



Global
Vigilance
Reach &
Power

America's Air Force

VISION 2020

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Foreword

Since early in the 20th Century when the Wright Brothers first took to the skies, the flight path for aerospace power has been onward and upward. The pioneers who established the United States Air Force were committed to achieving aerospace power's enormous potential to serve our nation. We continue that journey.

At the dawn of the 21st Century, the Air Force has reached ever higher, faster and farther. Revolutionary technological developments have been matched by dramatically improved operational concepts to produce profound increases in combat capability. As a part of that evolution, past Air Force visions laid thoughtful foundations for today's force. This vision, which builds on previous work and reflects key organizational and conceptual improvements, lays the foundation for our future force.

The next two decades will present many unknowns. As Joint Vision 2020 suggests, the nation will face a wide range of challenges and opportunities. In an environment with an uncertain rhythm, we must be prepared to maintain our strategic and nuclear vigilance while sustaining peacetime operations, ensuring our preparations for major theater war and conducting the training necessary to prepare each new generation of airmen to lead.

In a world that is globally connected, national security and international stability are vital foundations of America's prosperity. Assuring security and stability requires global vigilance, reach and power—global vigilance to anticipate and deter threats, strategic reach to curb crises and overwhelming power to prevail in conflicts and win America's wars.

With Global Vigilance, Reach and Power, the Air Force will provide balanced aerospace capabilities key to meeting national security objectives and realizing the full spectrum dominance envisioned by Joint Vision 2020. The United States Air Force is a mission-focused, combat-proven, decisive fighting force. This vision will guide America's Air Force in meeting the diverse challenges of the 21st Century as a part of America's Joint Military Team.

AIR FORCE MISSION

To defend the United States and protect its interests through aerospace power

vision 2020

Michael E. Ryan
MICHAEL E. RYAN, GENERAL, USAF
CHIEF OF STAFF

F. Whitten Peters
F. WHITTEN PETERS
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE

The FOUNDATION

Our People & Our Values

We are America's Airmen. We are warriors...we will fight and win wherever our nation needs us. The aerospace realm is our domain, and we are vigilant in our commitment to defend, control and use it in our nation's interest. We are leaders...we live our core values. We are a Total Force—Active, Guard, Reserve, and Civilian—seamless in providing aerospace power.

We do not operate alone. Our efforts are made possible by the great support of many. Our families, our retirees, the employers of our Guardsmen and Reservists, our industry partners, and the communities in which we live and work enable us to carry out our mission.

And we are partners in the Joint Team...we project aerospace power anywhere in the world, and operate in concert with America's land and sea forces, and with our allies. Wherever we serve, whatever we do, we are America's Airmen.

We will recruit, train and retain America's best young men and women

to provide Global Vigilance, Reach and Power to our nation in the 21st Century. We will command and lead effectively at all levels—with decisiveness and concern for our people. We'll provide an environment that encourages all our people to achieve personal and professional excellence, taking pride in being part of the aerospace force that's respected the world over.

We will size, shape and operate the force to meet the needs of the nation. We must also manage the effects of tempo on our people. This is particularly important for those elements of the force currently in short supply, but in high demand. And we'll continue leading the way in leveraging the strengths of all our components to optimize Total Force effectiveness in peace as well as war.

America's Airmen will be smart, sharp and tough. We'll provide them with the education, equipment and training to perform at their best. And we will demonstrate commitment to our people and to their families, providing quality of life that lives up to their trust. Our Air Force will be worthy of the great men and women who join us.



America's Airmen...smart, sharp and tough...we will fight and win wherever our nation needs us.

AIR FORCE CORE VALUES

Integrity First • Service Before Self • Excellence In All We Do



The foundation of the force is our people... We will remain worthy of America's best.

The DOMAIN Aerospace



...We operate aircraft and spacecraft optimized for their environments, but the art of commanding aerospace power lies in integrating systems to produce the exact effects the nation needs...

