Air Force Complaints Resolution Program is a leadership tool that indicates where command involvement is needed to correct systematic, programmatic, or procedural weaknesses. Resolving the underlying cause of a complaint may prevent more severe symptoms or costly consequences, such as reduced performance, accidents, poor quality work, or poor morale.

The program also ensures the effective and efficient use of resources, resolves problems affecting the Air Force mission promptly and objectively, creates an atmosphere of trust in which issues can be objectively and fully resolved without retaliation or fear of reprisal, and assists commanders in instilling confidence in Air Force leadership. Even though allegations may not be substantiated, the evidence or investigation findings may reveal

**Submitting Complaints.** Under the Air Force Complaints Resolution Program, a member has the right to present a complaint without fear of reprisal and codified in Department of Defense 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. While members should attempt to resolve complaints at the lowest possible level before addressing them to higher level command or the IG, member from making a lawful communication to an IG or member of Congress. In addition to having the right to present personal complaints, a member has the responsibility to report FWA, or gross mismanagement; a violation of law, policy, procedures, instructions, or regulations; an injustice; any abuse of authority; inappropriate conduct; or misconduct through appropriate supervisory channels or the IG. **Note:** Only the IG may investigate allegations of reprisal and restriction under the Military Whistleblower's Protection Act.

**Complaints Generally Handled Outside the Air Force Complaints Resolution Program.** Matters normally addressed through other established grievance or appeal channels may be referred back to the appropriate grievance or appeal channel unless there is evidence these channels mishandled the matter or process. Complainants must provide some relevant evidence that the process was mishandled or handled prejudicially before an IG channel will process a complaint of mishandling. Dissatisfaction or disagreement with the outcome or findings of an alternative grievance or appeal process is not a sufficient basis to warrant an IG investigation. For additional information on procedures for filing an IG complaint and further details regarding the program, refer to AFI 90-301, *Inspector General Complaints Resolution*.

### **19.10. Commander's Authority and Responsibility**

While preserving an Airman's right of expression to the maximum extent possible, Air Force commanders have the inherent authority and responsibility to take action to ensure the mission is performed. This authority and responsibility includes placing lawful restriction on engaging in dissident and protest activities; writing, distributing, publishing, or posting any unauthorized material; frequenting establishments that have been designated as 'off limits'; participating in any activities of illegal discrimination or any activities that a commander finds to be detrimental to good order, discipline, or mission accomplishment; interfering with the USAF mission or law and order; or presenting a clear danger to loyalty, discipline, or morale of members of the U.S. Armed Forces.

### **19.11. Public Statements**

According to AFI 1-1, the issuance of public statements on official USAF 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 USAF policy or that could be misleading to the public if taken out of context. To ensure USAF official information is presented professionally, personnel should make certain it is accurate, prompt, and factual; is confined to their particular areas of expertise; avoids a hypothetical and speculative nature; accurately reflects USAF policy; is presented simply and honestly; and complies with the spirit and letter of the Secretary of Defense's principles for public information. For additional information, refer to AFI 35-101.

As representatives of the service in both official and unofficial contact with the public, members have many opportunities to contribute to positive public opinion toward the USAF. Each USAF member is responsible for obtaining the necessary review and clearance, starting with public affairs, before releasing any proposed statement, text, or imagery to the public. This includes digital products being loaded on an unrestricted website. Members must ensure the information revealed, whether official or unofficial, is appropriate for release according to classification requirements in DoDM5200.01V1\_AFMAN16-1404V1.

### **19.12. Free Exercise of Religion and Religious Accommodation**

Every Airman 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. According to AFI 1-1,, 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, disapproving, or extending preferential treatment for any faith, belief, or absence of belief. Airmen requesting religious accommodation must continue to comply with directives, instructions, and lawful orders until the request is approved. If the request is not approved, 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, safety, or mission accomplishment; and must be by the least restrictive means necessary to avoid the adverse impact.

### **19.13. Political Activities**

According to AFI 1-1, generally, as an individual, you enjoy the same rights and have the same responsibilities as other citizens. However, as a member of the USAF, the manner in which you exercise your rights is limited in some cases. While on RegAF status, members are prohibited from engaging in certain political activities to maintain good order and discipline and to avoid conflicts of interest and the appearance of improper endorsement in political matters. While USAF members do have the right and duty as American citizens to vote and voice opinions concerning political matters, we must be careful that personal opinions and activities are not directly, or by implication, represented as those of the USAF.

Examples of political activities that may be prohibited or associated with restrictions include: political rallies, speaking engagements, contributions, endorsements, sponsorship, campaigns, and demonstrations. Before engaging in any political activities, be sure to review applicable USAF instructions and guidance. AFI 51-508 provides detailed information on what USAF members may or may not be allowed to do regarding political activities. DoD Directive 1344.10, *Political Activities by Members of the Armed Forces*, 19 February 2008, includes guidance on political activities for all U.S. Armed Forces. Also reference DAFI 52-201, *Religious Freedom in the Department of the Air Force*, 23 June 2021.

### **19.14. Alcohol Abuse**

USAF policy recognizes that alcohol abuse negatively affects public behavior, duty performance, and physical and mental health. The USAF provides comprehensive clinical assistance to eligible beneficiaries seeking help for an alcohol problem. According to AFI 1-1, USAF policy is to prevent alcohol abuse and alcoholism among its personnel and dependents; to assist USAF 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. All Airmen 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. Use of alcohol must not adversely affect duty performance or conduct on- or off-duty, to include the ability to be recalled, if specifically required, (when serving in an on-call status) during scheduled off-duty time. Also reference AFI 34-219, *Alcoholic Beverage Program*, 3 February 2021.

**Drunk Driving.** Drunk driving can lead to disciplinary action, including criminal prosecution under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) and local and state criminal laws. AFI 31-218, *Motor Vehicle Traffic Supervision*, 4 October 2016, applies to everyone with military installation driving privileges. A person with a blood alcohol concentration greater than .08 is considered *per se* impaired, even without any other evidence. If a member has a blood alcohol percentage of 0.05 but less than 0.08, the person may be presumed to be impaired. This standard may be considered with other competent evidence in determining whether the person is under the influence of alcohol. There is a one-year driving privilege suspension for driving or being in physical control of a motor vehicle while under the influence of intoxicating liquor at a blood alcohol concentration of 0.08 percent or greater.

### **19.15. Substance Use/Misuse**

Department of Defense policy is to prevent and eliminate problematic substance use in the Department of Defense. Substance use and abuse is incompatible with USAF core values, maintenance of high standards of behavior, performance, readiness, and the discipline necessary to accomplish the Air Force mission. Additionally, substance abuse and misuse can cause serious physical and mental health problems and jeopardize safety.

According to AFI 1-1, the illegal use of drugs, or improper use of legal drugs, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. In AFI 90-507, *Military Drug Demand Reduction Program, 25 May 2017*, drug abuse is described as the wrongful use, possession, distribution, or introduction onto a military installation or other property or facility under military supervision, of a controlled substance, prescription medication, over-the-counter medication, or intoxicating substance (other than alcohol). “Wrongful” means without legal justification or excuse, and includes use contrary to the directions of the manufacturer or prescribing healthcare provider, and use of any intoxicating substance not intended for human ingestion. Drug abuse also includes inhalant abuse (sometimes referred to as huffing) and steroid use, other than that specifically prescribed by a competent medical authority. Violators are subject to punitive action under the UCMJ as well as adverse administrative actions, up to and including administrative separation. 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. The possession of an intoxicating substance with the intent to use in a manner that would alter mood or function, without legal authorization, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Failure by military personnel to comply with these prohibitions may result in prosecution under the UCMJ or state and local laws, as well as adverse administrative actions up to and including administrative separation. **Note:** USAF 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. ADAPT and drug demand reduction programs include substance use/misuse prevention, education, treatment, and urinalysis testing. Members are held to the highest standards of discipline and behavior, both on- and off-duty. All patients diagnosed with a substance use disorder and entered into ADAPT will be recommended for limited duty, indicating the patient is not worldwide qualified. Individuals who experience problems related to substance use/misuse will receive counseling and treatment as needed; however, all USAF members are held accountable for unacceptable behavior.

**Commander’s Identification.** Unit commanders will refer all service members for assessment when substance use or misuse is suspected to be a contributing factor in any misconduct. Examples include: driving under the influence, public intoxication, drunk and disorderly conduct, spouse or child abuse and maltreatment, underage drinking, positive drug test, or when notified by medical personnel. Commanders who fail to comply with this requirement place the member at increased risk for developing severe substance problems, and may jeopardize the safety of others and ultimately mission accomplishment.

### **19.16. Drug Testing**

The USAF conducts drug testing of personnel according to AFI 90-507. Drug testing is an effective deterrent for the illegal use of drugs; therefore, USAF military members are subject to testing regardless of grade, status, or position. Military members may receive an order or may voluntarily

consent to provide urine samples at any time. Military members who fail to comply with an order to provide a urine sample are subject to punitive action under the UCMJ. **Note:** Commander-directed testing should only be used as a last resort because the results may not be used for disciplinary action under the UCMJ or to characterize an administrative discharge.

**Inspection under Military Rule of Evidence 313.** In general, an inspection is an examination conducted as an incident of command, the primary purpose of which is to determine and ensure the security, military fitness, or good order and discipline of a unit, organization, or installation. Inspections may utilize any reasonable natural or technological aid and may be conducted with or without notice to those inspected. The positive result of a urine sample may be used to refer a member for a substance use evaluation, as evidence to support disciplinary action under the UCMJ or administrative discharge action, and as a consideration on the issue of characterization of discharge in administrative discharges.

**Probable Cause Search under Military Rule of Evidence 315.** A probable cause search requires a search and seizure authorization from the appropriate commander, military judge, or military magistrate in order to seize a urine specimen. Probable cause exists when there is a reasonable belief that evidence of illegal drug use will be found in the system of the member to be tested. Results may be used as evidence to support disciplinary action under the UCMJ, or in an administrative discharge action.

**Medical Purposes.** Results of any examination conducted for a valid medical purpose, including emergency medical treatment, periodic physical examination, and other such examinations necessary for diagnostic or treatment purposes, may be used to identify drug abusers. Results may be used as evidence to support disciplinary action under the UCMJ or in administrative discharge action.

**Self-identification.** USAF members (not currently under investigation or pending action), with alcohol problems, substance use problems, or personal drug use or possession, are encouraged to seek assistance from the unit commander, first sergeant, substance use counselor, or a military medical professional. Following an assessment, the ADAPT program manager will consult with the treatment team and determine an appropriate clinical course of action. Commanders may not use voluntary self-identification of a substance use problem against a member in an action under the UCMJ or when determining the appropriate characterization of service in an administrative discharge action.

## *Section 19C—Appropriate Working Relationships*

### **19.17. Working Relationships**

Social interaction that contributes appropriately to unit cohesiveness and effectiveness is encouraged. 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. While personal relationships between USAF 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 affect the USAF by eroding morale, good order, discipline, respect for authority, unit cohesion, or mission accomplishment.

**Professional Relationships.** As stated in AFI 1-1, appropriate professional relationships are vital to the effective operation of all organizations and to maintaining good order and discipline. The nature of the military mission requires absolute confidence in command and an unhesitating adherence to orders that may result in inconvenience, hardships, and at times, injury or death. This distinction makes the maintenance of professional relationships in the military more critical than in civilian organizations. AFI 36-2909, *Air Force Professional Relationships and Conduct*, 14 November 2019, establishes responsibilities for maintaining professional relationships.

**Unprofessional Relationships.** Unprofessional relationships, whether pursued on- or off-duty, are those relationships that detract from the authority of superiors, or result in, or reasonably create the appearance of, favoritism, misuse of office or position, or the abandonment of organizational goals for personal interests. 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.

Unprofessional relationships must be avoided between officers, between enlisted members, between officers and enlisted members, between military personnel and civilian employees or contractor personnel, as well as within and across the military branches. Relationships in which one member exercises supervisory or command authority over another have the potential for becoming 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 have direct or indirect organizational influence over the duties and careers of junior members. The ability of the senior member to directly or indirectly influence assignments, promotion recommendations, duties, awards, and other privileges and benefits, places both the senior member and the junior member in susceptible situations.

**Fraternization.** Fraternalization is an unprofessional relationship between an officer and enlisted member specifically prohibited by Article 134, Uniform Code of Military Justice. Fraternalization exists when a relationship between an officer and an enlisted member puts the enlisted member on terms of military equality with the officer in a way that prejudices good order and discipline in the U.S. Armed Forces or brings discredit upon the U.S. Armed Forces.

This custom of the service recognizes that officers will not form personal relationships with enlisted members on terms of military equality, whether on- or off-duty. Whether a contact or association constitutes fraternization depends on the surrounding circumstances, such as whether the conduct has compromised the chain of command; has resulted in the appearance of partiality; or has otherwise undermined good order, discipline, authority, or morale. The prohibition on fraternization extends beyond organizational and chain of command lines to include members among or across different services. In short, it extends to all officer and enlisted relationships. When fraternization occurs, the officer will be held primarily responsible, and is the only member subject to disciplinary action for fraternization under Article 134, UCMJ; however, an enlisted member involved in consensual fraternization is still engaged in an unprofessional relationship and is likewise subject to discipline under Article 92, UCMJ.

### **19.18. Equal Opportunity**

The USAF Equal Opportunity Program fosters and supports equal opportunity and must be carried out in the day-to-day actions of all personnel. The USAF will not tolerate unlawful discrimination, harassment, or reprisal against individuals who engage in protected activity. Airmen must actively make workplace professionalism a top priority and take proactive steps to prevent and eliminate

unlawful discriminatory or harassment behavior. Commanders and supervisors are charged with taking immediate and appropriate actions to address inappropriate behaviors or allegations once they are made aware, and are encouraged to consult with their local equal opportunity office before initiating action to resolve such concerns. Refer to AFI 36-2710, *Equal Opportunity Program*, 18 June 2020, for additional information. **Note:** The Air Force Sexual Harassment/Unlawful Discrimination (24-hour) Hotline (1-888-231-4058), is established to ensure USAF personnel can easily and freely report to proper Equal Opportunity authorities any allegations of sexual harassment or discrimination, and provide information on sexual harassment and equal opportunity issues.

**Equal Opportunity Program Objectives.** The primary objective of the Equal Opportunity Program is to eradicate unlawful discrimination and foster a positive human relations environment. To this end, Equal Opportunity offices at every installation stand ready to assist individuals, supervisors, and commanders with eradicating every form of unlawful discrimination and harassment from the workplace. To improve the USAF human relations environment, Equal Opportunity offices offer an array of counseling, mediation, education, assessment, training, general assistance, and complaint resolution services.

**Unlawful Discrimination.** Unlawful discrimination can include the use of disparaging terms regarding an individual's birthplace, ancestry, culture, or the linguistic characteristics common to a specific ethnic group. The use of terms that degrade or connote negative statements pertaining to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, genetic information, and mental or physical disability, can constitute unlawful discrimination. These terms include insults, printed material, visual material, signs, symbols, posters, or insignia.

- **Unlawful Discrimination Against Military Members.** Unlawful discrimination against military members includes any unlawful action that denies equal opportunities to persons or groups based on their race, color, religion, national origin, harassment, sex (to include gender identity), and sexual orientation. This type of discrimination includes verbal, physical, and non-verbal forms, as well as social media. For military members, unlawful discrimination is unacceptable, on- or off-base, 24 hours a day.

