Airpower Starts Here

Recruit, Train, and Educate Airmen to Deliver Airpower for America

2016 AETC STRATEGIC PLAN

Forging Innovative Airmen to Power the World's Greatest Air Force

The First Command

Foreword

Airmen and Airpower Advocates:

Airpower Starts Here! In a world that is constantly changing, we in the First Command are responsible for forging innovative and agile Airmen who must adapt to these dynamic times. Tomorrow's Airmen will have to outthink and outperform our nation's adversaries. They will develop innovative solutions for future challenges because of the education and training they earned in Air Education and Training Command.

Airpower, at its core, is Airmen. Without Airmen, our weapon systems, capabilities, and equipment are mere tools. Those best trained in their employment will always prevail.

As the Air Force Core Function Lead for Education and Training, we ensure all Airmen learn the skills necessary to excel in their profession in any environment. We provide Airmen a foundation of professionalism, a deep understanding of Integrity, Service, and Excellence, and the ability to apply these values every day. We produce men and women who embody professional competence, have the desire and tools to take care of their fellow Airmen, and possess the character to overcome any obstacle.

In this ever-changing world, innovation is critical to success. We must ensure that no matter how the world changes, Airmen will rise above the challenges. In AETC we have the privilege and responsibility to recruit, train, and educate Airmen who think beyond the here-and-now and develop the skills and tools they'll need in the future.

This 2016 AETC Strategic Plan guides our way forward. It is the foundation of how we produce Airmen who implement the National Security Strategy, National Military Strategy, and Air Force Strategy. Take this document and make it the starting point of how you talk to every recruit, lead every training mission, and teach every class. Everything we do should link to this Strategic Plan. This will ensure that the Air Force maintains its greatest advantage, its peerless Airmen!

So, when I say "Airpower," I expect to hear a loud and proud, "Starts Here!" Thanks to you, the Airmen of the First Command, it always will.

Darryl L. Roberson

DARRYL L. ROBERSON
Lieutenant General, USAF
Commander

Airpower Starts Here

The Air Education and Training Command (AETC) recruits, trains, and educates the world's greatest Airmen in the world's greatest Air Force. We're the first to touch the lives of the men and women who volunteer to serve this nation as Airmen. We are The First Command!

The 2016 AETC Strategic Plan nests within the National Security Strategy, National Military Strategy, and Air Force Strategy. Levels of strategy enable us to tailor our capabilities to complement and support national objectives. This is how it fits together:

Did You Know..

There are:

- 12 AETC Installations
- 23 AETC Wings
- 60,102 Total Personnel Assigned to AETC
  (Active Duty, Air National Guard, Reserve, Civilian and Contractors)
- 1,383 Aircraft in AETC

The First Command … The Foundation of Airpower

In the past two years, the Air Force published strategic documents that describe how it will continue meeting the Air Force mission – to fly, fight, and win in air, space, and cyberspace – well into the 21st Century. In January 2013, the Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff published *A Vision for the United States Air Force*. In August of that year they released an explanation of the Air Force core missions: *Global Vigilance, Global Reach, and Global Power*. In July 2014, the Air Force Strategy, *America's Air Force: A Call to the Future*, provided the path to where we need to go for the next 30 years. In May 2015, the Air Force released the *USAF Strategic Master Plan* and its four accompanying annexes. The annexes are: Human Capital, Strategic Posture, Capabilities, and Science and Technology.

As the foundation of airpower for America, AETC performs a unique role that directly links the command to the broader Air Force mission.

In 2014, AETC emphasized its enduring contributions to airpower with revised Vision and Mission statements.

Through the four pillars of the command, we accomplish the following:

Recruiting

- Recruit the brightest of America's youth.

Technical Training

- Develop leaders from the first day Airmen begin training.
- Train initial skills in 260 Air Force specialties to more than 200,000 students annually.

Flying Training

- Leverage technology to train Airmen to fly, fight, and win in the 21st century.
- Fly approximately 300,000 training sorties (missions) every year.

Education

- Provide professional military education to more than 117,000 students annually.
- Champion the continuum of learning throughout an Airman's career.

As important as these pillars are, we can't become complacent and stagnant. The world is changing; America's Air Force has to adapt to emerging threats to our national security. Innovation and agility, anchored in professionalism and competence, are keys to the future.

Purpose of this Plan

The purpose of this plan is to establish an enduring and relevant AETC strategy for reinforcing today's capability with a deliberate approach to meet tomorrow's challenges. It provides a clear path moving forward.