We are an integrated aerospace force. Our domain stretches from the earth's surface to the outer reaches of space in a seamless operational medium. We operate aircraft and spacecraft optimized for their environments, but the art of commanding aerospace power lies in integrating systems to produce the exact effects the nation needs. To meet this need, we've modified our command organizations to take full advantage of air, space and information expertise. We have implemented an Aerospace Basic Course that ensures newly commissioned officers understand the breadth and value of the different components of aerospace power. Our Space Warfare Center now emphasizes how to leverage the combination of space and atmospheric capabilities, and we've added space training to the air combat training at our Weapons School. Our information capabilities support operations across the entire aerospace domain. And we're putting air, space and information operators into all our key commands and training courses, focusing on expanding and cross-flowing knowledge to maximize effectiveness.

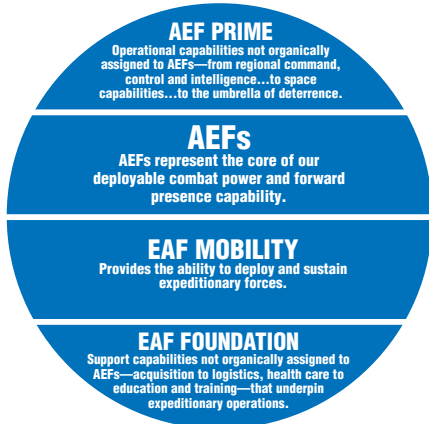
We will continue integrating air, space and information operations, while leveraging the strengths of each. Our airmen will think in terms of controlling and exploiting the full aerospace continuum on a regional and global scale to achieve effects both on earth and in flight regimes beyond the horizon. We will strengthen the ability of our commanders to command and control aerospace forces. Their Aerospace Operations Centers will be able to gather and fuse the full range of information, from national to tactical, in real-time, and to rapidly convert that information to knowledge and understanding—to assure decision dominance over adversaries.

To employ these aerospace capabilities effectively, we'll continue to develop commanders who think in terms of exploiting the whole aerospace continuum—leaders able to employ forces that produce the desired effects, regardless of where platforms reside, fly, or orbit. These leaders with experience and cross-competence in the increasingly complex range of military disciplines will lead aerospace and joint forces to victory for the nation.

Operation ALLIED FORCE demonstrated the power of aerospace integration. During combat operations over Serbia, space sensors identified time-critical targets, allowing airborne surveillance platforms to pinpoint exact target locations. The Aerospace Operations Center then rapidly directed strike aircraft to engage and destroy those targets. Tomorrow's fully-integrated aerospace force will realize even greater potential.

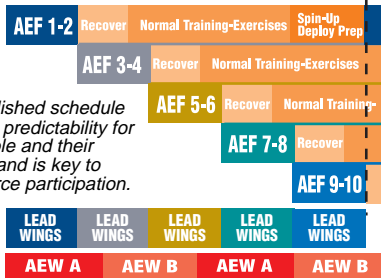
The METHOD Expeditionary Aerospace Force

The Expeditionary Aerospace Force



Airmen from all across the Air Force contribute to our ability to deploy and sustain powerful aerospace capabilities whenever and wherever necessary.

15-MONTH CYCLE



The published schedule provides predictability for our people and their families and is key to Total Force participation.

We are an expeditionary aerospace force configured for the full spectrum of aerospace operations. We have returned to our expeditionary roots in the way we organize ourselves and present our forces. This shift provides a unifying structure that brings all our people together in shared challenges, shared goals and shared successes. Airmen from all across the Air Force contribute to our expeditionary capabilities—from those who provide the deterrent umbrella under which we operate, to those who deploy, to those who operate the fixed facilities on which we depend when we reach back for support.

We have constituted ten deployable Aerospace Expeditionary Forces, or AEFs. Two AEFs, trained to task, are always deployed or on call to meet current national requirements while the remaining force trains, exercises and prepares for the full spectrum of operations. AEFs provide joint force commanders with ready and complete aerospace force packages that can be tailored to meet the spectrum of contingencies—ensuring situational awareness, freedom from attack, freedom to maneuver and freedom to attack. They fit into established theater-based command and control structures, when such are available, or bring their own command and control when needed. In addition, we maintain an Aerospace Expeditionary Wing, or AEW, on continuous alert as a “911”

force to respond to unexpected developments, as well as on-call Lead Wings to open expeditionary bases.