- **Unlawful Discrimination Against Department of Defense Civilian Employees.** Unlawful discrimination against civilian employees includes any unlawful employment practice that occurs when an employer fails or refuses to hire or promote; discharges or otherwise discriminates against any individual with respect to compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment; limits, segregates, or classifies employees or applicants for employment in a way that deprives or tends to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affects his/her status as an employee because of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, (including sexual harassment, pregnancy, gender identity, sexual orientation, age (40 or older), genetic information, physical or mental disability, or reprisal).

### **19.19. Harassment**

Harassment against military members or civilian employees includes any behavior that is unwelcome or offensive to a reasonable person, whether oral, written, or physical, that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Harassment includes use of electronic communications, social media, other forms of communication, and in person. Harassment may include offensive jokes, epithets, ridicule or mockery, insults or put-downs, displays of offensive objects or imagery, stereotyping, intimidating acts, veiled threats of violence, threatening or

provoking remarks, racial or other slurs, derogatory remarks about a person's accent, or displays of racially offensive symbols. Activities or actions undertaken for a proper military or governmental purpose, such as combat survival training, are not considered harassment.

**Six Distinct Forms of Harassment.** The Air Force Equal Opportunity Program covers six distinct forms of harassment: discriminatory, sexual, bullying, hazing, retaliation, and reprisal. They are briefly described here.

- **Discriminatory Harassment.** Discriminatory harassment is conduct that is unwelcome based on race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity), national origin, or sexual orientation.

- **Sexual Harassment.** Sexual harassment is conduct of any deliberate or repeated unwelcome verbal comments or gestures of a sexual nature by any military member or civilian employee. Sexual harassment is conduct that involves unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and deliberate or repeated offensive comments or gestures of a sexual nature when: submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's job, pay, or career; submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is used as a basis for career or employment decisions affecting that person; such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment; and is so severe or pervasive that a reasonable person would perceive, and the victim does perceive, the environment as hostile or offensive. Any person in a supervisory or command position who uses or condones any form of sexual behavior to control, influence, or affect the career, pay, or job of a military member or civilian employee is engaging in sexual harassment. **Note:** Sexual harassment includes use of electronic communications, including social media, other forms of communication, and in person. There is no requirement for concrete psychological harm to the complainant for behavior to constitute sexual harassment. Behavior is sufficient to constitute sexual harassment if it is so severe or pervasive that a reasonable person would perceive, and the complainant does perceive, the environment as hostile or offensive.

- **Bullying.** A form of harassment that includes acts of aggression by a military member or civilian employee with a nexus to military service, with the intent of harming a service member either physically or psychologically, without a proper military or other governmental purpose. Bullying may involve the singling out of an individual from his or her coworkers, or unit, for ridicule because he or she is considered different or weak. It often involves an imbalance of power between the aggressor and the victim. Bullying can be conducted through electronic devices or communications, and by other means including social media, as well as in person. Service members may be responsible for an act of bullying even if there was actual or implied consent from the victim and regardless of the grade or rank, status, or service of the victim. Bullying is prohibited in all circumstances and environments, including off-duty or "unofficial" unit functions and settings. **Note:** Bullying does not include properly directed command or organizational activities that serve a proper military or other governmental purpose, or the requisite training activities required to prepare for these activities, such as command-authorized physical training.

- **Hazing.** A form of harassment that includes conduct through which military members or civilian employees, without a proper military or other governmental purpose but with a nexus to military service, physically or psychologically injures or creates a risk of physical or psychological injury to service members for the purpose of: initiation into, admission into, affiliation with, change in status or position within, or a condition for continued membership in any military or Department of Defense civilian organization. Hazing can be conducted through the use of electronic devices

or communications, and by other means including social media, as well as in person. Service members may be responsible for an act of hazing even if there was actual or implied consent from the victim and regardless of the grade or rank, status, or service of the victim. Hazing is prohibited in all circumstances and environments including off-duty or “unofficial” unit functions and settings. **Note:** Hazing does not include properly directed command or organizational activities that serve a proper military or other governmental purpose, or the requisite training activities required to prepare for these activities, such as, administrative corrective measures, extra military instruction, or command-authorized physical training.

- **Retaliation.** Retaliation is taking or threatening to take an adverse personnel action against a person, or wrongfully withholding or threatening to withhold a favorable personnel action with respect to a person, as a result of that person reporting a criminal offense or making a protected communication, or planning to do either. A protected communication is a communication made to a Member of Congress or an Inspector General, or to certain other authorities when the communication discloses evidence of a violation of law or regulation, including sexual harassment and unlawful discrimination. A protected communication may also relate to gross mismanagement, fraud, waste and abuse or a substantial danger to public health and safety. Retaliation is prohibited by Article 132, UCMJ.

### **19.20. Military Equal Opportunity Complaint Process**

Only military personnel, their family members, and retirees may file military Equal Opportunity complaints. To file a complaint, the individual must be the subject of the alleged unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment. Third parties, to include commanders, supervisors, or co-workers, may not file a complaint on behalf of another individual. The Equal Opportunity office will refer all third party individuals who are aware of specific allegations of military Equal Opportunity policy violations to their respective chain of command. The Equal Opportunity office will not accept military complaints from military members, family members, or retirees if the concerns are related to off-base or Department of Defense civilian employment.

**Military Informal Complaint Procedures.** The purpose of the military informal complaint process is to attempt resolution at the lowest possible level. To informally resolve unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment complaints, individuals may orally address or prepare written correspondence to the alleged offender, request intervention by a coworker, opt to use the alternate dispute resolution process, or use the chain of command, such as requesting assistance from the supervisor, first sergeant, or commander. There is no time limit for filing informal complaints and no requirement for commander approval before accepting informal complaints.

**Military Formal Complaint Procedures.** The purpose of the military formal complaint process is to enable military members, retirees, and their family members to formally present allegations of unlawful discrimination and sexual harassment to the Equal Opportunity office with the goal of attempting resolution through a complaint clarification process. The complaint clarification process involves gathering information regarding a formal military complaint or hotline complaint to determine whether a ‘preponderance of evidence’ exists to demonstrate that unlawful discrimination or harassment occurred. The complaint clarification includes interviewing or taking statements from complainants, potential witnesses, alleged offenders, and anyone else who may have information relevant to the case. The Equal Opportunity office may use information gathered from other investigations in conjunction with, but not in lieu of, their own clarification process to establish a preponderance of credible evidence. The clarification results are forwarded to the Staff

Judge Advocate for a legal sufficiency review. Once the review is complete, the alleged offender's commander receives the complaint for final action, if appropriate. Military formal complaints must be filed within 60 calendar days of the alleged offense. The installation commander may waive the time limits for good cause based on a memorandum with sufficient justification provided by the complainant and submitted through the Equal Opportunity office.

### **19.21. Civilian Equal Opportunity Complaint Process**

Only USAF employees, former employees, and applicants for employment may file civilian Equal Opportunity complaints. An aggrieved person can file a complaint if discriminated against on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation) national origin, age (40 and older), or disability, or if subjected to sexual harassment or retaliated against for opposing discrimination or for participating in the complaint process. Additionally, an employee can file a complaint under Title II of the Public Law 110-233, *Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008*, 21 May 2008, which prohibits genetic information discrimination for any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignment, promotion, layoff, training, fringe benefits, or any other term or condition of employment. To harass or retaliate against a person because of his or her genetic information is illegal under the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act.

**Civilian Informal Complaint Procedures.** The purpose of the civilian informal complaint process is to provide for the prompt, fair, and impartial processing and resolution of complaints, consistent with legal obligations under Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1614, *Federal Sector Equal Employment Opportunity*, 1 July 2016. The objective is to seek opportunities to resolve issues at the lowest organizational level at the earliest possible time. The Equal Opportunity office will work with management and the Staff Judge Advocate in an attempt to resolve the complainant's concerns. The Equal Opportunity office must complete the informal complaint process within 30 calendar days of the complaint being filed unless the complainant grants an extension not to exceed 60 additional calendar days. If the matter is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction before the end of the authorized period, including extensions, the complainant is issued a notice of right to file a formal complaint.

**Civilian Formal Complaint Procedures.** A formal complaint must be filed at the installation where the alleged discrimination occurred. For the complaint to be processed at the formal stage, the initial contact must be within 45 calendar days of the date of the matter alleged to be discriminatory or, in the case of a personnel action, within 45 calendar days of the effective date or when he or she becomes aware of the personnel action. The complaint must describe the actions or practices that form the basis of the complaint that was discussed with the Equal Opportunity office during the informal complaint process. The complaint must be filed with the Equal Opportunity director or designee within 15 calendar days of the complainant receiving the notice of right to file a formal complaint.

The USAF is required to process civilian formal Equal Opportunity complaints in accordance with Title 29, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1614, and Equal Employment Opportunity Management Directive 110, 5 August 2015. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission requires federal agencies to discharge certain responsibilities once a civilian formal Equal Opportunity complaint is filed. The Equal Opportunity office must process all formal complaints expeditiously and make a determination whether to accept, dismiss, or partially dismiss a

complaint or portion of a complaint to allow an investigation to be completed within 180 calendar days from the date filed.

## **19.22. Sexual Assault Prevention and Response**

The Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Office is responsible for oversight of the Department of Defense sexual assault policy and works hand-in-hand with the services and the civilian community to develop and implement innovative prevention and response programs.

**Installation Sexual Assault Response Coordinator.** The installation Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) is the single point of contact at an installation or within a geographic area reporting to the installation commander, who oversees sexual assault awareness, prevention, and response training; coordinates medical treatment, including emergency care for sexual assault victims; and tracks the services provided to a victim of sexual assault from the initial report through final disposition and resolution. **Note:** The USAF will identify trained military SARCs, as well as trained civilian SARCs or SAPR Victim Advocates (SAPR VA), for rotational support of global contingency operations and deployments. Normally, each air expeditionary wing will warrant at least one SARC and one SAPR VA position. For deployments smaller than an air expeditionary force, deployed commanders must provide a sexual assault response capability consistent with USAF requirements.

**Volunteer Victim Advocate.** Volunteer Victim Advocates (VVA) are military and Department of Defense civilian employees who are selected, trained, and credentialed to provide non-clinical crisis intervention, referral, and ongoing non-clinical support to adult sexual assault victims. The VVA provides information on available options and resources to victims, conducts liaison assistance with other organizations and agencies on victim care matters, and reports directly to the SARC when performing victim advocacy duties.

**Special Victims' Counsel.** The Special Victims' Counsel (SVC) is a judge advocate who is authorized to provide independent legal representation to eligible victims of sexually-related offenses. A SVC's primary responsibility is to their client. The program, through its attorneys and paralegals, delivers victim-centered advice and advocacy world-wide, assists clients in obtaining support and recovery resources, and promotes greater confidence in the military justice process and the USAF. The SVC's representation allows victims of sexually-related offenses to provide informed input throughout the military justice process to decision-makers and may assist with matters outside the military justice process if they are related to the reported offense.

**Sexual Assault.** Sexual assault is criminal conduct that violates the standards the United States of America expects of the men and women serving in the USAF and is inconsistent with our core values of *Integrity First*, *Service Before Self*, and *Excellence In All We Do*. Inherent in these core values is respect: self-respect, mutual respect, and respect for the USAF as an institution. Sexual assault is an intentional sexual contact, characterized by the use of force, threats, intimidation, abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. The term sexual assault encompasses a range of sexual offenses specifically prohibited by Articles 120, 120b, and 80 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, to include rape, sexual assault, aggravated sexual contact, abusive sexual contact, forcible sodomy, or attempts to commit any of these offenses.

**Consent.** Consent is defined as words or overt acts indicating a freely given agreement to the sexual conduct by a competent person. An expression of lack of consent through words or conduct means there is no consent. Lack of verbal or physical resistance or submission resulting from the

accused's use of force, threat of force, or placing another person in fear, does not constitute consent. A current or previous relationship, or the manner of dress of the person involved with the accused in the sexual conduct at issue, shall not constitute consent. There is no consent where the person is sleeping or incapacitated, such as due to age, alcohol or drugs, or mental incapacity.

**Response to an Allegation of Sexual Assault.** Any military member or civilian employee, other than those authorized to receive confidential communications or otherwise exempted by law, regulation, or policy, who receives a report of a sexual assault incident about a subordinate in the individual's supervisory chain, will report the matter to the commander, the SARC, and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations. Military members or civilian employees who become aware of a sexual assault incident, not involving a subordinate in the supervisory chain, are strongly encouraged, but not required, to report the incident to the SARC or encourage the victim to do so.

### **19.23. Sexual Assault Reporting Options**

The USAF has two reporting options: unrestricted and restricted reporting. The USAF makes every effort to treat victims of sexual assault with dignity and respect, to protect their privacy to the maximum extent of the law, and provide support, advocacy, and care. Regardless of whether the victim elects restricted or unrestricted reporting, confidentiality of medical information will be maintained.

**Restricted Reports.** The Department of Defense has directed the implementation of confidentiality in the form of a restricted reporting option that enables eligible victims to report allegations of sexual assault to specified personnel, without triggering an investigation. This reporting option is intended to remove barriers to medical care and support while giving the victim additional time and increased control over the release and management of personal information.

Only SARCs, SAPR VAs, VVAs, and healthcare personnel may receive restricted reports of sexual assault. If a victim elects this reporting option, a victim may convert a restricted report to an unrestricted report at any time. Chaplains, legal assistance attorneys, and SVC entitled to privileged communications will not accept a restricted report of sexual assault. However, in the course of otherwise privileged communications with chaplains, legal assistance attorneys, and SVC, a victim may indicate that he or she wishes to file a restricted report. If this occurs, the chaplains, legal assistance attorneys, and SVC will facilitate contact with a SARC, SAPR VA, or VVA to ensure that a victim is offered SAPR services.

**Unrestricted Reports.** Any report of a sexual assault made by the victim through normal reporting channels, including the victim's chain of command, law enforcement, and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations or other criminal investigative services, is considered an unrestricted report. If a victim elects this reporting option, a victim will not be permitted to change from unrestricted to a restricted report. The individual to whom an unrestricted report is made will notify the SARC. Any report of sexual assault made through the SARC, SAPR VA, VVA, or healthcare personnel by an individual who elects an unrestricted report and designates so in writing, will be forwarded for the Air Force Office of Special Investigations.

In cases of an unrestricted report of a sexual assault or information concerning a sexual assault, information concerning the victim and the offense will only be provided to governmental entities or persons with an established official need to know. Those who are deemed to have an official need to know in the USAF to perform their respective duties, routinely include: law enforcement,

commanders, and first sergeants of the victim and the alleged assailant, legal personnel, the SARC, SAPR VA, VVA, and healthcare providers, as required.

Commanders notified of a sexual assault through an unrestricted report must take immediate steps to ensure the victim's physical safety, emotional security, and medical treatment needs are met and that the Air Force Office of Special Investigations or appropriate criminal investigative agency and SARC are notified.

**Reporting Eligibility.** The following individuals are eligible for both the restricted and unrestricted reporting option within the SARC program.

- RegAF members who were sexual assault victims perpetrated by someone other than the victim's spouse, same sex domestic partner, and/or unmarried intimate partner.
- Military members, who are on RegAF status, but who were sexual assault victims prior to enlistment or commissioning, are eligible to receive SAPR services under either reporting option. Support to a member on RegAF status is available regardless of when or where the sexual assault took place.
- Service members' dependents, 18 years of age and older, who are eligible for treatment in the military health system at installations in the Continental United States and outside of the Continental United States, and who were sexual assault victims perpetrated by someone other than the victim's spouse, same sex domestic partner, and/or unmarried intimate partner.
- Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard members in Title 10 status who are sexually assaulted when performing active service and inactive duty training.
- Department of Defense civilian employees will have access to full SAPR services that are offered to service members. This does not include additional medical entitlements or legal services to which they are not already authorized by law or policy.