The Commander's Vectors and his Immediate Focus Areas guide our daily operations. This guidance aligns with AETC Strategic Goals, which in turn support Air Force Goals.

Consistent with anticipated updates to the USAF Strategic Master Plan and annexes, we will update the AETC plan every two years, looking at near-term (0-5 years), mid-term (6-10 years), and far-term (beyond 10 years) goals. Everything we do in AETC should support this plan, and we will provide a Strategic Management Annex for assessing our progress toward meeting AETC Strategic Goals and the Commander's Immediate Focus Areas.

Strategic Environment

Looking Forward

While no one can accurately predict the future, we anticipate that it will bring new and unique challenges. There's no one as qualified to overcome these challenges as America's Airmen. To plan for the future, we begin by looking at external trends along with factors internal to the command that influence the strategic environment.

External Trends

Emerging Threats. After more than 14 years of counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations, the international landscape is changing. Russia's resurgence on the global stage and the impact of China's rise will influence national security decisions. Deterring the threat of a nuclear armed Iran, defeating the Islamic State, and supporting Afghanistan are a few near-term challenges confronting our nation. Given these wide-ranging issues, the Air Force will maintain its ability to provide airpower whether in uncontested or contested environments.

Changing Global Economy. The global economy influences political stability and the ability of countries to participate in trade and commerce. These variables contribute to a population's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their national government, which influences their international role. In the United States, global economic trends influence national decisions about how to spend money and allocate other resources, including those in the Department of Defense. Whether it's shrinking budgets or a strong national economy, we'll increasingly rely on Airmen's innovation and creativity to maximize the use of our resources.

How do these external trends affect the mission of the First Command? Here are some examples:

- The state of the national economy influences our ability to inspire volunteers to become Airmen.
- Shrinking national budgets affect our ability to recapitalize our aging trainer aircraft fleet and to update the training and education infrastructure.
- Emerging threats highlight the need to quickly adapt training and education to meet operational requirements.
- The increasing demand for high technology capabilities and operators will require a continual ability to meet this demand.

Internal Factors

Fiscal Constraints. Airpower starts here, but like every other major command, we face a limited budget that forces us to make tough decisions. We will focus on the requirements, determine where we are willing to accept risk, and allocate our resources to achieve the best results for the command. This strategic plan will help guide our decisions.

Professionalism. A strong commitment to the profession of arms promotes a mindset to enhance effectiveness. It fosters relationships that strengthen an environment of trust and enhance a culture of shared identity, dignity, and respect. Professionalism connects our core values of Integrity, Service, and Excellence with the Air Force mission to Fly, Fight, and Win. Like airpower, professionalism starts here.

We introduce and grow professionalism – forging Airmen who are the best trained and educated in the world.

Technology. Greater demands and limited resources encourage us to use technology in new and innovative ways. Whether it's Live, Virtual, Constructive training that blends actual and simulated flying, or tailored technical training and professional military education concepts, we will identify and use technology to help us succeed. Our ability to exploit technology to recruit, train, and educate the force will help guarantee our airpower advantage in the future.

Inclusiveness. We're able to produce the world's greatest Airmen because of the unique blend of people that form the AETC team. A combination of Active Duty, Guard, Reserve, Civilian, and Contractor personnel brings together different skill sets and diverse backgrounds that form a team of professionals who recruit, train, and educate Airmen to deliver airpower for America. Our inclusiveness makes us strong. We will continue relying on that strength as we move forward.

Enduring Purpose

America's Air Force is the military power of choice for Joint force commanders around the world. Emerging threats in combination with changes in the global economy forecast continued demand for airpower. With sustained demand for airpower, our foundational contribution to the Air Force will endure. As part of the world's greatest Air Force, our mission to recruit, train, and educate innovative Airmen of character to provide Global Vigilance, Global Reach, and Global Power for America will remain relevant.

Shaping Our Future

The Air Force We Need: Agile and Inclusive

The *Air Force Strategy* is clear: "We must commit to changing those things that stand between us and our ability to rapidly adapt. The Air Force must aggressively pursue a path toward institutional strategic agility." What does this mean? Agility relates to flexibility, adaptability, and responsiveness. Flexibility is a defining characteristic of airpower, while adaptability and responsiveness are hallmarks of Airmen, organizations, concepts, and weapon systems. The *Air Force Strategy's* emphasis on inclusiveness recognizes that "none of us is as smart as all of us."