Most important to our people, our rotational structure provides predictability for their lives and stability for their training. Predictability also is key to optimizing peacetime participation of our traditional Guardsmen and Reservists who must balance military duties with full-time civilian employment.

In a smaller-scale contingency, one AEF, task force-organized, can provide intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, and command and control of aerospace forces, over an area roughly half the size of Texas. The AEF can provide air superiority while striking some 200 targets per day. One AEF can surge to provide these capabilities 24 hours a day. More AEFs can be added, expanding the space we can control and contributing to our ability to transition rapidly from contingency operations to major theater war.

We will continue to improve our expeditionary capabilities as we become lighter and leaner—at the same time we become more lethal. We are already responsive, but we’ll become even more so. We will be able to deploy an AEF in 48 hours—fast enough to curb many crises before they escalate. We will be able to rapidly deploy additional AEFs—up to 5 AEFs

in 15 days—providing joint force commanders options to begin offensive operations and halt and win major theater wars.

And we will improve the capabilities each AEF provides. We’ll expand the battlespace an AEF can control and enhance our ability to do real-time, adaptive targeting to dominate that battlespace. We’ll dramatically increase the number of targets one AEF can engage in a day. We will leverage long-range and stealthy assets to ensure we can access any target—and quickly defeat enemy defenses to allow other forces to operate.

We’ll focus on the Expeditionary Combat Support capabilities that underpin our ability to operate anywhere. Effective, efficient logistics will be key to sustaining expeditionary forces. We will harness information technology, rapid transportation and the strengths of both the organic and industrial logistics base to ensure responsive, dependable, precise support. We’ll constantly improve the skills and discipline to protect the force in any environment. And we will use the AEF structure to reconstitute our forces when they surge, to ensure we regain and maintain the sharp edge of readiness.

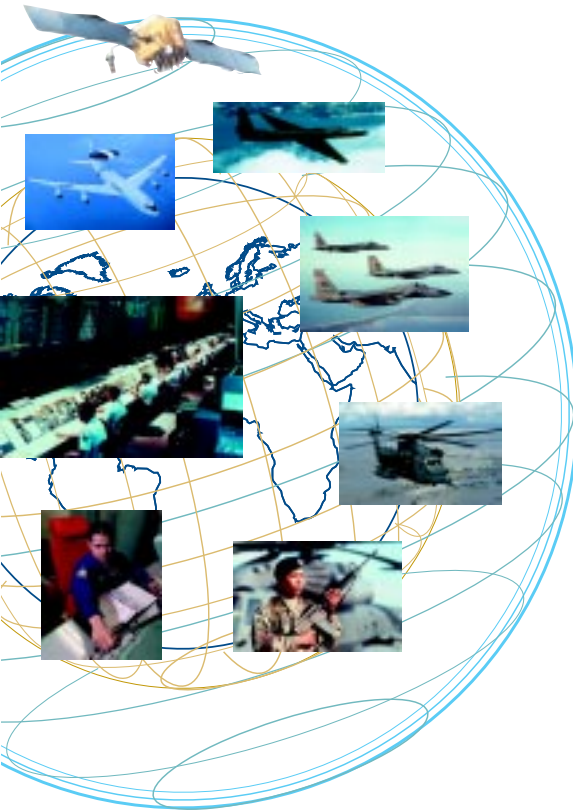
Operation ALLIED FORCE proved expeditionary operations work. Airmen deployed rapidly to more than 20 expeditionary bases. In the future, we'll be able to deploy an AEF in 48 hours—fast enough to curb many crises—and we'll be able to rapidly deploy additional AEFs to deter a major theater war.



The BUILDING BLOCKS

Our Core Competencies

Global Vigilance is an Air Force mindset...a commitment that we are always on watch across our domain.