**Collateral Misconduct in Sexual Assault Cases.** An investigation into the facts and circumstances surrounding an alleged sexual assault may produce evidence that the victim engaged in misconduct. Collateral misconduct by a sexual assault victim is a significant barrier to reporting because of the victim's fear of punishment. Some reported sexual assaults involve circumstances where the victim may have engaged in some form of misconduct like underage drinking or other related alcohol offenses, adultery, drug abuse, fraternization, or other violations of instructions or orders.

In accordance with the Uniform Code of Military Justice, the Manual for Courts-Martial, and USAF instructions, commanders are responsible for addressing misconduct in a manner that is consistent and appropriate to the circumstances. However, Rule for Courts-Martial 306 permits superior commanders to withhold disciplinary authority from subordinate commanders for individual cases, types of cases, or generally. Pursuant to DAFI 51-201, *Administration of Military Justice*, 15 April 2021, the authority to dispose of collateral misconduct in sexual assault cases is initially reserved to the special court-martial convening authority. In those cases, the subordinate commander forwards the case file, along with a written recommendation, to the initial disposition authority. The initial disposition authority may dispose of the collateral misconduct himself or herself, or may return the case file to the subordinate commander and permit him or her to take action.

## *Section 19D—Addressing Misconduct*

### **19.24. Corrective Actions**

Commanders, supervisors, and other persons in authority can issue administrative counseling, admonitions, and reprimands that are intended to improve, correct, and instruct subordinates who depart from standards of performance, conduct, bearing, and integrity, on- or off-duty, and whose actions degrade the individual and the unit mission.

**Personal Information File.** Commanders and supervisors perform many personnel management functions requiring them to keep Personal Information Files (PIF) on assigned personnel. AFI 36-2608, *Military Personnel Records System*, 16 April 2021, authorizes the use and maintenance of PIFs by commanders and supervisors. If a PIF is established, use of AF Form 10A, *Personnel Information File, Record of Performance; Officer Command Selection Record Group (Folder)*, is required. Custodians must keep PIFs current and secured in a locked area or container to protect against misuse or unauthorized access. The member may gain access to their PIF at any time per AFI 33-332. Contents of the PIF must be available to commanders, raters, first sergeants, senior raters, Air Force Office of Special Investigations, and Staff Judge Advocate personnel, as warranted. The release and review of the PIF contents in these instances are for official business or routine use.

**Unfavorable Information File.** The Unfavorable Information File (UIF) provides commanders with an official and single means of filing derogatory data concerning an USAF member's personal conduct and duty performance. With some exceptions, the commander has wide discretion as to what should be placed in a UIF and what should be removed. Mandatory documents in UIFs include suspended or unsuspended Article 15 punishment of more than one month (31 days or more), court-martial conviction, civilian conviction where the penalty or actions equivalent to a finding of guilty of an offense which resulted in confinement of one year or more or could have resulted in a penalty of confinement for more than one year or death, and control roster actions. Optional documents may be included in UIFs for up to one year. Individuals have three duty days to acknowledge and provide pertinent information before the commander makes the final decision. The commander advises the individual of the final decision. If the commander decides to file the information in an UIF, the individual's response is also filed.

Unit commanders must review all UIFs within 90 days of assuming or being appointed to command; when individuals are considered for promotion, reenlistment, permanent change of station or assignment, and reclassification or retraining. Commanders also review UIFs annually, with the assistance of the Staff Judge Advocate. Commanders keep the UIF for the disposition period unless early removal is clearly warranted. In the course of their USAF duties, the following individuals are authorized access to a member's UIF: the member, commander, first sergeant, enlisted performance report reporting and rating officials, force support squadron personnel, inspector general, inspection team, legal office personnel, military equal opportunity personnel, law enforcement personnel, and substance abuse counselors. For additional information regarding the UIF program, refer to AFI 36-2907, *Adverse Administrative Actions*, 15 January 2021.

**Control Roster.** Control rosters are used by commanders to establish an observation period as a rehabilitative tool for individuals whose duty performance is substandard or who fail to meet or maintain USAF standards of conduct, bearing, and integrity, on- or off-duty. Commanders should consider prior incidents, acts, failures, counseling, and rehabilitative efforts when establishing

control rosters. A single incident of substandard performance or an isolated breach of standards not likely to be repeated, is not ordinarily a basis for a control roster action. Commanders place an individual on the control roster by using AF Form 1058, *Unfavorable Information File Action*, which puts the member on notice that his/her performance and behavior must improve or he/she will face more severe administrative action or punishment. The individual acknowledges receipt of the action and has three duty days to respond and submit a statement on his or her behalf before the action is finalized. Placement on the control roster is a mandatory UIF entry and is initially instated for six months, but it can be removed early at the commander's discretion. If a member is not rehabilitated within six months of being placed on the control roster, the commander initiates more severe action. The UIF six-month time period begins the day the AF Form 1058, is finalized and ends at 2400 hours six months later. **Note:** The control roster is not to be used by commanders as a substitute for more appropriate administrative, judicial, or nonjudicial action.

### **19.25. Administrative Counseling, Admonitions, and Reprimands**

Administrative counseling, admonitions, and reprimands are quality force management tools available to supervisors, commanders, and other persons in authority to help maintain established USAF standards and enhance mission accomplishment. These tools are intended to improve, correct, and instruct subordinates who depart from standards of performance, conduct, bearing, and integrity on- or off-duty, and whose actions degrade the individual and unit's mission. Counseling, admonitions, and reprimands should be used as part of a graduated pattern of discipline in response to repeated departures from standards. The decision to issue a letter of counseling, admonition, or reprimand should be based primarily on the nature and seriousness of the incident and on the previous disciplinary record of the member.

Counseling statements may be either verbal or written, but written corrective actions are more meaningful to the member and the infraction, and when documented properly, may be used in subsequent proceedings. Written administrative counseling, admonitions, and reprimands are subject to the rules of access, protection, and disclosure outlined in the Privacy Act of 1974. The same rules apply to copies kept by supervisors and commanders and those filed in a UIF or PIF. Preponderance of the evidence is the standard to utilize in administrative action proceedings when evaluating whether the evidence establishes that misconduct occurred. A preponderance of the evidence simply means the greater weight of credible evidence. If such proof is lacking, administrative action is susceptible to being found to be legally unsupportable and, as a result, could be set aside.

**Letter of Counseling and Air Force Form 174, Record of Individual Counseling.** Counseling is used by first line supervisors, first sergeants, and commanders to help Airmen use good judgment, assume responsibility, and face and solve problems. Counseling, whether conducted verbally or in writing, helps subordinates develop skills, attitudes, and behaviors consistent with maintaining USAF readiness. Counseling may be documented on an AF Form 174, *Record of Individual Counseling*, or on bond paper or letterhead as a letter of counseling.

**Letter of Admonishment.** An admonishment is used to document an infraction that warrants more severe action than a counseling, but not serious enough to warrant a reprimand. For officer personnel, if the letter of admonishment is not filed in the UIF, it must be filed in the individual's PIF.

**Letter of Reprimand.** A reprimand is more severe than a letter of counseling and letter of admonishment, and indicates a stronger degree of official censure. Commanders may elect to file a letter of reprimand in a UIF for enlisted personnel. Letters of reprimand are mandatory for file in the UIF for officer personnel.

### **19.26. Administrative Demotion of Airmen**

An administrative demotion of Airmen is a process available to commanders. The most common reasons commanders would administratively demote an Airman are for a failure to complete officer transitional training due to reasons of academic deficiency, self-elimination, or misconduct (trainees will be demoted to the grade they formerly held); failure to maintain or attain the appropriate grade and skill level; failure to fulfill the responsibilities as prescribed in AFH 36-2618, failure to attain or maintain fitness program standards as prescribed in the DAFMAN 36-2905, *Air Force Physical Fitness Program*, 26 July 2021; or upon termination of student status of members attending temporary duty USAF schools.

Upon the decision to proceed with an administrative demotion, the immediate commander notifies the member in writing of the intention to recommend demotion, citing the paragraph, the demotion authority if other than the initiating commander, and the recommended grade. The notification must also include the specific reasons for the demotion and a complete summary of the supporting facts. The commander informs the member of their right to counsel, their right to respond within three duty days, and their right to apply for retirement in lieu of demotion, if eligible. Following the member's response, if the commander elects to continue the proceedings, the case file is forwarded with a summary of the member's written and verbal statements to the force support squadron for processing prior to forwarding to the demotion authority. The member must be notified in writing of the decision to forward the action to the demotion authority. The demotion authority obtains a written legal review before making a decision. Airmen may appeal the demotion decision through proper channels.

### **19.27. Administrative Separations**

Airmen are entitled to separate at their expiration of term of service unless there is a specific authority for retention. As a rule, Airmen separate on the date their expiration term of service occurs, but their separation is not automatic. Airmen are members of the USAF until they are separated by administrative action. Many different reasons for separation exist. The suitability of persons to serve in the USAF is judged on the basis of their conduct and their ability to meet required standards of duty performance and discipline. Commanders and supervisors must identify enlisted members who show a likelihood for early separation and make reasonable efforts to help these members meet USAF standards. Members who do not show potential for further service should be discharged. Commanders must consult the servicing Staff Judge Advocate and military personnel flight before initiating the involuntary separation of a member.

**Required Separation.** Airmen who will continue to serve in another military status must separate; for example, an Airman may separate to serve with the Air Force Reserve or Air National Guard. An Airman may also separate to accept an appointment as a commissioned officer of the USAF or to accept an appointment as a warrant or commissioned officer of another branch of service.

**Voluntary Separation.** Airmen may ask for early separation for the convenience of the government if they meet the criteria. Entering an officer training program, pregnancy, conscientious objection, hardship, and early release to attend school are some of the reasons for which members may be allowed to separate.

**Involuntary Separation.** Physical conditions that interfere with duty performance or assignment availability, inability to cope with parental responsibilities or military duty, or insufficient retainability for required retraining, are reasons for involuntary discharge for the convenience of the government. Defective enlistment (fraudulent or erroneous) is also a basis for discharge. Airmen are subject to discharge for cause based on such factors as unsatisfactory performance, substance abuse, misconduct, or in the interest of national security.

### **19.28. Service Characterization**

Airmen who do not qualify for reenlistment receive a discharge without regard to their remaining military service obligation. The service characterization depends upon the reason for the discharge and the member's military record in the current enlistment or period of service. The service of members administratively discharged under AFI 36-3208, *Administrative Separation of Airmen*, 29 June 2021, may be characterized as honorable, general (under honorable conditions), or under other than honorable conditions.

**Honorable.** Members separating at their expiration of term of service, or voluntarily or involuntarily separating for the convenience of the government, are characterized as honorable. An honorable discharge is given when the quality of the member's service generally has met USAF standards of acceptable conduct and performance of duty, or a member's service is otherwise so meritorious that any other characterization would be inappropriate.

**General (under honorable conditions).** A general (under honorable conditions) discharge is given when a member's service has been determined to be honest and faithful, but significant negative aspects of the member's conduct or performance outweigh positive aspects of the Airman's military record.

**Under Other Than Honorable Conditions.** An under other than honorable conditions discharge is given based a pattern of behavior, or one or more acts or omissions, that constitute a significant departure from the conduct expected of an Airman. This characterization can be given only if the member is offered an administrative discharge board or if a discharge is unconditionally requested in lieu of trial by court-martial.

**Discharge in Lieu of Trial by Court-Martial.** If charges have been preferred against an Airman and if the Uniform Code of Military Justice authorizes punitive discharge as punishment for any of the offenses preferred, the Airman may request an administrative discharge instead of trial by court-martial. There is no guarantee; however, that the Airman's request will be granted.

### **19.29. Air Force Discharge Review Board**

The Air Force Discharge Review Board affords former USAF members the opportunity to request review of their discharge (except for a bad-conduct discharge, dishonorable discharge, or dismissal by general court-martial) within 15 years of the date of separation. The objective of a discharge review is to examine an applicant's administrative discharge and consider changing the characterization of service, the reason for discharge, and the re-enlistment code (when applicable), based on standards of propriety or equity. Airmen separated under circumstances (except

retirement) that make them ineligible for reenlistment, and officers discharged under adverse conditions, are briefed by the military personnel section at the time of their discharge about the discharge review board process. They are provided with a discharge review fact sheet and an application, DD Form 293, *Application for the Review of Discharge from the Armed Forces of the United States*.

A personal appearance before the discharge review board is a statutory right. The applicant or the applicant's counsel may appear before the board or address the board via video teleconference. Procedures allow the applicant latitude in presenting evidence, witnesses, and testimony in support of the applicant's case. A board may also review the case based on documentation in the military record and any additional evidence provided by the applicant.

### **19.30. Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records**

The Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records is the highest level of administrative review for correcting military records. In most cases, applicants are members or former members of the USAF. In some situations, a family member, heir, or legal representative (such as a guardian or executor) of the member or former member with a proper interest, may request correction of another person's military records when that person is incapable of acting on his or her own behalf, is missing, or is deceased. With a few exceptions, most records generated by the USAF may be corrected by the board. Records addressed for change include, but are not limited to: enlisted performance reports, fitness test results, debts incurred, discharges and reenlistment/reentry eligibility codes, survivor benefit plans, accumulated leave days, Article 15 actions, and reinstatement into the USAF. Records may be changed, voided, or created as necessary to correct an error or to remove an injustice. Applicable monetary benefits are recomputed based on the records changed. The board is a recommending body and will vote to grant, partially grant, or deny the requested relief. If the board recommends favorable relief, the case is forwarded to the Secretary of the Air Force or their designee for final decision. Unless procured by fraud, their decision is final and binding on all USAF officials and government agencies.

Personal appearance to present an application to the Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records is not a statutory right and is granted solely at the discretion of the board, predicated on finding the applicant's presence, with or without counsel, will materially add to the board's understanding of the issue(s) involved. Information on the board's authority, jurisdiction, and policy can be found in AFI 36-2603, *Air Force Board for Correction of Military Records (AFBCMR)*, 18 September 2017. **Note:** Applicants must exhaust other reasonably available administrative avenues of relief prior to applying to the *AFBCMRs*. If other administrative remedies have not been properly exhausted before applying, the application, DD Form 149, *Application for Correction of Military Record Under the Provisions of Title 10, United States Code, Section 1552*, will be returned without action.

## **Chapter 21**

### **FITNESS AND READINESS**

#### ***Section 21E—Readiness State of Mind***

##### **21.23. Mental Preparedness**

One of the telltale signs of a military professional is preparation. When the time comes to use the skills we've learned, military professionals are ready. Most experience is gained by accepting opportunities as they come, even when conditions are not perfect. Through experience, professionals build the confidence, judgment, courage, and integrity needed to continue developing professionally. The USAF is committed to taking care of Airmen or Guardians and families, and has a wide-range of support capabilities available to address issues and take care of the Total Force. Despite how ready we may feel, demands of the mission can sometimes increase stressors affecting well-being and resiliency.

##### **21.24. Psychological First Aid**

Psychological first aid is a way of reducing initial and ongoing stress by developing adaptive coping and recovery skills. Airmen or Guardians who take care of themselves by getting adequate sleep, eating a balanced diet, and making time for rest and relaxation, combined with the use of positive stress management skills, can reduce actual and perceived stress in their lives. Whether deployed or in garrison, we all need a place to reset and recharge. Consider the following aspects of coping with stress, for yourself and for others.