Our Path

Our path begins with the Commander's Vectors. They guide daily activities and decision-making. Keeping the vectors in mind, we look to the future as we strive to meet AETC

Strategic Goals and the Commander's Immediate Focus Areas. Strategic Goals are far-term and directly connect our efforts with Air Force goals. The Commander's Immediate Focus Areas are specific issues that demand attention now and also influence tomorrow's capability.

Commander's Vectors

The four Commander's Vectors are interdependent. While described separately, they act together: Taking Care of Airmen and their Families, Innovation, and Leadership lead to Motivational Mission Accomplishment.

This goes beyond an individual Airman doing his or her job. This is about inspirational leaders, committed followers, and relentless efforts to succeed at the mission. It means:

- Attracting, engaging, inspiring, and recruiting the best talent.
- Exploring agile competency-based training models to train as we fight.
- Educating Airmen to improve critical thinking skills, diversity of thought, and innovation.
- Developing character so Airmen know the difference between a profession – the work we perform – and professionalism – the act of leading oneself.
- Building trust in subordinates and ourselves by setting the example and holding ourselves and others accountable to the standards of the profession of arms.

Fiscal Year 2015

- Basic Military Training graduates - 30,198
- Education Course Graduates - 117,724
- Training Course Graduates - 174,281
- Degrees Awarded - 27,378

It's about recruiting an Airman and retaining the family. We can't take care of our Airmen and their families unless we know them. It takes work, but the payoff is priceless – Airmen with families who understand their important roles in the AETC team and who watch out for each other. This is about strengthening a culture of resiliency. Resilient Airmen have the ability to withstand, recover, and grow in the face of stressors and changing demands. Everything we do is about people; our mission is about people!

This constantly and rapidly changing world demands we find innovative ways to meet our mission. Innovation requires experimentation and an appropriate level of risk-taking. It's the way we continuously learn and improve how we recruit, train, and educate. Empowered Airmen, supportive leadership, and honest feedback cultivate innovation.

"The story of the Air Force is a story of innovation. Airmen, using their unique perspective, have long stood for and pioneered innovative ways to win the fight while shaping the future."

-- A Vision for the United States Air Force

Innovative solutions to problems arise when Airmen have the mindset to continuously improve how we recruit, train, and educate. Many problems can be solved by using a simple, standardized process known as the Eight-Step Problem Solving model.

8 Step Problem Solving Model

1. Clarify and validate the problem.
2. Break down the problem and identify improvements.
3. Set improvement target(s).
4. Determine root cause.
5. Develop countermeasures.
6. See countermeasures through.
7. Confirm results and process.
8. Standardize successful processes.

Here are some additional tools:

- Brainstorming
- The Five W's (who, what, when, where and why)
- The Six S's (sort, straighten, shine, standardize, sustain, and safety)

Do you have a suggestion for improving the way we do business?

- iMatter is available online at: https://imatter.aetc.af.mil/SitePages/home.aspx

It all comes down to leadership – this is where motivational mission accomplishment begins and ends. Inspirational leaders create an atmosphere of enthusiasm and a drive to succeed, and they know their Airmen. Leaders are courageous, facing challenging situations and dealing with them honestly. They demonstrate and encourage ethical behavior. They promote a lifelong learning mindset through critical thinking, intellectual curiosity, and diversity of thought. They inspire and build trust with Airmen through continuous engagement.

"To become a credible leader, first you have to comprehend fully the the values, beliefs, and assumptions that drive you."
--Kouzes and Posner, the Leadership Challenge

Following the Commander's Vectors sustains our common direction. Like the four points of a compass, they keep us on course. If distracted by other influences, we use them to return to our path.

AETC Strategic Goals

The *USAF Strategic Master Plan* provides far-term goals that translate Air Force strategy into capabilities to create the Air Force of 2035. Air Force goals are associated with agility, inclusiveness, and strategic vectors. Because AETC recruits, trains, and educates Airmen – the ultimate source of airpower – the AETC Strategic Goals as well as the Commander's Vectors are directly linked to Air Force goals for agility and inclusiveness. In addition, the AETC Strategic Goals align with objectives in the Human Capital Annex.

The Air Force Strategic Vectors and associated goals in the *USAF Strategic Master Plan* identify priority areas for investment, institutional change, and operational concepts. Therefore, these enterprise-level goals will be addressed outside this Strategic Plan. As required, they will be covered in the annual Education and Training Core Function Support Plan, for which the AETC Commander, as the Core Function Lead, is responsible.

