



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC 20330

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Fellow Airmen,

It was almost a year ago that I became your 23rd Air Force Chief of Staff. When I assumed this role, I promised to [Follow Through](#) on both new and ongoing initiatives to improve our Air Force. Since that day, we've made many changes. These changes include those designed to reoptimize our force for Great Power Competition—some of the most significant transformations to our Air Force since its inception. Make no mistake—we are still the most dominant Air Force on Earth and, if needed, will fight and win against any adversary... but at what cost? We must acknowledge that we are operating in a dynamic security environment characterized by one of the most rapid paces of change in history. We are Reoptimizing for Great Power Competition to ensure that the cost to win is not too great.

Over the past four decades, separate pieces of our Air Force were needed to support the Joint Force, which compelled our functional experts to adapt to different requirements. These adaptations slowly made us more diffuse—essentially transforming us from One Air Force into many Air Forces. This trend continues today. We may be cooperating as functional experts, but we're still competing amongst ourselves for resources, primacy, and position. Only as One Air Force can we attain the holistic mindset needed to reach the next level of effectiveness.

This letter is the second of its kind. It is the next chronicle in our journey together as we reoptimize our Air Force to meet the emerging demands of our era, both at home and abroad. Its goal is the same as the first: To keep us honest about our progress.

We are following through on our force presentation and force generation models.

▪ **Air Task Force (ATF)**

We are evolving our force presentation model from a system that prioritizes in-garrison efficiencies to one that prioritizes combat mission effectiveness. The new system will establish fixed and coherent Units of Action so our forces arrive in theater pre-formed, pre-trained, and ready to fight. The first six Air Task Forces (ATFs) for deployment in Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) are [activated](#) and received their Mission Guidance Letters. The first three began the *Prepare* phase of the AFFORGEN cycle in October 2024 and will be ready to deploy by FY26. Concurrently, we are implementing the next evolution of deployable Units of Action: [Deployable Combat Wings \(DCWs\)](#). We will stand up five active duty DCWs in 2025, eight in 2026, and the remaining three in 2027. The Air Reserve Component (ANG/AFRC) will also begin standing up DCWs in 2025.

We are following through on our pledge to define and refine the force design that provides the optimum size, shape, and composition of our force.

▪ **Mission over Function**

This September, I authorized the stand-up of the provisional [Integrated Capabilities Command](#). ICC (P) will evaluate operational concepts, influence force structure, and generate requirements to outpace threats and provide a unified demand signal to industry. Earlier this month, I signed the classified One Force Design strategic narrative that describes the Air Force's transformational

approach to achieving our enduring purposes—defending the homeland, maintaining a strategic nuclear deterrent, and projecting power. We will soon issue the inaugural Force Design Guidance to provide additional context, guide capability development, and direct action by the Air Staff and Major Commands.

We are following through on adapting our *organizational structure* to Reoptimize for Great Power Competition.

- **Improved Structural Design**

Our pacing threat does not respect the lines we draw on the map. Remaining dominant across the entire spectrum of warfare operations requires efficient communication and execution at the Service Component Command level. To that end, we elevated [AFSOUTH from a NAF to a Service Component Command](#). Expect AFNORTH, AFCENT, and AFCYBER to follow suit in the future.

We are following through on transforming the products of our *Operational Imperatives* into meaningful operational capability.

- **Delivery of New Capabilities, Resources, and Opportunities**

We are making progress on our commitment to field affordable, lethal mass with Collaborative Combat Aircraft. We [awarded major contracts](#) to air vehicle and autonomy vendors to procure production representative test aircraft. The program is executing on schedule and [cultivating international interest](#), which will amplify our ability to project next-generation airpower. Additionally, our acquisition professionals, teaming with operational experts, technologists, and other key functions, made progress across multiple areas of the [long-range kill chain](#). Significant investments expanded [resilient operational capabilities](#) in sortie generation, base support, base defense, command and control, Regional Base Cluster Prepositioning (RBCP) kitting, Mission Ready Airmen, and infrastructure resiliency. Through [continued investments and coordination](#) with the defense-industrial base, we are beginning to develop capabilities through reclamation of historic operating locations and increased exercises across the Joint force and with our Allies.

We are following through on *training transformation*.

- **Ready Airmen Training (RAT) Program**

The Ready Airman Training Council is continuously collecting feedback to improve the 12 Ready Training Areas. During the July curriculum review at our [Expeditionary Center](#), we decided to merge requirements from two Advanced Ready Training courses into one Contingency Location course. This course meets requirements for Airmen transiting between Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) in AFCENT and AFAFRICA, while meeting force protection training requirements for Airmen supporting Agile Combat Employment (ACE) operations at various contingency locations. AETC is working with the AF Installation and Mission Support Center, AF Security Forces Desert Defender, and the Army Task Force to [accomplish training while the ATFs are at Ft Bliss](#).