- Have a physically and emotionally safe place to recuperate or to relax.
- Know (or be) someone who understands, listens, and is compassionate.
- Find opportunities to connect with others while at the gym, dining facility, or local events.
- Provide or demonstrate coping skills that empower others to return to 'normal' state.
- Seek supportive services, such as religious affairs, first sergeants, or mental health providers.
- Contact Military and Family Life Counselors for counseling and supportive services.

##### **21.25. Mental Strength and Resilience**

All people experience stressors (challenges or problems) and distress (negative feelings associated with stressors). Long work days, increased deployments, and financial issues are just a few of the conditions that cause stress. The frequency of stress and the significant negative effect stress can have on people and organizations make this a major concern for Airmen or Guardians at all levels. As an organizational concern, stress can negatively affect performance, organizational effectiveness, and mission accomplishment. As a personal concern, experiencing stress over an extended period of time can lead to health problems and affect overall quality of life. Therefore, it is important to personally and professionally recognize stress and learn how to manage it effectively.

##### **21.26. Stress Reactions**

For Airmen or Guardians today, stressors occur within the work environment as well as outside the work environment, often involving family, relationship, and financial issues. We know when

we feel stressed, but recognizing some of the key signs of stress can help deal with issues before they evolve into bigger problems. Stress reactions typically appear in four different categories: cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and physical. Reactions associated with these categories are provided here so they may be recognized and addressed early by minimizing, adjusting, or successfully coping with the cause.

**Cognitive Stress.** Cognitive stress can manifest as memory problems, an inability to concentrate, poor judgment, seeing only the negative, anxious or racing thoughts, or constant worrying.

**Emotional Stress.** Emotional stress can manifest as apathy, anxiety, depression, irritability, job dissatisfaction, memory problems, or mental fatigue.

**Behavioral Stress.** Behavioral stress can manifest as appetite changes, increased arguments, increased smoking, neglecting self-care, social withdrawal, substance abuse, or violence.

**Physical Stress.** Physical stress can manifest as frequent illness, headaches, high blood pressure, increased heart rate, physical exhaustion, sleep disturbances, or weight gain or loss.

### **21.27. Individual Stress Management**

The key to recognizing stress is knowing what feels normal so you can recognize when something feels off. The earlier stress can be identified, the earlier stress reduction techniques can be applied. Each of the following steps can help in developing a well-rounded stress management plan.

**Make Adjustments.** Reduce stress by identifying potential stressors before they arise. For example, if you are stressed by crowds and long lines, adjust your plans so that you may minimize the exposure to crowded environments. While planning can't prevent all stress, it is extremely valuable in minimizing or preparing for exposure to stress before a stressor occurs.

**Time Management.** Not having enough time to complete a task can be a significant stressor for some people. If time management is an issue, reduce stress by using effective time management skills and tools, like developing a task list and prioritizing tasks.

**Overload Avoidance.** For most people to eliminate or reduce the effects of overload-related stressors is relatively simple. For a start, identify and avoid busy work, delegate or empower others when possible, learn to say no, and attempt to negotiate unreasonable deadlines.

**Relaxation.** Relaxation can help manage stress and help you stay alert, energetic, and productive. Relaxation techniques, such as meditation, reading, and listening to music can improve your heart rate, regulate your blood pressure, and decrease your respiratory rate. By incorporating relaxation skills into your daily routines, you can train your body to respond differently to stress.

**Exercise and Nutrition.** Regular exercise combined with a healthy diet is an effective stress management technique. Exercise can provide an outlet for excess energy and tension caused by stress. Eating nutritious foods ensures your body has the nutrients needed to manage stress and helps prevent overeating. Exercising and eating a balanced diet help your body become more resistant to the negative results of stress, such as high blood pressure, heart attacks, and frequent illness.

**Social Support.** Having a strong social support network, such as family, friends, social groups, and peers, can help manage stress. Being able to discuss problems with people who care about you and your well-being can help reduce stress by providing a more positive outlook, suggesting solutions to your problems, or just listening.

**Prioritize.** On the job, identify potential sources of stress, determine the importance of each task, and eliminate tasks that are not necessary or productive. If a job requires long hours, consider using elements of job enrichment, like adequate time off or periodic breaks to help reduce potential stress. If possible, restructure the job to accommodate individual needs to help reduce stress and enhance productivity.

## **21.28. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a mental health condition that can occur after someone has gone through a traumatic event, such as war-related combat, sexual or physical assault, or a natural or man-made disaster. The USAF strongly encourages Airmen or Guardians to seek treatment early or encourages early intervention. Because this disorder impacts not only the person who suffers from it, but those who are close to them, it is important for all military members to be educated about PTSD. With enhanced awareness, many people may be prevented from developing this condition, and those who suffer from PTSD may receive treatment before symptoms become disabling and chronic.

**Symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.** Symptoms of PTSD include: (1) intrusive or unwanted thoughts, such as distressing memories, nightmares, or flashbacks; (2) avoidance behavior in the form of efforts to avoid reminders of the traumatic event; (3) negative thoughts and moods, such as feeling disconnected from others or believing that the world is a dangerous place; and (4) hyper-arousal symptoms, including difficulty sleeping and irritability. Approximately seven to eight percent of the United States population will have PTSD at some point during their lives. Fortunately, within the last decade researchers have developed highly effective treatments that can lead to symptom reduction and even loss of the diagnosis of PTSD.

**Helpful Actions to Take.** Knowing how to respond to someone with an invisible wound, such as PTSD, is challenging because there is so much going on inside the individual that is not visible on the outside. Some of their behaviors or moods may make you feel uncomfortable, confused, or even annoyed. However, it is important to remember that a person with PTSD may be so distracted by painful thoughts, memories, or physical injuries, that they are not fully able to focus and concentrate as well as they would like to.

A great way to determine how to respond to a person with an invisible wound is to put yourself in their shoes, to practice empathy:

- Try to imagine how you would feel in their situation, even if you don't know all of the details of what they've experienced.
- Remind yourself and those around you of the sacrifice that has been made in service of our country.
- Don't be afraid to ask about what is going on. Give yourself permission to intervene if you think they need help, and make the time to have a sincere conversation with them. Question starters to help you talk about this topic are:

“What's going on in your life? I've noticed you seem upset.”

“I'm concerned about you. Can we talk about it?”

“Is there something I can do to help you?”

“What do you think might help?”

- Once you've asked a question, allow time and space for the answer. Encourage them to share without fear of judgment or interruption. Listening shows you care, will help you understand, and builds rapport.

- Acknowledge the distress. It is not helpful to tell them they shouldn't feel a certain way. PTSD is a real condition that produces measurable changes in brain function. Acknowledging distress is a key step in dispelling myths about invisible wounds and removing the stigma associated with getting help.

- Discuss needs and offer to help make a plan to address them. Often, this means suggesting a helping resource. Offering to accompany them can be a good way to make getting help seem less difficult.

Additional training on how to interact with Airmen or Guardians with invisible wounds, such as PTSD, can be found in the invisible wounds videos located at: [www.resilience.af.mil](http://www.resilience.af.mil).

### **21.29. Redeployment, Recovery, and Reconstitution**

Deploying Airmen or Guardians receive just-in-time training on stress reactions, psychological first aid, and referral resources through pre-deployment mental health training. While preparation, deployment, and post-deployment support are all important, receiving continued support upon return from deployment is an emphasized aspect of readiness. The intent of the ongoing redeployment support process is to provide continuous, integrated support from the deployed area to home station while assisting with the transition from the deployed environment to family life and worksite. Taking leave after arduous duty and deployment can have a beneficial effect on an individual's psychological and physical status, and an immediate recovery period allows returning Airmen or Guardians to tend to personal needs neglected during lengthy periods away from home. Sometimes readjustment from deployment requires participation in structured recovery time and activities for members and families prior to leave. The redeployment support timeline identifies activities at the critical redeployment, recovery, reintegration, and reconstitution junctures.

### **21.30. Psychological Services**

Mental health services are designed to strengthen the readiness capability of the force and ensure Airmen or Guardians are equipped for peak performance. Seeking care for a mental health problem is a sign of strength, not a sign of weakness. Seeking help early increases the likelihood of recovery and reducing risk for subsequent negative consequences of mental health symptoms. More than 12 percent of USAF personnel voluntarily seek mental health services each year. Willingness to seek help when needed is a sign of good self-awareness and judgment. The fear of having a negative impact on one's career for seeking care at the mental health clinic is diminishing across the USAF. Time has proven that seeking help appropriately often does not have a long-term negative career impact. In fact, seeking help can improve performance and enable people to better solve problems. In many cases, seeking mental health treatment early can actually save one's USAF career.

### **21.31. USAF Suicide Prevention Program**

When suicides occur in the USAF, they result in a number of serious consequences: the loss of human life; grief and loss to the deceased's family, friends, co-workers, and military community; and a direct impact on mission capability through loss of the deceased's skills, experience, and productivity. While suicide prevention is the responsibility of every Airman or Guardian, the

USAF has identified that leadership support and action across all levels of command are critical to the goal of reducing suicide in the USAF. Military and civilian leaders will build an environment that promotes healthy and adaptive behaviors, fosters the wingman culture, and encourages responsible help-seeking actions of all Airmen or Guardians. **Note:** In an effort to promote help-seeking actions by Airmen or Guardians who are experiencing legal or administrative problems, the USAF instituted the Limited Privilege Suicide Prevention Program in accordance with AFI 44-172, *Mental Health*, 13 November 2015, which provided an added layer of confidentiality that allows Airmen or Guardians who are under investigation to receive mental health care without the risk of information disclosed during treatment being used to incriminate them in the future. This is important since Airmen or Guardians who are under investigation for legal problems are at significantly elevated risk for suicide and other negative outcomes. Mental health providers are required by DoDI 6490.08, Command Notification Requirements to Dispel Stigma in Providing Mental Health Care to Service Members, 17 August 2011, to disclose safety (suicidal or violent thoughts or self-injurious behavior) and fitness for duty issues to commanders, but all other information is confidential.

### **21.32. Recognition**

Airmen or Guardians must know the importance of recognizing that anyone can become suicidal, regardless of how well they have previously managed military or personal stress. Warning signs can be sudden, may signify a person is in distress, and require immediate support. Sudden changes, such as sleep difficulties or discipline problems, may be warning signs. Those most likely to spot a person at risk for suicide are the ones with whom an individual interacts on a daily basis (friends, coworkers, and immediate supervisors). These individuals are best positioned to notice changes in behavior, mood, or performance. If you hear someone comment or indicate they're considering suicide, take it seriously, get involved, and get them the help they need. Even if there appears to be no real indication of a serious problem, be observant for any sudden changes in behavior or attitude that could be a sign that they need help. Find out what caused the observed changes, assist in choosing resources to resolve stressors, and communicate concerns with the chain of command, as appropriate.

Leaders and Airmen or Guardians of all ranks have a vested interest in knowing the people they work with, investing in their professional and personal development, and quickly addressing issues whenever they arise. The following actions can be taken to support and help resolve life's challenges and reduce the number of suicides: (1) know co-workers, their usual moods and behaviors, and how they are functioning; (2) be able to recognize early signs of risk, stress, and distress; (3) engage with Airmen or Guardians to determine what may be stressful or problematic; (4) assist Airmen or Guardians with choosing the most appropriate resource to help resolve the problem; and (5) follow-up with Airmen or Guardians to ensure the stressors are resolving and new ones are not taking their place.

**Risk Factors.** Risk factors for suicide can include, but are not limited to: relationship difficulties, problems at work, legal and financial problems, mental health diagnosis, substance misuse, and previous suicide attempts. Some factors leaders should watch for and address to ensure effective supervision and open communication exist in the organization are: (1) tunnel vision on the mission; (2) not engaging with Airmen or Guardians; (3) difficulty recognizing risk factors and warning signs; (4) lack of knowledge of USAF supported resources and the true impact of seeking help on

an USAF career; and (5) inappropriately sheltering Airmen or Guardians from the consequences of their actions or failing to take proper action.

**Protective Factors.** Protective factors include: social support, connectedness, sense of belonging, sense of purpose, effective individual coping skills, and cultural norms that promote and protect responsible help-seeking behavior.

### **21.33. Ask, Care, and Escort Model**

Suicide prevention is everyone's responsibility. The Ask, Care, and Escort (ACE) Model was developed to assist Airmen or Guardians in intervening when an Airman or Guardian experiences stress, distress, or faces challenges. Understanding the appropriate steps to suicide risk prevention and the available USAF approved resources can aid in saving the career and life of a fellow Airman or Guardian. The acronym *ACE* is one that people can easily remember.

**Ask.** When you see or hear any of the warning signs discussed in this section, or are aware of risk factors in someone's life, ask questions to learn more about the person's situation. If you have any uncertainty about someone's safety, calmly but directly ask the question, "Are you thinking of killing/hurting yourself?" Asking about suicide gives people permission to talk about a subject that may otherwise be difficult to bring up. It lets the Airman or Guardian know you are ready to discuss what they are experiencing. Do not promise to keep thoughts of suicide a secret. Airmen or Guardians need to remember the importance of sharing these concerns with leaders and professionals who can help.

**Care.** Showing care and concern for those at risk is important. Simply taking the time to ask about problems, and asking specifically about suicide, shows caring and concern. If someone acknowledges thoughts of suicide, listen and allow them to share what is troubling them. Avoid making judgmental statements, immediately trying to solve their problem, or trying to talk them out of suicide. If they share thoughts of suicide with you, accept that they are in distress, listen to their concerns, and begin getting them help. Determine if they have a plan for suicide, what the plan is, and take reasonable steps to secure the potential means of suicide, but do not put yourself in harm's way. Airmen or Guardians in distress who are seeking access to lethal means, such as a firearm, should be considered at risk for self-harm. If you are not able to secure the potential means of self-harm, or you have significant concern about the individual's safety, then contact command and emergency services. Building time and space between Airmen or Guardians in distress and access to lethal means (including firearms and medications) can reduce the risk of suicide attempts and deaths.

**Escort.** After asking about suicide and showing concern, the final step is to escort the person to command or professional support that can provide appropriate assistance. Do not leave the person in distress alone. At most bases, professionals are on call through the command post, and evaluations can be conducted in local emergency rooms if on-base services are not accessible. If a distressed Airman or Guardian will not agree to go with you and you have significant concern about the individual's safety you should contact your chain of command, contact emergency services; local, civilian, or national resources; dial 911; go to the emergency room or mental health clinic; or call the Veterans Crisis Line (1-800-273-8255). The most important step is to get the individual the help they need if they are in distress.

### 21.34. Comprehensive Airman or Guardian Fitness

Comprehensive Airman or Guardian Fitness (CAF) is a holistic approach to build and sustain a thriving and resilient USAF Community by taking care of each other and ourselves through wellness in four domains – mental, physical, social, and spiritual. The intent is to equip Airmen or Guardians and families with the tools and skills needed to continually assess and adjust to the unique challenges of a military lifestyle. The Wingman concept is a core element of CAF essential to building fit, resilient, and ready Airmen or Guardians by dedicating time to focus on individual and unit wellness, and fostering a culture of *Airmen or Guardians taking care of Airmen or Guardians*.

**Mental Domain.** The mental domain is defined as the ability to effectively cope with unique mental stressors and challenges needed to ensure mission readiness. The tenets of the mental domain are: awareness, adaptability, positive thinking, and decision-making.

**Physical Domain.** The physical domain is defined as the ability to adopt and sustain healthy behaviors needed to enhance health and wellness. The tenets of the physical domain are: endurance, strength, nutrition, and recovery.

**Social Domain.** The social domain is defined as the ability to engage in healthy social networks that promote overall well-being and optimal performance. The tenets of the social domain are: connectedness, teamwork, social support, and communication.