We are America's Air Force. We are focused on the aerospace domain. Although we make no claim to exclusivity, aerospace power is our primary mission. We execute that mission by mastering our core competencies. These core competencies are built upon foundations of world class support across a wide range of disciplines—acquisition to logistics, health care to education and training.

We will develop and field the critical future capabilities to sustain our core competencies, and the command and control through which we employ them. We'll provide the full range of vigilance necessary to anticipate and deter emerging global threats. Enhanced vigilance will be essential to guard against new threats that could reach our homeland or impact America's worldwide security interests.

We will optimize the great potential of space systems to provide duration, breadth and depth of coverage, and of manned and unmanned atmospheric systems to provide focus. And we'll continue to develop the ability to control space when need be, assuring our ability to capitalize on space's advantages. That will become vital as more countries enter space and potential threats to our systems increase.

With advanced integrated aerospace capabilities, networked into a system of systems, we'll provide the ability to find, fix, assess, track, target and engage anything of military significance, anywhere. We'll transition from the ability to do that in hours to the ability to do it in minutes. Information superiority will be a vital enabler of that capability. We will continually improve our ability to make better decisions, faster—faster than an enemy can react—to assure decision dominance over adversaries.

We will continue enhancing our reach. We'll be able to achieve desired effects from whatever range we choose. Aerospace power's ability to strike directly from the United States, or from regional bases, ensures maximum flexibility. Improvements in standoff and penetration capabilities will enable us to operate with reduced vulnerabilities.

Capitalizing more fully on a set of revolutionary technologies—like stealth, advanced airborne and spaceborne sensors and highly precise all-weather munitions—we'll operate with great effectiveness in an environment that includes not just new adversarial aircraft, but advanced surface-to-air missile

systems, theater ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and a multitude of international space systems. In that challenging battlespace, our improved capabilities will provide joint forces with freedom from attack, freedom to maneuver and freedom to attack, while denying those to the enemy. We'll target with such speed and precision that we'll deny an enemy the traditional sanctuaries of night, weather and terrain. With advanced sensors and a range of precise weapons, from large to very small, we will be able to strike effectively wherever and whenever necessary with minimum collateral damage. We'll harness new ways to achieve effects, ranging from directed energy to non-lethal weapons.

We'll continue improving our strategic agility, providing the mobility to rapidly position and reposition forces in any environment, anywhere in the world. At the same time, our combat support will become more agile. We will streamline what we take with us, reducing our forward support footprint by 50 percent. We'll rely increasingly on distributed (or reach back) operations to efficiently sustain our forces, providing time-definite delivery of needed capabilities. Fast, flexible, responsive, reliable support will be the foundation of all Air Force operations.

Aerospace Superiority

The ability to control what moves through air and space...



...ensures freedom of action.

Information Superiority

The ability to control and exploit information to our nation's advantage...



...ensures decision dominance.

Global Attack

The ability to engage adversary targets anywhere, anytime...



...holds any adversary at risk.

Precision Engagement

The ability to deliver desired effects with minimal risk and collateral damage...



...denies the enemy sanctuary.

Rapid Global Mobility

The ability to rapidly position forces anywhere in the world...



...ensures unprecedented responsiveness.

Agile Combat Support

The ability to sustain flexible and efficient combat operations...



...is the foundation of success.

The APPROACH

Innovation & Adaptation

The invention of mid-air refueling revolutionized air warfare—shrinking the globe so we can reach anywhere from the US in hours.

The spirit of innovation is embodied in aviation pioneers like Chuck Yeager, who first broke the sound barrier...pioneers who transformed aviation.

Air Force pioneers like General Bernard Schriever opened up the ultimate high ground with the application of space and missile technology.



High-altitude reconnaissance blurred the line between air and space...and proved that aerospace power could be harnessed to give the warfighter unprecedented situational awareness.



The development of the precision bomb profoundly changed warfare...where it once took many aircraft to destroy one target, precision allows us to think in terms of one aircraft destroying many targets.

In the Berlin Airlift, airmen did what people said could not be done...they sustained a city of almost 3 million for a year entirely by air—a humanitarian operation that delivered the first and most enduring victory of the Cold War.