We are following through on harnessing the *innovative talent* and spirit that exists in every corner of our Air Force.

- **Cyber/IT Warrant Officers**

Active Duty, Guard and Reserve selected the first cohort of prior-service Airmen to attend Warrant

Officer (WO) Training School in FY25. The first set of selected WOs began classes on 8 October and [graduate on 6 December 2024](#). The next cohort of WOs will start classes in January and March of 2025.

- **Department of the Air Force Fellows Program Revision**

The [DAF Fellows program](#) continues to improve how it harnesses the talent of our officer and enlisted corps. The AU Fellowship Office evaluated Academic Year 2026 (AY26) Officer Fellows ensuring a deliberate nomination, matching, and outplacement process for each Fellowship opportunity. SAF/LL developed an Off-Boarding Roadmap for AY24 Enlisted Fellows and beyond to ensure intentional talent management and outplacement.

- **Officer and Enlisted Technical Tracks**

We are committed to establishing robust and effective paths for critical technical areas to sustain a workforce equipped with deep expertise and the skills essential for maintaining competitiveness. The first cohort of 21 Cyber Operations (17X) technical track officers reported for duty between August and October 2024, with three selected for promotion during the most recent LAF Major board. The enlisted technical track is on pause pending the maturation of the new warrant officer program.

- **e-Testing for Air Force Officer Qualifying Test (AFOQT) and Weighted Airmen Promotion System (WAPS)**

In my last update, we described our plans to introduce e-testing for the AFOQT and WAPS via partnerships and collaborations with commercial vendors. Today, I am pleased to say we successfully implemented e-testing at all 78 DAF installations through these partnerships, specifically Personnel Data Research Institute (PDRI) and Pearson VUE. This approach reduces test duration, integrates aptitude-based content, and mitigates educational disparities across socioeconomic status, race, and gender, avoiding unnecessary barriers to commissioning. It also enables frequent updates to test content in response to evolving needs, eliminating the costly 8–10-year revision cycle. E-testing now supports officer candidates and Airmen located far from military bases by offering testing at Pearson VUE centers. We administered over 17,900 AFOQT e-tests and approximately 88,700 WAPS e-tests since introduction, with an estimated 99,000 Airmen projected to test in 2025.

We are following through on our *[commitment to the success of the team](#)*.

- **DAF-Wide Implementation of Co-Location of Victim Services**

20% of our installations achieved full or hybrid implementation of co-location of victim services: Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocate (SAPR VA) supporting sexual harassment advocacy, Family Advocacy Program Domestic Abuse Victim Advocate (FAP DAVA), Victims' Counsel (VC), and Religious Support Teams (RST). The DAF plans to launch co-location implementation at additional installations in FY25.

- **Wingman Guardian Connect (WGC)**

[Wingman Guardian Connect \(WGC\)](#) is the new DAF-specific resilience skills training program. WGC utilizes a research-informed facilitation strategy and focuses on building strong connections

through material that is personally meaningful and socially interactive. WGC replaces previously utilized First Term Enlisted Course (FTEC) materials known as “Resiliency Skills” IAW DAFI 90-5001, *Integrated Resilience*. Nine DAF installations implemented WGC, with a structured rollout to all installations anticipated to be complete by FY28.

Finally, we are following through on providing the support our Airmen and their families expect and deserve.

- **Childcare Availability**

The DAF continues to expand childcare support for Airmen, Guardians, and their families. In the past 6 months, Child Development Center (CDC) staffing levels rose from 80% to 85%, highlighting the impact childcare provider discounts are making at our installations. We also enabled access to the [Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood](#) program for all of our Airmen, Guardians, and civilian DAF employees, providing fee assistance for families who cannot access the CDC due to distance or waitlists.

This year has been both sobering—as we come to grips with the magnitude and consequence of our changes—and invigorating—as we see the energy and commitment to change throughout our formation. As we close this first year and head into the next, I want to say thank you to each of you. In a short period, we’ve made some very impactful changes across our entire force, and we have much to be proud of. I am grateful for every one of you, and I commend you for your continued efforts. We have a lot more work ahead of us, but you inspire me daily with your relentless determination to reoptimize and give our Nation the Air Force it deserves: One Air Force, unified by a shared vision, optimized for the current strategic environment, and ready for anything. I look forward to what our team will accomplish next. Let’s keep the momentum going!



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