**Spiritual Domain.** The spiritual domain is defined as the ability to strengthen a set of beliefs, principles, or values that sustain an individual's sense of well-being and purpose. The tenets of the spiritual domain are: purpose, core values, perseverance, and perspective.

*Additional information, tools and programs designed to strengthen individual and unit CAF can be found by visiting [www.resilience.af.mil](http://www.resilience.af.mil).*

### 21.35. Support Agencies

Commanders, supervisors, wingmen, and individuals have many resources to help resolve problems and challenges for themselves, their families, and others, in healthy, safe, and constructive ways. A few of the sources are provided here for a quick reference screenshot.

#### **Support Agencies Quick Reference:**

Air Force Integrated Resilience Program <https://www.resilience.af.mil/>

Military One Source Online: <http://www.militaryonesource.mil/>.

Military One Source Help Line: 1-800-342-9647.

Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255 (Press 1).

Veterans Crisis Line Chat: <https://www.veteranscrisisline.net/>.

Veterans Crisis Line Text: 838255.

### 21.36. Medical Care

The military health system supports all uniformed service personnel, retirees, and their families. It provides the direction, resources, health care providers, and other means necessary for promoting the health of the beneficiary population. Military health support includes developing and

promoting health awareness issues to educate customers, discovering and resolving environmentally based health threats, providing health services (including preventive care, problem intervention services, pastoral care, and religious support), and improving the means and methods for maintaining the health of the beneficiary population by constantly evaluating the performance of the health support. Army, Navy, and USAF medical professionals help ensure those in uniform are medically ready to deploy anywhere around the globe on a moment's notice. These medical professionals not only send service members on their way, they're with them.

**Defense Health Agency.** The Defense Health Agency is a joint, integrated combat support agency within the military health system that enables the Army, Navy, and USAF medical services to provide a medically ready force and ready medical force to combatant commands in both peacetime and wartime. The defense health agency supports the delivery of integrated, affordable, and high quality health services to military health system beneficiaries and is responsible for driving greater integration of clinical and business processes across the military health system.

### **21.37. Air Force Medical Service**

Specifically, the Air Force Medical Service's mission is to enable medically fit forces, provide expeditionary medics, and improve the health of all who serve to meet our Nation's needs. The Air Force Medical Service's vision is to ensure that patients are the "Healthiest and Highest Performing Segment of the United States by 2025." The service's four primary objectives are: promote and sustain a healthy and fit force, prevent illness and injury, restore health, and optimize human performance. It is increasingly called upon to deliver medical capabilities throughout the range of military operations, consisting of civil-military operations, global health engagement, or humanitarian assistance/disaster relief, as part of joint or multinational operations.

**Operation Live Well.** Several programs can be found at: <https://health.mil/>. Particularly relevant to fitness and readiness is Operation Live Well. This program provides information on focus areas, such as integrative wellness, mental wellness, nutrition, physical activity, sleep, and tobacco-free living.

## **Chapter 23**

### **MILITARY CUSTOMS AND COURTESIES**

#### ***Section 23A—Honored Traditions***

##### **23.1. Honor and Tradition**

Military customs and courtesies are proven traditions, deep-rooted in culture that reflect pride in military service to our Nation. Expectations for acts of respect and courtesy have evolved from the need for order and discipline, to generating an environment of respect and sense of fraternity that exists among military personnel. While not all-inclusive, this chapter highlights many of the customs and courtesies that play an extremely important role in building morale, esprit de corps, discipline, and mission effectiveness. As stated in AFI 1-1, our customs and courtesies reflect the unique nature of our profession and guide significant aspects of our behavior. Customs and courtesies emphasize our strong bond with other military members as well as our mutual respect for one another and our civilian leadership.

##### **23.2. Protocol**

Protocol is an internationally recognized system of courtesy and respect involving a set of rules for behavior in official life and in ceremonies involving governments, nations, and their representatives. Protocol for the military and government agencies is a code of traditional precedence, courtesy, and etiquette in matters of military, diplomatic, official, and celebratory ceremonies. In modern practice, military protocol encompasses the knowledge, accumulation, and application of established service customs by combining the traditional codes of conduct with contemporary etiquette and courtesy. Executive orders, presidential proclamations, USAF instructions, and other service-associated sources provide specific guidance on protocol and customs and courtesies. AFI 34-1201, *Protocol*, 18 August 2020, is a very good source for detailed information regarding a wide range of military customs and courtesies and decorum.

##### **23.3. Base Honor Guard Program**

Base Honor Guard is a mandatory USAF program, under the responsibility of installation commanders, which emphasizes the importance of military customs and courtesies, dress and appearance, and drill and ceremonies. The first base honor guard was activated within the 1100th Air Police Squadron, Bolling Field, Washington D.C., and was responsible for maintaining an USAF ceremonial capability in the National Capitol Region. The primary mission of today's base honor guard program is to employ, equip, and train USAF members to provide professional military funeral honors for RegAF, retired members, and veterans of the U. S. Air Force. Members are usually volunteers from the installation host and tenant units, with selections generally coming from Airman Basic to Technical Sergeant. **Note:** In January of 2000, public law was implemented, providing for all veterans to receive, at a minimum, a funeral ceremony that includes the folding of a United States flag, presentation of the flag to the veteran's family, and the playing of Taps.

##### **23.4. Symbolism and Representation**

Military tradition and patriotism are steeped in symbolism, often honored in ceremonies and represented in many forms. Some of the ways the United States and the USAF are represented include symbols, such as the United States flag and its colors, songs, official seals, and other nationally recognized objects.

### **23.5. National Anthem**

The United States national anthem, The Star-Spangled Banner, is often played or sung at official and unofficial ceremonies and events. It is important to understand the appropriate protocols and procedures for showing proper respects for the national anthem. See **Attachment 8**, The Star-Spangled Banner Lyrics, for all four verses of the national anthem. When the bugle call, To the Color, is played, the same respects are shown as rendered to the national anthem.

**National Anthem Outdoors.** When outdoors, during the rendition of the national anthem, Airmen in uniform should render the military salute at the first note of the anthem and retain this position until the last note of music has played. When outdoors during rendition of the national anthem, all present in civilian attire should stand at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. Men not in uniform should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart.

**National Anthem in Vehicles.** When on USAF installations, during the playing of The Star-Spangled Banner or To the Color, vehicles in motion will pull to the side of the road and stop (if consistent with safety and mission requirements). Individuals in vehicles should sit quietly until the last note of music has played.

**National Anthem Indoors.** When indoors, in uniform, in formation, with appropriate headgear, military members should render the military salute during the national anthem. When indoors, in uniform, without headgear, military members should stand and remain at the position of attention without rendering the military salute. Civilians should stand at attention with their right hand over their heart. If the flag is not displayed, those present should face toward the music and act in the same manner they would if the flag were displayed.

**National Anthems of Friendly Foreign Nations.** Anthems of friendly foreign nations may be played to honor visitors of foreign nations as a show of respect. The same respect is shown to foreign national anthems as is shown to The Star-Spangled Banner. Typically, foreign national anthems are played before the national anthem of a host nation, but there is no regulation or law mandating when or in what order national anthems are played when more than one is played.

### **23.6. The Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance is not traditionally recited at military events. At outdoor events or social functions where the pledge is rendered, military personnel in uniform will stand at attention, remain silent, face the flag, and salute. When outdoors in civilian attire, remove any non-religious headdress with right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, with the hand being over the heart. At indoor events, military personnel in uniform will stand at attention, remain silent, face the flag, but will not salute; however, at indoor events where participants are primarily civilians or in civilian attire, reciting the Pledge of Allegiance is optional for those in uniform. When indoors in civilian attire, stand at attention, face the flag, place your right hand over your heart, and recite the pledge.

### 23.7. Department of the DAF Seal

As shown in **Figure 23.1.**, the official Air Force colors of ultramarine blue and Air Force yellow are reflected in the DAF Seal. The circular background is ultramarine blue and the trim is Air Force yellow. The 13 white stars represent the original 13 colonies. The Air Force yellow numerals under the shield stand for 1947, the year the DAF was established. The band encircling the whole design is white, edged in Air Force yellow, with black lettering reading “Department of the Air Force” on the top and “United States of America” on the bottom. Centered on the circular background is the DAF Coat of Arms, consisting of the crest and shield.

**Figure 23.1. DAF Seal.**



**Coat of Arms – Crest.** The crest portion of the Coat of Arms consists of the eagle, wreath, and cloud form. The American bald eagle symbolizes the United States airpower, and appears in natural colors. The wreath under the eagle is made up of six alternate folds of metal in white (representing silver) and light blue. This repeats the metal and color used in the shield. The white clouds behind the eagle denote the start of a new sky.

**Coat of Arms – Shield.** The shield portion of the Coat of Arms, directly below the eagle, wreath, and cloud, is divided horizontally into two parts by a nebular line representing clouds. The top part bears an Air Force yellow thunderbolt with flames in natural color that shows striking power through the use of aerospace. The thunderbolt consists of an Air Force yellow vertical twist with three natural color flames on each end crossing a pair of horizontal wings with eight lightning bolts. The background at the top of the shield is light blue representing the sky. The background at the lower part is white representing metal silver.

**Authorized and Unauthorized Uses of the DAF Seal and Coat of Arms.** The DAF Seal is to be protected from unauthorized use. Falsely making, forging, counterfeiting, mutilating, altering, or knowingly using or possessing the Seal with fraudulent intent, is punishable by law. AFMAN 33-326, *Preparing Official Communications*, 31 July 2019, **Attachment 2**, outlines the authorized users and uses of the DAF Seal and the Coat of Arms.

### 23.8. Official Air Force Symbol

**Figure 23.2. Air Force Symbol.**



The Air Force Symbol, as shown in **Figure 23.2.**, was designated the official symbol of the USAF on 5 May 2004. The upper half includes the stylized wings, which represent the stripes of our strength—our enlisted men and women. Below the stylized wings, the lower half includes a sphere, a star, and three diamonds. The Air Force Symbol honors the heritage of our past and represents the promise of our future. Furthermore, it retains the core elements of our Air Corps heritage with respect to the bent up, rather than straight “Arnold” wings, and a star with the circle. The current Symbol modernizes these core elements to

reflect our air and space force of today and tomorrow. All of the elements come together to form one symbol that presents two powerful images—an eagle, the emblem of our Nation, and a medal, representing valor in service to our Nation.

**Stylized Wings.** The wings are drawn with great angularity to emphasize our swiftness and power. The six sections of the wings represent our distinctive capabilities—air and space superiority, global attack, rapid global mobility, precision engagement, information superiority, and agile combat support.

**Sphere.** The sphere within the star represents the globe and symbolically reminds us of our obligation to secure our Nation’s freedom with global vigilance, reach, and power. The sphere also reminds us of our challenge as an expeditionary force to respond rapidly to crises and to provide decisive air and space power worldwide.

**Star.** The area surrounding the sphere takes the shape of a star. The star has many meanings. The five points of the star represent the components of our one force and family—our RegAF, civilians, Guard, Reserve, and retirees. The star symbolizes space as the high ground of our Nation’s air and space force. The rallying symbol in all our wars, the star also represents our officer corps, central to our combat leadership.

**Three Diamonds.** The star is framed with three diamonds that represent our core values—*Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence In All We Do.*

**Authorized and Unauthorized Uses of the Air Force Symbol.** The Air Force Symbol is a registered trademark and must be protected against unauthorized use or alterations to approved versions. Approved versions of the Symbol are available for download on the USAF Portal, under the library and resources tab. Instructions for the proper use and display of the Symbol can be found in DoDI5535.12\_DAFI35-114, *Air Force Branding and Trademark Licensing Program*, 3 February 2021 in the DoD Guide, *Important Information and Guidelines About the Use of Department of Defense Seals, Logos, Insignia, and Service Medals*, and at: [www.trademark.af.mil](http://www.trademark.af.mil). Refer to these references for details regarding the use and display of the Air Force Symbol.

### **23.9. The Air Force Song**

In the late 1930’s, the Air Corps sought an official song to reflect its unique identity. After reviewing over 700 compositions, music instructor Robert Crawford’s song was a unanimous winner. The U.S. Army band made the first recordings of the song in 1939, titled *The U.S. Air Force*. According to AFI 34-1201, when the Air Force song is played, Airmen will stand at attention, but are allowed to sing the lyrics of the song. During official events, the official party may move to depart after the playing of the first verse. See **Attachment 9**, *The U.S. Air Force* lyrics, for all four verses of song. In the past year, the USAF finalized updates to its official song to be more inclusive, removing male-only references to reflect the central role that women play in the service. In March 2020, the third verse of the song was changed, and on May 29, 2020, announced all male-only references had been changed.

### ***Section 23B—Respect for the Flag***

#### **23.10. Showing Respect for the Flag**

The United States flag is one of the most enduring and sacred symbols of our country. It represents the principles and ideals Airmen have pledged to defend, and for which many have made the ultimate sacrifice. Airmen shall treat it with respect similar to that shown to the highest military and public officials. Several laws, practices, and traditions are associated with the flag. The Title

4 United States Code, *Flag and Seal, Seat of Government, and the States*; Title 10 United States Code, *Armed Forces*; and Title 36 United States Code, *Patriotic and National Observances, Ceremonies, and Organizations*, pertain proper display and respect for the flag.

### 23.11. History of United States Flag

There is no official meaning for the folds of the flag, and according to AFI 34-1201, there is no official flag folding script. Although various national interest groups hold flag folding ceremonies, they are not official. A narrative is provided in **Figure 23.3.** to highlight significant historical information regarding the United States flag. It is not for official ceremonial use.

**Figure 23.3. U.S. Flag.**

For more than 200 years, the American flag has been the symbol of our Nation's unity, as well as a source of pride and inspiration for millions of citizens. Born on June 14, 1777, the Second Continental Congress determined that the flag of the United States be 13 stripes, alternating between seven red and six white; and that the union be 13 stars, white in a blue field representing a new constellation.

Between 1777 and 1960, the shape and design of the flag evolved into the flag presented before you today. The 13 horizontal stripes represent the original 13 colonies, while the stars represent the 50 states of the Union. The colors of the flag are symbolic as well; red symbolizes hardiness and valor; white signifies purity and innocence; and blue represents vigilance, perseverance, and justice. Traditionally, a symbol of liberty, the American flag has carried the message of freedom, and inspired Americans, both at home and abroad.

In 1814, Francis Scott Key was so moved at seeing the Stars and Stripes waving after the British shelling of Baltimore's Fort McHenry that he wrote the words to The Star-Spangled Banner. In 1892 the flag inspired Francis Bellamy to write the "Pledge of Allegiance," our most famous flag salute and patriotic oath. In July 1969 the American flag was flown in space when Neil Armstrong planted it on the surface of the moon.

Today, our flag flies on constellations of Air Force satellites that circle our globe, and on the fin flash of our aircraft in harm's way in every corner of the world. Indeed, it flies in the heart of every Airman who serves our great Nation. The sun never sets on our USAF, nor on the flag we so proudly cherish. Since 1776, no generation of Americans has been spared the responsibility of defending freedom... Today's Airmen remain committed to preserving the freedom that others won for us for generations to come.

By displaying the flag and giving it a distinctive fold, we show respect to the flag and express our gratitude to those individuals who fought, and continue to fight for freedom, at home and abroad. Since the dawn of the 20th century, Airmen have proudly flown the flag in every major conflict, on lands and skies around the world. It is their responsibility...our responsibility...to continue to protect and preserve the rights, privileges, and freedoms we, as Americans, enjoy today.

The United States flag represents who we are. It stands for the freedom we all share and the pride and patriotism we feel for our country. We cherish its legacy as a beacon of hope to one and all. Long may it wave.