We are an innovative, adaptive force. That's not new for us. We were born of change and it remains a part of our character. We challenge ourselves after every mission, every day. What worked? What didn't? How do we become better? This kind of continuing innovation leads over time to dramatic improvement—sometimes known as transformation.

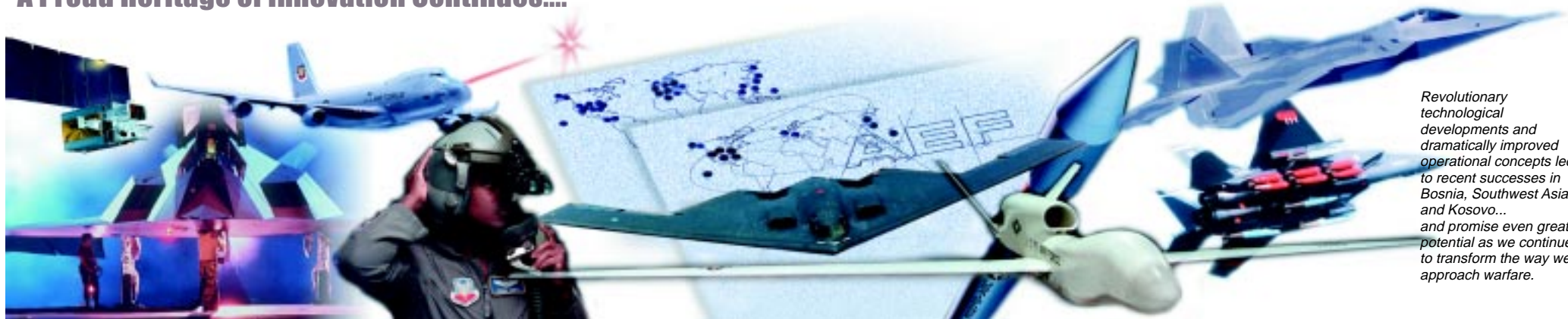
Real transformation is not the result of a one-time improvement, but a sustained and determined effort. We have been engaged in that effort for more than ten years, and it is paying off in the dramatic improvements in capability that have been on display in places like the Persian Gulf and Kosovo. Impressive as those improvements have been, they are just the beginning. We recognize that aerospace power is America's asymmetric advantage—and we're determined to ensure America keeps that advantage.

We will continue exploring both science and technology and operational concepts, identifying those ideas that offer potential for evolutionary or revolutionary increases in capability. We'll test those ideas rigorously through experimentation to determine which have practical application worthy of development.

We will ensure technological innovations continue to be accompanied by innovations in doctrine, organization and training. These intellectual innovations will prepare us to conduct and sustain decisive operations in major theater war and in other forms of conflict.

We will leverage information technology as a way to continue transforming our operational capabilities and command and control. And we'll encourage innovation in our research and battle labs, our product centers, logistics centers and warfare centers and across the force—recognizing that it is in the imagination of our people that new concepts and technologies key to future aerospace operations will be born.

A Proud Heritage of Innovation Continues....



Revolutionary technological developments and dramatically improved operational concepts led to recent successes in Bosnia, Southwest Asia and Kosovo... and promise even greater potential as we continue to transform the way we approach warfare.

The COMMITMENT Keeping the Trust

We're committed to working effectively within the Joint Team...



...and with our Coalition partners.



We are partners in our nation's security. We dominate the aerospace domain to facilitate the effectiveness of the Joint Team. Our commitment is firm—to work effectively with soldiers, sailors, marines and coast guardsmen anywhere our nation's interests and its people are at risk. And as members of the Joint Team, our commitment is equally firm to live up to the trust of our multinational partners.

We will never forget the trust the American people place in us. They count on us to protect their ideals, their security and their prosperity—and they give us their finest young men and women to sustain that effort. We will keep faith with those young men and women—America's Airmen—and they will keep faith with the nation. Together, we are America's Air Force.

We will keep faith with America's Airmen—and they will keep faith with the nation...