Commander's Vector	Strategic Goal	
	AETC	Air Force
Motivational Mission Accomplishment (MA)	Recruit, train, and educate tomorrow's ready and responsive diverse Airmen and leaders, adaptable to any environment. (MA1)	Agility Inclusiveness
	Integrate innovative solutions through the application of emerging ideas, tools, and technologies. (MA2)	Agility
	Strengthen relationships with Congress, think tanks, academia, industry, the Joint and interagency team, and international partners. (MA3.1)	Inclusiveness
	Institute Just-in-Time training to meet emerging multi-mission/multi-skillset requirements. (MA3.2)	Agility
Taking Care of Airmen and Families (AF)	Create mechanisms for integrating the One Air Force concept into the AETC mission. (AF1)	Inclusiveness
	Infuse Air Force core values and history into everything we do. (AF2)	Inclusiveness
	Support families as holistic military members. (AF3)	Inclusiveness
Innovation (IN)	Explore innovative, adaptable, cost effective options for recruiting, training, and education learning pathways. (IN1)	Agility Inclusiveness
Leadership (LD)	Provide Airmen with lifelong learning and leadership mindset. (LD1)	Agility

Commander's Immediate Focus Areas

The Commander's Immediate Focus Areas are listed below. The planned completion date according to near-, mid-, or far-term is indicated by a corresponding blue line.

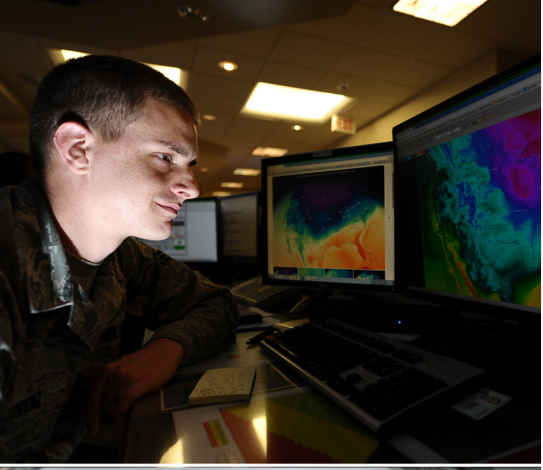
Topic	Issue	NEAR (0-5 years)	MID (6-10 years)	FAR (Beyond 10 years)
T-6 Aircraft	Correct maintenance and parts issues.			
Military Training Leaders (MTLs)	Build and develop MTL's institutional health. Correct manpower shortages to synchronize with Technical Training projected student load increases.			
Remotely Piloted Aircraft (RPA)	Transfer RPA Formal Training Unit mission from Air Combat Command to Air Education and Training Command. Introduce new efforts to attract, recruit, and double production for RPA pilots and sensor operators to meet future requirements.			
Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) / Officer Training School (OTS) Cadre	Increase professional cadre development. Correct Air Force ROTC and OTS manning shortfalls.			

Commander's Immediate Focus Areas Continued

The Commander's Immediate Focus Areas are listed below. The planned completion date according to near-, mid-, or far-term is indicated by a corresponding blue line.

Topic	Issue	NEAR (0-5 years)	MID (6-10 years)	FAR (Beyond 10 years)
Undergraduate Pilot Training	Conduct a Clean Sheet Analysis of the Flying Training enterprise. Identify and correct gaps/breaks in training and increase pilot production.			
Recruiting	Establish mid- and far-term steady state funding requirements for all recruitment activities. Complete the hub-and-spoke architecture plan and force protection initiative. Increase recruiter manning and accession production.			
Profession of Arms Center of Excellence	Infuse the AF Core Values throughout the curriculum and practices for Basic Military Training, Technical Training, Flying Training, and Education.			
F-35 Aircraft	Continue expansion of partner nations' training. Support efforts for Initial Operating Capability. Determine locations for the Foreign Military Sales training for non-partner nations.			

Commander's Immediate Focus Areas Continued

The Commander's Immediate Focus Areas are listed below. The planned completion date according to near-, mid-, or far-term is indicated by a corresponding blue line.

Topic	Issue	NEAR (0-5 years)	MID (6-10 years)	FAR (Beyond 10 years)
Battlefield Airman Program	Consolidate Battlefield Airman training in support of training enterprise modernization/recapitalization.			
International Training Requirements	Stabilize international training scheduling/utilization rates with emphasis on the Saudi Arabia F-15SA pipeline.			
Trainer Aircraft (T-X)	As the lead for T-X, educate AF Senior Leadership and ensure the acquisition program remains on track. Establish FY24+ requirements and the right balance between Live, Virtual, and Constructive training methods. Determine offload and download training efficiencies to improve training and reduce cost.