### 23.12. Types of Flags

There are specific sizes, types, and occasions for proper display of the United States flag. Understanding the significance of each of these types of flags will ensure its proper display.

**Installation Flag.** The installation flag is lightweight nylon bunting material, 8 feet 11 3/8 inches by 17 feet, and is only displayed in fair weather from an installation flagstaff. This is the typical flag used at USAF installations.

**All-Purpose Flag.** The all-purpose flag is made of rayon bunting material, 3 feet by 4 feet. This size can be used for outdoor display with flags of friendly foreign nations, in arrival ceremonies for international dignitaries, or to indicate joint occupancy of a building by two or more countries.

**All-Purpose (All-Weather) Storm Flag.** The all-purpose, all-weather storm flag is a lightweight nylon bunting material, 5 feet by 9 feet 6 inches. Use this size as an alternate for the installation flag in inclement weather.

**Ceremonial Flag.** The ceremonial flag is rayon or synthetic substitute material, 4 feet 4 inches by 5 feet 6 inches, trimmed on three edges with yellow rayon fringe 2 inches wide.

**Organizational Flag.** The organizational flag is rayon or synthetic substitute material and is 3 feet by 4 feet. This flag is trimmed on three edges with rayon fringe 2 inches wide.

**Retirement Flag.** The retirement flag may be either 3 feet by 4 feet or 3 feet by 5 feet. Members retiring from the USAF are entitled to presentation of a United States flag. For details, refer to AFI 65-601, Volume 1, *Budget Guidance and Procedures*, 24 October 2018, on using Organization & Maintenance funds for this purchase.

**Garrison Flag.** The garrison flag is 20 feet by 38 feet. This flag is flown on holidays and special occasions and can be substituted with the installation flag.

**Interment Flag.** The interment flag is 5 feet by 9 feet 6 inches of any approved material. The interment flag is authorized for deceased military personnel and for deceased veterans. This is the size flag used to drape over a closed casket. **Note:** To receive an interment flag from the Department of Veterans Affairs, fill out VA Form 27-2008, *Application for U.S. Flag for Burial Purposes*. The form is available online at: [http://www.cem.va.gov/burial\\_benefits/burial\\_flags.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/burial_benefits/burial_flags.asp).

### **23.13. Display of the United States Flag**

**Sunrise to Sunset.** The universal custom is to display the United States flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstaffs in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed 24 hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness. All other flags should also be illuminated when displayed with the United States flag.

**Locations.** USAF installations are authorized to fly one installation flag from reveille to retreat, normally on a flagstaff placed in front of the installation headquarters, and additional flagstaffs and flags are authorized adjacent to each dependent school on the installation. The flag should be displayed daily on or near the main administration building of every public institution; it should also be displayed during school days in or near every schoolhouse.

**Holidays.** The United States flag should be displayed on all days as may be proclaimed by the U.S. President, the birthdays of states (date of admission), and on state holidays. It should also be displayed on the following national holidays.

New Year's Day	Father's Day
Inauguration Day	Independence Day
Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday	Nat'l Korean War Veterans Armistice Day
Lincoln's Birthday	Labor Day
Washington's Birthday	Constitution Day
Easter Sunday (variable)	Columbus Day
Mother's Day	Navy Day
Armed Forces Day	Veterans Day
Memorial Day (half-staff until noon)	Thanksgiving Day
Flag Day	Christmas Day
Juneteenth	

#### **23.14. Position and Manner of Display**

The United States flag is always displayed on a stage or in a parade on its own right. In other words, for an audience looking at a stage, the flag is on the audience's left. When displaying the flag, the union (the white stars on the blue field) is displayed at the uppermost, right side of the flag itself. **Figure 23.4.** is provided as an example for proper display of the United States flag in various situations and configurations.

**Carried in Procession with Another Flag.** As a rule of thumb, when the United States flag is displayed or carried in a procession with another flag or flags, it should be either on the right of all others, or in front of and centered ahead of other flags, if there is a line of other flags in the same procession.

**Displayed with Crossed Staffs.** When the United States flag is displayed with another flag against a wall from crossed staffs, it should be on the right, the flag's own right (the observer's left), and the staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.

**Radiating from a Central Point.** When the United States flag is flown with a number of flags displayed from staffs radiating from a central point, and no foreign flags are in the display, the United States flag will be in the center and at the highest point of the group.

**Projecting from a Building.** When the United States flag is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from the windowsill, balcony, or front of a building, the union of the flag should be placed at the peak of the staff.

**In a Row or Line with Equal Height.** When the United States flag is flown with a number of flags displayed from staffs set in a line, all staffs will be of the same height and same finial. The United States flag will be on the right side of the group (the observer's left).

**In a Row or Line with Elevated Height.** When no foreign national flags are involved in the display, the United States flag may be placed at the center of the line and displayed at a higher level than the other flags in the display.

**Displayed with One or More Nations.** When the United States flag is displayed with one or more other nations, they are flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of equal size. In most cases, member country flags are displayed in a line, alphabetically, with the United States flag at its own right (the observer's left).

**Displayed on a Staff near a Speaker's Platform.** When displayed from a staff in a church or public auditorium, the United States flag should hold the position of superior prominence and the position of honor at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he or she faces the audience. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the clergyman or speaker, or to the right of the audience.

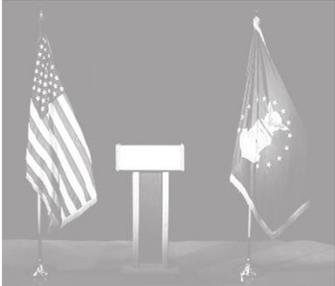
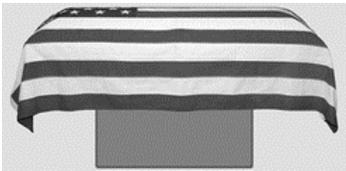
**Displayed Vertically.** When displayed from a building, a window, or over the middle of a street, the United States flag should be suspended vertically with the union to the uppermost and the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left (north on an east and west street, or east on a north and south street). This also applies when the flag is suspended from the main entrance of a building or hangar.

**Displayed Horizontally.** When displayed horizontally against a wall or when displayed behind a speaker's platform, the union of the United States flag should be uppermost and to the flag's own right (the observer's left). When displayed in a window, the flag should be displayed in the same way, with the union to the observer's left.

**Displayed on a Closed Casket.** On a closed casket, place the United States flag lengthwise with the union at the head and over the left shoulder of the deceased. Do not lower the flag into the grave, and do not allow the flag to touch the ground. The interment flag may be given to the next of kin at the conclusion of the interment.

**Displayed at Half-Staff.** The term "half-staff" means the position of the United States flag when it is one-half the distance between the top and bottom of the staff. All flags displayed with the United States flag are flown at half-staff when the United States flag is flown at half-staff, with the exception of foreign national flags, unless the foreign country has granted permission for their flag to also be at half-staff. Within the USAF, the installation commander may direct that the United States flag be flown at half-staff on occasions when it is considered proper and appropriate. When flown at half-staff, the flag shall be first hoisted to the peak for an instant, and then lowered to the half-staff. The flag should be raised to the peak position before lowering at the end of the day.

Figure 23.4. U.S. Flag Display Configurations.

<p><b>U.S. Flag Carried in Procession with Another Flag.</b></p> 	<p><b>U.S. Flag and Another Flag Displayed with Crossed Stuffs.</b></p> 	<p><b>U.S. Flag with Other Flags Radiating from a Central Point.</b></p> 
<p><b>U.S. Flag Projecting from a Building.</b></p> 	<p><b>U.S. Flag Displayed in a Line with Equal Height.</b></p> 	<p><b>U.S. Flag Displayed in a Line with Elevated Height.</b></p> 
<p><b>U.S. Flag Displayed with One or More Nations.</b></p> 	<p><b>U.S. Flag Displayed from a Staff at Speaker's Platform.</b></p> 	<p><b>U.S. Flag Positioned Vertically.</b></p> 
<p><b>U.S. Flag Displayed Flat at Speaker's Platform.</b></p> 	<p><b>U.S. Flag Draped Over a Closed Casket.</b></p> 	<p><b>U.S. Flag Flown at Half-Staff.</b></p> 

### **23.15. Care and Respect for the United States Flag**

Some acts for showing proper respect for the United States flag include:

- When in uniform, salute the United States flag six paces before it passes in a procession or parade and hold the salute until it has passed six paces.
- Regimental colors, state flags, and organizational or institutional flags are always dipped as a mark of respect to the United States flag. The USAF flag and organizational flags may be dipped as appropriate. The United States flag will not be dipped to any person or thing, and at no time will a foreign national flag be dipped.
- The United States flag should never be displayed with union down, except as a signal of dire distress in instances of extreme danger to life or property.
- The United States flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, floor, water, or merchandise. The United States flag should never be used to cover for a statue or monument.
- The United States flag should never be carried flat or horizontally, but always aloft and free.
- The United States flag should never be used as wearing apparel, bedding, or drapery. The United States flag should never be festooned, drawn back or up, or in folds, but always allowed to fall freely.
- The United States flag should never be fastened, displayed, used, or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged.
- The United States flag should never be used as a covering for a ceiling.
- The United States flag should never have placed upon it, nor on any part of it, nor attached to it, any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing of any nature.
- The United States flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.
- The United States flag should never be used for advertising purposes. Advertising signs should not be fastened to a staff or halyard from which the United States flag is flown.
- The United States flag should never be printed or embroidered on such articles as cushions, handkerchiefs, paper napkins, boxes, or anything that is designed for temporary use.
- The United States flag should not be displayed on a float in a parade, except from a staff.
- The United States flag should not be draped over the hood, top, sides, or back of a vehicle, railroad train, or boat.
- No part of the United States flag should be used as a costume or athletic uniform. However, a United States flag patch may be affixed to the uniform of military personnel, firemen, policemen, and members of patriotic organizations.
- A United States flag lapel pin, being a replica of the flag, should be worn on the left lapel near the heart.
- No other flag or pennant should be placed above or, if on the same level, to the right (observer's left) of the United States flag, except during church services conducted by naval chaplains at sea when the church pennant may be flown above the flag during church services for the personnel of the Navy.

- Exercise extreme care to ensure proper handling and cleaning of soiled flags. When the United States flag is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, it should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning. There may be instances when a flag is retired from service and preserved because of its historical significance. Disposition instructions should be obtained from the proper authority, such as the installation honor guard or protocol office.

- A folded flag is considered cased; therefore, a salute is not necessary.

### **23.16. Service Flags**

In accordance with Title 10 United States Code, *Armed Forces*, service flags will be displayed by order of service date, with the most senior service flags being given the position of honor on the far right. Service flags will be displayed in the following order of precedence from their own right or the observer's left: U.S. Army (11 July 1775), U.S. Marine (10 November 1775), U.S. Navy (13 October 1775), U.S. Air Force (18 September 1947), U.S. Coast Guard (4 August 1790), and U.S. Space Force (20 December 2019).

Following the service flags, the order of precedence of flags is as follows: North American Aerospace Defense, U.S. Space Command, major commands (in alphabetical order), field operating agencies, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, direct reporting units, Numbered Air Forces and wings (in descending order), and personal/position (using branch appropriate flags).

### ***Section 23C—Respect for Individuals***

#### **23.17. Showing Respect for Individuals**

Respect, consideration, manners, common sense, and politeness are all ways of demonstrating common acts of courtesy. Common acts of courtesy that contribute to a positive, professional working environment include simple things like saying “please” and “thank you” and respecting other people's time. When in the workplace, being helpful, taking and delivering messages, and offering assistance when possible, are demonstrations of consideration for others. All USAF personnel should demonstrate common acts of courtesy while on- and off-duty.

**Distinguished Visitors.** Certain individuals who are considered distinguished visitors (DV) are often afforded particular courtesies as a matter of respect, as well as tradition. A DV may be defined as any: (1) General or Flag Officer; (2) government official with rank equivalent to a Brigadier General or higher; (3) foreign military officer or civilian designated a DV by the Under Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs; or (4) visitor or group designated by the commander. Persons in certain positions may be given DV status as designated by the commander. A DV visit is an important event and should be given close attention to detail Review AFI 34-1201, and AFPAM 34-1202, *Guide to Protocol*, 8 May 2019, and contact the installation protocol office for further guidance on responsibilities and proper procedures for DVs.

#### **23.18. Position of Honor**

Junior personnel shall employ a courteous and respectful bearing toward senior personnel. Give the senior person, enlisted or commissioned, the position of honor on the right when walking, riding, or sitting. The junior person takes the position to the senior's left.

**Entering or Exiting an Area.** Unless told otherwise or impractical, rise and stand at attention when a senior official enters or departs a room. If more than one person is present, the person who

first sees the officer calls the area to attention. An exception to this is when an officer is already in the room who is equal to or has a higher rank than the officer entering the room. In that case, do not call the room to attention.

**Entering or Exiting Vehicles.** Military personnel enter automobiles and small boats in reverse order of rank. Juniors will enter a vehicle first and take their appropriate seat on the senior's left. The senior officer will be the last to enter the vehicle and the first to exit.

### **23.19. Ranks, Titles, and Terms of Address**

Military personnel are addressed by the rank associated with their grade or title. While all USAF personnel are Airmen, it is appropriate to address officers by their grade, such as Lieutenant Colonel, and enlisted members by their grade, such as Master Sergeant. It is also acceptable to address enlisted members relative to their tier, such as Airman, Sergeant, Senior, Chief, as appropriate. USAF members may also be addressed as "Sir" or "Ma'am." Chaplains may be addressed as Chaplain or by their ecclesiastical title.

**Respect for Civilians.** Civilians and civil service employees should be addressed appropriately as "Mr," "Mrs," "Miss," or "Ms," and their last name. Also, using "Sir" or "Ma'am" is appropriate.

**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. Refer to AFI 36-3106, *Retiree Activities Program*, 28 December 2018, for additional details.

**Respect for Uniformed Forces and Other Services.** Extend military courtesies to members Uniformed Forces, other services, and friendly foreign nations. Pay the same respect to the national anthems and flags of other nations as rendered the United States national anthem and flag. While not necessary to learn the identifying insignia of the military grades of all nations, you should learn the ranks, grades, and insignia of the most frequently contacted nations, particularly during an overseas assignment or deployment.

### **23.20. Rendering the Salute**

Saluting is a courtesy exchanged between members of the U.S. Armed Forces as both a greeting and a symbol of mutual respect. The salute is an expression of recognition for one another as members of the profession of arms; representing a personal commitment of self-sacrifice to preserve the American way of life. Salutes are appropriate to the U.S. 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. A salute is also rendered as a sign of respect to the United States flag and during official ceremonies, as covered in this chapter.

**Saluting Uniformed Forces and Other Services.** Salutes will be exchanged between officers (commissioned and warrant), and enlisted personnel of the U.S. Armed Forces. Salutes will also be exchanged between U.S. Armed Forces personnel and the Uniformed Services of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Public Health Service, as appropriate.

**Saluting Protocol.** When a salute is exchanged among individuals, the junior member always salutes the senior member first. The junior member should initiate the salute in time to allow the senior officer to return it. To prescribe an exact distance for all circumstances is not practical; however, good judgment should dictate when salutes are exchanged. While any Airman (enlisted or officer) recognizing a need to salute or a need to return a salute may do so anywhere at any time, there are circumstances when saluting may or may not be practical or warranted.

**Indoors.** Salutes are not rendered indoors, except for formal reporting. When reporting to an officer indoors, knock once, enter when told to do so, march to approximately two paces from the officer or desk, halt, salute, and report, “Sir (Ma’am), (rank and last name) reports as ordered,” or “Sir (Ma’am), (rank and last name) reports.” When the conversation is completed, execute a sharp salute, hold the salute until the officer acknowledges the salute, perform the appropriate facing movement, and depart.

**Outdoors.** When outdoors (outside of a building, on a porch, a covered sidewalk, an entryway, a reviewing stand, or at a bus stop) the salute will be exchanged. This applies both on and off military installations.

**When Carrying Items.** Individuals carrying articles in both hands (unable to be transferred to the left hand) need not initiate or return the salute when impractical, but should nod or offer a verbal greeting, acknowledging the appropriateness of a salute.

**In Formation.** When in formation, members do not salute or return a salute unless given the command to do so. The person in charge of the formation salutes and acknowledges salutes for those in the formation.

**In a Work Detail.** When in a work detail, individual workers do not salute. The person in charge of the detail salutes for those in the detail.

**In Groups.** When in groups, when a senior officer approaches, the first individual noticing the officer calls the group to attention. All members face the officer and salute. If the officer addresses an individual or the group, all remain at attention (unless otherwise ordered) until the end of the conversation, at which time they salute the officer.

**Public Gatherings.** When attending public gatherings, such as sporting events, meetings, or when a salute would be inappropriate or impractical, salutes between individuals are not required.

**In Vehicles.** Exchange of salutes between members in moving military vehicles is not mandatory. For pedestrians, when officer passengers are readily identifiable (for example, officers in appropriately marked staff vehicles), the salute must be rendered. This includes the U.S. President, the Vice President, Secretary of Defense, Service Secretaries, and senior officers in vehicles when distinguished by vehicle plates and/or flags.

**In Civilian Attire.** Persons in uniform may salute civilians or senior military members in civilian clothes upon recognition.

**At “No Salute” Areas.** Saluting is not required in areas designated as “no salute” areas.

**In Physical Training Gear.** Saluting individuals due to rank recognition is not required when wearing the physical training gear, but may be expected during specified academic training environments. When outdoors in physical training gear, Airmen are required to salute during reveille and retreat.

**At Military Funerals / Memorials.** When at a military funeral or memorial in uniform, salute the caisson or hearse as it passes and the casket as it is carried past. Also, salute during the firing of volleys and the playing of Taps. **Note:** Many installations across the USAF play Taps to signify “lights out” at the end of the day. For these purposes, the salute is not required.

### *Section 23D—Ceremonies and Events*

#### **23.21. Military Ceremonies**

The USAF has many different types of ceremonies that are unique customs of our military profession, many of them held in honor of significant events throughout a member’s career. Official military ceremonies include: promotions, changes and assumptions of command, activations and in-activations, re-designations, enlistments and reenlistments, awards, decorations, arrivals, departures, reveille, retreat, building dedications, ribbon cuttings, retirements, and funerals. Some are very formal and elaborate, while others are quite simple and personal.

#### **23.22. Event Planning and Preparation**

All events begin with planning. Consideration should always be given to the nature and sequence of the event, scheduling, guests, and budget. To give guests time to plan, aim at having details planned out at least three weeks in advance, or more. In such cases, planning committees will need to begin meeting and discussing details of the event far in advance of the invitations being sent out. This could mean, depending on the size and scope of the event, planning as early as several months to a year in advance. Because ceremonies are often steeped in tradition, there are almost always resources available for helping planners get started. Rather than starting from scratch, reach out to other organizations or review checklists from previous events to help get things started.

#### **23.23. Parades and Honors Arrivals or Departures**

Ceremonies, such as parades, honor cordons, motorcades, and other ceremonies that involve large numbers of Airmen and resources, may be held when officials entitled to such honors visit military installations. Full honors are reserved for statutory appointees and General or Flag Officers, foreign dignitaries, and occasions when ceremonies promote international good will. The installation commander determines which types of honors are rendered.

**Award Ceremony.** An award ceremony affords an opportunity to recognize a member’s accomplishments. The commander or other official determines whether to present an award at a formal ceremony or to present it informally. Many units present awards during commander’s call. Because there are no specific guidelines for an award presentation, commanders and supervisors must ensure the presentation method reflects the significance of the award.

**Decoration Ceremony.** Decoration ceremonies formally recognize service members for meritorious service, outstanding achievement, or heroism. Formal and dignified decoration ceremonies preserve the integrity and value of decorations. When possible, commanders should personally present decorations. Regardless of where the presentation is conducted, the ceremony is conducted at the earliest possible date after approval of the decoration. All military participants and attendees should wear the uniform specified by the host.

**Promotion Ceremony.** Promotions are significant events in the lives of military people. Commanders and supervisors are responsible for ensuring their personnel receive proper recognition. Many of the guidelines for promotion ceremonies are the same as for decoration ceremonies. Because most promotions are effective the first day of the month, the promotion ceremony is customarily conducted on the last duty day before the promotion effective date. Some bases hold a base-wide promotion for all promotes, while other bases prefer to recognize promotees within their organizations.

**Reenlistment Ceremony.** Unit commanders will honor all reenlistees through a dignified reenlistment ceremony. Airmen may request any commissioned officer to perform the ceremony, and may invite guests. The member's immediate family should be invited to reinforce the recognition that when a member makes a commitment to the USAF, the family is also making a commitment. The ceremony may be conducted in any place that lends dignity to the event. The United States flag has traditionally served, and should be used when available, as a backdrop for reenlistment ceremonies. Reenlistees and officers administering the oath must wear an authorized uniform for the ceremony, unless the officer performing the reenlistment is retired, then the uniform requirement for the reenlisting officer is optional. For additional information on reenlistments, refer to AFI 36-2606.

#### **23.24. Oaths**

At the core of the ceremony is the oath. The oath is recited by the officer and repeated by the reenlistee. The reenlistee and the officer administering the oath must be physically collocated during the ceremony. The officer, enlisted, and civilian oaths are very similar, but vary to some degree. If desired, the words "so help me God" may be omitted.

##### **Officer Oath**

I (state your name), /// having been appointed a (rank), 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 upon which I am about to enter, /// so help me God.

##### **Enlisted Oath**

I (state your name), /// 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.

## **Air National Guard Enlisted Oath**

I do hereby acknowledge to have voluntarily enlisted this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, in the \_\_\_\_\_ National Guard of the State of \_\_\_\_\_ for a period of \_\_\_\_ year(s) under the conditions prescribed by law, unless sooner discharged by proper authority. I (state your name), /// do solemnly swear (or affirm) /// that I will support and defend /// the constitution of the United States /// and of the State of \_\_\_\_\_ /// against all enemies, foreign and domestic, /// that I will bear true faith /// and allegiance to them, /// and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States /// and the Governor of \_\_\_\_\_, /// and the orders of the officers appointed over me, /// according to law and regulations, /// so help me God.

## **Civilian Oath**

I, (state your name), /// 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 upon which I am about to enter, /// so help me God.

### **23.25. Retirement Ceremony**

Recognition upon retirement is a longstanding tradition of military service with a tangible expression of appreciation for contributions to the USAF mission, and with the assurance of continuation as a part of the USAF family in retirement. Commanders are responsible for ensuring members have a retirement ceremony to recognize their contributions. They must offer the retiring member the courtesy of a formal ceremony in keeping with the customs and traditions of the service, unless the member prefers otherwise. Family members and friends should be invited and encouraged to attend the ceremony. During the retirement ceremony, the member receives a certificate of retirement, a United States flag, the USAF retired lapel button, various certificates and letters of appreciation, as well as appropriate awards, decorations, and honors. Spouses also receive special recognition at a member's retirement ceremony. Retirement ceremonies often combine official, long standing USAF traditions with a member's desire to personalize the ceremony for family and invited guests. Anyone involved in planning a retirement should consult AFI 36-3203 for complete details.

### **23.26. Reveille Ceremony**

The signal for the start of the official duty day is the playing of reveille. Because the time for the start of the duty day varies among different locations, the commander designates the specified time for reveille. If the commander desires, a reveille ceremony may accompany the raising of the flag. This ceremony takes place after sunrise near the base flagstaff. Shortly before the specified time,

Airmen march to a pre-designated position near the base flagstaff, halt, face toward the flagstaff, and dress. The flag security detail arrives at the flagstaff at this time and remains at attention.

A typical reveille ceremony will involve the following commands and procedures:

- The unit commander (or senior participant) commands “Parade, REST.”
- At the specified time, the unit commander commands “SOUND REVEILLE.” The flag detail assumes the position of attention, moves to the flagstaff, and attaches the flag to the halyards.
- After reveille is played, the unit commander commands “Squadron, ATTENTION” and “Present, ARMS” and then faces the flagstaff and executes present arms. On this signal, the national anthem or To the Color is sounded.
- On the first note of the national anthem or To the Color, the flag security detail begins to raise the flag briskly. The senior member of the detail holds the flag to keep it from touching the ground.
- The unit commander holds the salute until the last note of the national anthem or To the Color is played, then executes order arms, faces about, and commands “Order, ARMS.”
- The Airmen are then dismissed or marched to the dismissal area.

**Raising the Flag.** When practical, a detail consisting of one senior member and two junior members hoists the flag. The detail forms in line with the senior member carrying the flag in the center. The detail then marches to the flagstaff, halts, and attaches the flag to the halyards. The two junior members attend the halyards, taking a position facing the staff to hoist the flag without entangling the halyards. The flag is always raised and lowered from the leeward side of the flagstaff. The senior member continues to hold the flag, taking particular care that no portion of the flag touches the ground. When the flag is clear of the senior member’s grasp, the senior member comes to attention and executes present arms. On the last note of the national anthem, To the Color, or after the flag has been hoisted to the staff head, all members of the detail execute order arms on command of the senior member. The halyards are then secured to the cleat of the staff or, if appropriate, the flag is lowered to half-staff before the halyards are secured. The detail is formed again and then marches to the dismissal area.

### **23.27. Retreat Ceremony**

The retreat ceremony serves a twofold purpose; it signals the end of the official duty day, and it serves as a ceremony for paying respect to the United States flag. Because the time for the end of the duty day varies among different locations, the commander designates the time for retreat ceremonies. The retreat ceremony may take place at the squadron area, on the base parade ground, or near the base flagstaff. If conducted at the base parade ground, retreat may be part of the parade ceremony. Shortly before the specified time for retreat, Airmen participating in the ceremony are positioned facing the flagstaff and dressed. If a band is present, the band precedes the Airmen participating in the ceremony. A typical reveille ceremony will involve the following commands and procedures:

- If the band and Airmen march to the flagstaff, a flag security detail also marches to the flagstaff and halts, and the senior member gives the command “Parade, REST” to the security detail.

- As soon as the Airmen are dressed, the commander commands “Parade, REST.” The commander then faces the flagstaff, assumes parade rest, and waits for the specified time for retreat.
- At the specified time, the commander orders the bandleader to sound retreat by commanding “SOUND RETREAT.”
- During the playing of retreat (either by a band or over a loud speaker), junior members of the flag security detail assume the position of attention and move to the flagstaff to arrange the halyards for proper lowering of the flag. Once the halyards are arranged, the junior members of the flag security detail execute parade rest in unison.
- After retreat has played, the commander faces about and commands “Squadron (Group, etc.), ATTENTION.”
- The commander then commands “Present, ARMS.” The members of the flag security detail and members in formation execute present arms on command of the commander. The commander faces to the front and also assumes present arms.
- The national anthem is played, or a bugler plays To the Color. The junior members of the flag security detail lower the flag slowly and with dignity.
- The commander executes order arms when the last note of the national anthem or To the Color is played and the flag is securely grasped. The commander faces about, gives the Airmen in formation the command of “Order, ARMS,” and then faces to the front.
- The flag security detail folds the flag. The senior member of the detail remains at attention while the flag is folded unless needed to control the flag.
- When the flag is folded, the flag security detail, with the senior member on the right and the flag bearer in the center, marches to a position three paces from the commander (or officer of the day in an informal ceremony). The senior member salutes and reports “Sir (Ma’am), the flag is secured.” The commander returns the salute, and the flag security detail marches away. The Airmen in formation are then marched to their areas and dismissed. **Note:** Uniformed military members not assigned to a formation face the flag (if visible), or the music, and assume the position of parade rest on the first note of retreat. Upon completion of retreat, they should assume the position of attention and salute on the first note of the national anthem or To the Color.

**Lowering the Flag.** When practical, the detail lowering the flag should be one senior member and three junior members for the all-purpose flag, and one senior member and five junior members for the installation flag. The detail is formed and marched to the flagstaff. The halyards are detached and attended from the leeward side. On the first note of the national anthem or To the Color, the members of the detail not lowering the flag execute present arms. The lowering of the flag is coordinated with the playing of the music so the two are completed at the same time. The senior member commands the detail “Order, ARMS” when the flag is low enough to be received. If at half-staff, briskly hoist the flag to the staff head while retreat is sounded and then lower on the first note of the national anthem or To the Color. The flag is detached from the halyards and folded. The halyards are secured to the staff. The correct method for folding the United States flag can be found in AFI 34-1201.

### **23.28. The Dining-In and Dining-Out**

Dining-ins and dining-outs are both formal events. The one significant difference is that nonmilitary spouses, friends, and civilians may attend a dining-out, but the dining-in is a formal dinner for military members only. The present dining-in format had its beginnings in the Air Corps when General Henry H. “Hap” Arnold held his famous wingdings. The association of Army Air Corps personnel with the British and their dining-ins during World War II also encouraged their popularity in the USAF. Members now recognize the event as an occasion where ceremony, tradition, and good fellowship serve an important purpose and are effective in building and maintaining high morale and esprit de corps. Military members who attend these ceremonies must wear the mess dress or the semiformal uniform. Civilians wear the dress specified in the invitations. **Note:** The combat dining-in is an event similar to the dining-in because it maintains the traditional form; however, the difference is primarily in the dress and atmosphere. Combat dining-ins typically celebrate the evening in some form of utility uniform in a much more relaxed environment deliberately prepared to encourage camaraderie.

### **23.29. The Order of the Sword Induction Ceremony**

Induction into the order of the sword is an honor reserved for individuals who have provided outstanding leadership and support to enlisted members as a “Leader among Leaders and an Airman among Airmen.” The order of the sword event is conducted with the dignity that reflects its significance as the highest honor and tribute an enlisted member can bestow on anyone. Similar to the dining-in, this evening affair usually consists of a social period, formal dinner, and induction ceremony. The required dress is the mess dress, semiformal uniform, or equivalent. The only approved levels for award of the sword are the USAF level and major command level. The Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force and MAJCOM command chiefs are known as the “keepers of the sword,” and maintain the official lists of order of the sword recipients, respectively.

**History of the Order of the Sword.** The first recorded order of the sword ceremony in the United States was in the 1860s when a General officer was presented a sword by his command. The ceremony was revised, updated, and adopted by the USAF in 1967 to recognize and honor military senior officers, Colonel or above, and civilian equivalents, for conspicuous and significant contributions to the welfare and prestige of the USAF enlisted force mission effectiveness as well as the overall military establishment.

## Chapter 24 PROFESSIONALISM

### *Section 24A—USAF Professional*

#### **24.1. Professionalism**

Professionalism describes who we are as a service and how we conduct ourselves as Airmen and representatives of the USAF. It sets the standards all Airmen are expected to adhere to—and exceed. Professionalism within the USAF is framed by the requirements of trust, loyalty, dignity, and personal commitment. We must be dependable and responsible for our own actions while being good wingmen for fellow Airmen and co-workers. At the root of professionalism is respect. Respect is what bonds every Airman's contribution to the mission with the collective understanding of what it means to serve with humility and deference for those we serve with.

The USAF is a Total Force that effectively leverages the unique capabilities of officer, enlisted, and civilian Airmen across RegAF, Guard, Reserve, and Auxiliary Components. As a Total Force, we are a values-based, mission-focused, people-oriented air and space force. Professionalism is the heart and soul of who we are and who we aspire to be every day. Our sense of professionalism underlies the pride we feel when we say, "*I am an American Airman.*"

**Professional Obligation and Status.** Every Airman has an obligation to be the very best professional possible. As stated in AFI 1-1, the USAF has a very important national defense mission; and you, as a member of the USAF, 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 USAF. 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 and unbiased treatment, and each Airman has an obligation to care for, teach, and lead others. We must also maintain loyalty to the USAF'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 USAF and in you.

Professional status comes to people at different times in their lives and careers. Professional status is expressed by attitudes and commitments, and by internalizing military values. Studying and understanding these factors are vital to Airmen and the future of the USAF. Professional military members of today and tomorrow must accept responsibility for their actions, hold others accountable, and take appropriate action to never hide behind excuses. Focus must be directed toward devoted service to the nation, not on pay, working conditions, or the next assignment. Our Air Force is a critical part of the greatest fighting force the world has ever known. It is powered by the greatest Airmen the world has ever seen.

**Mission-Focused.** As Airmen, we stand ready, performing selfless duty in defense of our Nation. We, and our families, are dedicated to answering our Nation's call, making sacrifices for the good of the mission. We, as Airmen, must have the courage to take appropriate risks when necessary.

Our heritage of breaking barriers and accelerating faster, farther, and first drives us to see things differently, continually innovate, and improve our craft to execute the mission.

**People-Oriented.** Our most important resource is the people who commit to serving as USAF professionals. Taking care of our wingmen is our duty. We are an integrated force—strong, able, and ready. We, as Airmen, value the contribution of every USAF member and motivate each other to achieve excellence. We honor and respect all who serve, and when we strengthen our alliances—we are stronger together.

**Diversity.** Diversity is a military necessity. USAF 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. USAF 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 USAF, 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.

### *Section 24C—USAF Core Values*

#### **24.3. The USAF Core Values**

At the heart and soul of our profession, the USAF recognizes our core values as universal, consistent standards used to evaluate the ethical climate of all USAF organizations. When needed in the cauldron of war, core values are the beacons that light the path of professional conduct and the highest ideals.

#### *Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence In All We Do*

Values represent enduring, guiding principles for which we stand. Values, such as the USAF core values of integrity, service, and excellence, should motivate attitudes and actions on- and off duty as essential moral principles or beliefs that are held in the highest regard. Our core values represent the USAF's firm convictions about the nature of our personal character, our commitment to each other and our Nation, and the manner in which we perform our service. Core values are so fundamental that they define our very identity through a common bond among all professional Airmen—past and present. For those of us who join this proud community, being a part of the USAF family requires a commitment to living by these values at all times.

Reflecting the USAF core values in one's personal and professional lives is a challenge that must be faced every day. 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 USAF, earn the public's trust, strengthen our service, and accomplish our mission. This is the expectation of our profession and is the standard that our fellow service members and the American public hold us to.

*“Before you can lead others, you have to lead yourself. We must develop leaders of character that are ready to create and foster environments of respect, inclusivity, and trust. When Airmen know they are valued, have high quality of service and quality of life, and are empowered to reach their full potential—there are no limits to what we can accomplish.”*

**General Charles Q. Brown, Jr.  
Air Force Chief of Staff**

### **24.3.1. Integrity First.**

*Integrity* provides the bedrock for our military endeavors, and is fortified by *service* to country. Integrity encompasses many characteristics indispensable to Airmen and makes us who we are and what we stand for. 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 and respect are built.

Integrity is simply doing the right thing, all the time, whether everyone is watching or no one is watching. An individual realizes integrity when thoughts and actions align with what he or she knows to be right. Following principles, acting with honor, maintaining independent judgment, and performing duties with impartiality, help to maintain integrity and avoid conflicts of interest.

*“The foundation of our Profession of Arms is, and has always been, respect. That is a non-negotiable principle that supports the Integrity, Service and Excellence of our great Air Force. It is the cornerstone of the culture we need in our Air Force.”*

**CMSAF JoAnne S. Bass  
Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force**

### **Virtues of Core Values**

Each of the USAF 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 USAF professional. USAF professionalism is a shared belief in, and a commitment to, honorable service based on our USAF core values.

**Virtues of Integrity.** The virtues of *Integrity First* are honesty, courage, and accountability.

*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. Our word must be unquestionable. This is the only way to preserve the trust and respect that we hold so dear for one another and the population we serve.

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

*Accountability.* Accountability instills our responsibility while maintaining transparency and ownership for our actions, whether it is 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.

### **24.3.2. Service Before Self.**

*Service Before Self* represents an abiding dedication to the age-old military virtue of selfless dedication to duty, including putting one's life at risk if called to do so. Service Before Self tells us that professional duties take precedence over personal desires. Airmen are practitioners of the profession of arms, entrusted with the security of the nation, the protection of its citizens, and the preservation of their way of life. In this capacity, Airmen serve as guardians of America's future, and this responsibility requires the needs of service and country to be placed before our own. In today's world, service to country requires not only a high degree of skill, but also a willingness to make personal sacrifices. It requires having the heart and mindset for service that allows us to embrace expectations and requirements not levied on the American public or other professions.

**Virtues of Service Before Self.** The virtues of *Service Before Self* are duty, loyalty, and respect.

*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 USAF 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 USAF 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. Leaders demonstrate loyalty by respecting those who serve and treating them with dignity, compassion, and true concern for their wellbeing. Ultimately, loyalty is demonstrated by helping each other act with respect and honor.

*Respect.* Respect encompasses self-respect, mutual respect, and organizational respect. This three-dimensional view requires us to embrace the unique value of all individuals and treat everyone with dignity. We must always act in the certain knowledge that all Airmen must be treated with respect and boldly speak up, even when it is uncomfortable, to assert this truth. Further, respecting others requires a commitment to recognize and root out prejudices, biases, and stereotypes. We must engage genuinely, honestly, and with an empathetic and open mind. We must honor the USAF and others by following our words with actions.

***“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, 20th Air Force Chief of Staff**

### **24.3.3. Excellence In All We Do**

*Excellence In All We Do* directs us to develop a sustained passion for the continuous improvement and innovation that propels the USAF, as well as ourselves, beyond the capabilities of our adversaries. Excellence In All We Do does not mean that we demand perfection in everything from everyone. Instead, this core value directs us to continuously advance our craft and increase our knowledge as Airmen.

Excellence In All We Do means that Airmen seek out opportunities and complete developmental education; constantly work hard to stay in physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and moral shape; continue to enhance professional competencies; and are diligent to maintain their job skills, knowledge, and personal readiness at the highest possible levels. We must have a passion for deliberate continuous improvement and innovation that propels the USAF to accelerate change or lose now.

**Virtues of Excellence In All We Do.** The virtues of *Excellence In All We Do* are mission, discipline, and teamwork.

*Mission.* Mission focus encompasses operations and excellence in stewardship. The complex undertaking of the USAF mission requires us to harness the ingenuity, expertise, and elbow grease of all Airmen. We approach it with the mindset of respect, pride, innovation, 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 overall mission.

*Discipline.* Discipline is an individual commitment to uphold the highest of personal and professional standards. We demonstrate it in attitude, work ethic, and effort directed at continuous improvement, whether pursuing professional military education or nurturing ourselves physically, intellectually, emotionally, or spiritually. Our appearance, actions, professionalism, and words represent the USAF and shape our USAF culture 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 toward the mission and strive for organizational excellence. We not only give our personal best, but also challenge and motivate each other to give their best. We gain respect through our actions and strong work ethic to build team trust. We carry our own weight, and whenever necessary, help our wingmen carry theirs.

***“Wake up every day, work hard, stay humble and repeat.”***

**CMSAF Kaleth O. Wright, 18th Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force**

***Section 24D—Ethical Standards***

**24.4. Code of Ethics.**

As a member of the USAF, you must practice the highest standards of conduct and integrity, not only in your job, but also in your relationships, personal financial dealings, and interactions with the civilian community. Whereas moral values describe what we hold to be right and wrong, ethics is the systematic reflection of these values enabling us to live and act according to our beliefs. Although following the law is ethical, laws only tell us what we can and cannot do. Ethics, on the other hand, tells us what we should or shouldn't do. Thus, Airmen must follow the law, but simply doing so is not enough. Airmen must also develop a code of ethics such that your behavior and motives do not create even the appearance of impropriety while providing a larger standard to live up to. Your commitment to integrity and excellence will lead the way for others to follow. Nonetheless, personal values, such as happiness or stability, while almost always present, must not take precedence over USAF's ethical values. The key is to align ethical values with personal values, and enhance the commitment we have made to the dedicated service of our Nation. Our ethical code is prescribed in our core values, our oaths, the Airman's Creed, USAF instructions, Professions of Arms, and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. When faced with decisions related to mission, personal life, or the interest of peers, the choice can always be made with consideration for our ethical code.

**Principles and Guidelines.** Embedded in our code of ethics, and driven by our competence and character, are key guidelines that help clarify acceptable and unacceptable behavior, but also aspirational values about who we want to be. Principles and ethical guidelines can be used to help identify what right looks like and continue to fortify our USAF culture. Title 5, CFR, Part 2635, *Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch*, establishes the basic ethical principles and guidelines that must be followed by every government employee. A few examples of ethical expectations outlined in the regulation are provided here.

- Public service is a public trust, requiring employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles, above private gain.
- Employees shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.
- Employees 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.
- Employees shall not knowingly make unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the government.

- Employees shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any non-Federal entity (including installation-recognized private organization) or individual.
- Employees shall protect and conserve federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.
- Employees shall satisfy, in good faith, their obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially federal, state, or local taxes that are imposed by law.
- Employees may generally not accept gifts from subordinates or employees that make less pay than themselves.
- 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 or birth of a child), or occasions that terminate the superior-subordinate relationship, such as retirement, permanent change of station or assignment.

#### **24.4.1. Ethical Dilemma**

An ethical dilemma is a situation where one is forced to choose between at least two alternatives. Three general causes or sources of ethical dilemmas are: uncertainty, competing values, and potential harm. Uncertainty is the result of not having all the facts pertaining to a situation; not having enough experience for dealing with a situation; or not having a clearly established policy, procedure, or rules for deciding how to make an optimal decision. Competing values occur when our personal values conflict with those of our institution, subordinates, peers, or supervisors; however, the mark of a true professional is maintaining high professional standards despite conflicting values by locating the conflicting values, weighing one's options, and deciding upon the best course of action. Potential harm relates to the intentional and unintentional short and long-term consequences caused by our actions.

**Decisions and Actions.** As Airmen, we should always think through second and third order effects of our actions. We must apply a sense of order to our priorities so we are able to overcome temptation to stray from our military norms and values. When contemplating what to do, consider possible courses of action by listing the best options and quality checking ideas to take the right path. When possible, take the decision process to the next level and put each course of action to the test. Dr. Robert M. Hicks, former Deputy Director of the Civil Air Patrol, Chaplain Services, identified three tests we can use to check the morality of our actions and decisions.

*The Network Test.* The network test consists of asking yourself, "How would this decision look if it was aired on the news?" If your actions were broadcast on the evening news, would you be proud of your actions or ashamed? Would your actions bring credit to yourself and the USAF or would they discredit yourself or those we owe? If you find yourself leaning toward a negative response to these questions, then your decision doesn't pass the network test.

*The United States of America Test.* The United States of America test focuses on asking yourself, “Is this decision good for the United States? Is this decision good for the USAF? Is this decision good for my unit (us)? Is this decision good for me?” If you take this course of action, are you properly ordering your priorities? If you can’t answer with a resounding *yes*, this might not be the best decision.

*The Divine Test.* The divine test deals with asking yourself, “Would I feel good about the decision when I give account for my life?” When telling the story of your proud and honorable service to our country, would you include conversation about this decision? Would you feel guilt or loss of trust from this action? If you can’t confidently provide a positive response, the course of action fails the divine test.

#### **24.4.2. Honorable Characteristics**

Airmen share a history of valor, courage, and sacrifice. From the earliest days of airpower to the heights of space, Airmen have built an extraordinary heritage that forms the foundation for a boundless horizon. We are technology focused, we embrace change, and through transformation and innovation, we ensure a viable USAF for the future.

Always keep focus on demonstrating honorable service and commitment to the profession of arms. Through skills, knowledge, and experience developed in the USAF, listen to your internal compass while fostering the same in your peers. Remind yourself and your peers of the reason you do what you do. Declare the importance of serving for a higher cause, adhering to established ethical codes, and embracing an USAF culture steeped in honor and tradition. Rely on what you know is true and what is right. Be the Airman who makes decisions and leads in a way you can be proud of.

Airmen firmly grounded in the core values react to combat stresses, operational deployment pressures, and daily home station demands with valor, courage, and sacrifice. While many acts of valor, courage, or sacrifice go unseen, they should be recognized not only as part of USAF culture, but also to illustrate that any Airman may be called upon at any time to perform above and beyond in the profession of arms.

**Valor.** Valor is the ability to face danger or hardship in a determined and resolute manner. Valor is commonly and rightly recognized as bravery, fearlessness, fortitude, gallantry, heart, and nerve. When acting with valor, one expresses the willingness to step outside the comfort zone to deal with unexpected situations. Such situations can happen almost anywhere. In addition to demonstrating valor on the battlefield, an Airman can exhibit valor when presented with unusual circumstances in the daily routine of life.

**Courage.** Courage is about the ability to face fear, danger, or adversity. Three types of courage are critical in the profession of arms: personal, physical, and moral. Personal courage is about doing what’s right even when risking one’s career. Physical courage is the ability to overcome fears of bodily harm to get the job done, or willingness to risk harm to yourself for someone else’s sake in battle or the course of everyday life. Finally, moral courage is the ability to stand by the core values when moral courage may not be the popular thing to do. Integrity breeds courage when

and where the behavior is most needed. More often than not, courage is manifested as an act of bravery on the battlefield when Airmen face the challenges present in combat.

**Sacrifice.** Sacrifice involves a willingness to give your time, comfort, or life to meet others' needs. Personal sacrifice occurs on many levels, but is commonly evident in the heroic actions of Airmen in combat. Day-to-day deployed garrison activities also present opportunities to put others' needs before individual wants.

**Call to Duty.** Airmen are wingmen, leaders, and warriors with backgrounds and skills as diverse as our Nation. When America's sons and daughters commit to service, the USAF takes on the charge to develop them into Airmen. The USAF culture is one that embraces diversity and fiercely protects its foundational attributes. Over the next 30 years, the USAF's ability to continue to adapt and respond faster than our potential adversaries will depend on the flexibility and adaptability of our current and next generation Airmen. We will recruit, develop, and retain exceptional Airmen through strategies and programs designed to develop and care for our Total Force, strengthen the USAF culture, and leverage development opportunities that employ creative concepts across the force. When faced with the call to duty, we must remember that we are Airmen. As Airmen, we understand the price that is paid for freedom and the sacrifices that come from willing service to our country. We understand the meaning of belonging to the profession of arms.

#### **24.5. The Airman's Creed**

The Airman's Creed was presented to the USAF in 2007 by General T. Michael Moseley, 18th Air Force Chief of Staff. General Moseley introduced the creed as an aspect of one of his top priorities to reinvigorate the Total Force. The intent of the creed was to enhance the building of a warrior ethos among Airmen and establish a coherent bond between the members of the USAF.

## **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.