

2026 AETC
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, DATA, AND
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)
STRATEGIC GUIDANCE



THE ADVANTAGE

Cultivate Data
&
AI Literacy



Accelerate
Mission-Ready AI

Data Management



Strengthen Capabilities

THE FOUNDATION

Modernize AETC IT

Enterprise IT Investments

Secure and Connect

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COMAETC FOREWORD

To the Airmen of Air Education and Training Command:

In an era defined by strategic competition, the speed and quality of learning underpin our Air Force's success. AETC must master the digital domain to build the mission-ready force our Nation requires. This guidance is the roadmap to transform AETC's infrastructure and data into a cohesive, AI-driven learning ecosystem that accelerates force generation and delivers a decisive training advantage.

Legacy systems and data silos are no longer merely inefficiencies; they are institutional vulnerabilities. AETC will execute a modernization strategy that eliminates duplicative, under-performing and sustainment-intensive capabilities to invest in higher-yield ones. We will rationalize redundant, localized, and obsolete systems to self-fund enterprise modernization. Every future IT investment must deliver a measurable return in instructional capacity, training throughput, or mission resilience.

This directive aligns our Lines of Effort with fiscal reality to achieve four critical outcomes:

- Deliver predictive, data-driven insights that enhance instructor effectiveness and accelerate learner proficiency.
- Divest sub-par legacy systems to fund a unified, cost-efficient, cloud-native IT architecture.
- Secure the training environment against persistent and evolving network threats.
- Cultivate a digitally fluent force prepared to lead and fight in a technology-driven Air Force.

This transformation is a command-wide imperative. Every leader from wing commanders to line instructors are expected to overcome cultural resistance, enforce enterprise consolidation, and drive this shift across their organizations. Collective action will ensure the First Command remains the foundation of the Air Force's success in the decades ahead.

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CLARK J. QUINN

Lieutenant General, USAF

Commander, Air Education and Training Command

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Strategic Imperative:

AETC must fundamentally modernize its IT, data, and AI landscape to cultivate the Airmen of tomorrow. This guidance provides a blueprint for fiscally responsible transformation that equips commanders with the tools to make rapid, predictive decisions and optimize force generation at scale.

Fiscally Responsible Modernization: The Offset Strategy

AETC will self-fund next-generation capabilities by ruthlessly divesting from redundant legacy systems. This “offset-to-modernize” strategy is anchored in a strict “SaaS First” policy and an IT Investment Review Board empowered to govern enterprise spending. The goal is to reduce project overhead and legacy sustainment costs by up to 25 percent. Capital and manpower recovered will directly fund modern, cloud-native learning architectures that improve instructional delivery and training throughput.

Where higher-level mandates require sustainment of redundant or obsolete systems, AETC leadership will actively pursue waivers and exceptions, ensuring those funds are retained and reinvested within the command.

Force Structure Evolution: Building the Future Cadre

A modern digital environment requires a digitally fluent workforce. Foundational data and AI literacy will be established as core competencies integrated from Basic Military Training through Professional Military Education. AETC Data Skills Certifications and an AI talent framework utilizing Special Experience Identifiers (SEIs) will formalize expertise and career paths needed to operate, secure, and innovate within modern training pipelines.

Conclusion

AETC will execute lean, highly effective digital modernization by pairing strict financial offsets with targeted force development. The following seven Lines of Effort operationalize this vision and provide measurable actions to achieve decisive advantage in training and readiness.

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT

AETC operates at the critical intersection of force generation and rapid technological change. The speed of learning and adaptation is the decisive advantage in strategic competition. While the command has made localized progress with unit-level dashboards, early predictive analytics in flying training, these efforts have not been scaled to meet the demands of the future operating environment.

Fragmented data silos, legacy IT infrastructure, and decentralized, duplicative analytics efforts have imposed a ceiling on command capabilities. AETC remains largely trapped in a cycle of retrospective reporting rather than enabling true predictive insights that optimize training pipelines in real time. This posture is unsustainable against adversaries who are rapidly modernizing their own training enterprises.

The imperative is clear: modernize the digital foundation, establish trusted enterprise data as a strategic asset, and embed AI and advanced analytics into the core of how AETC generates combat power.

STRATEGIC LINES OF EFFORT: A UNIFIED CAMPAIGN

This guidance is executed through seven interconnected Lines of Effort organized into three tiers that reflect the Command's strategic priorities:

THE FOUNDATION

- **LOE 1:** Modernize the AETC IT Ecosystem
- **LOE 2:** Optimize Enterprise IT Investments
- **LOE 3:** Integrate and Strengthen the AETC Information Environment

THE ENGINE

- **LOE 4:** Establish Enterprise Data Management to Deliver Trusted, Decision-Ready Data
- **LOE 5:** Strengthen Data Analytics & AI Capabilities

THE ADVANTAGE

- **LOE 6:** Develop Force-Wide Data, Analytics, and AI Literacy
- **LOE 7:** Leverage AI to Accelerate Mission Readiness

Execution across all three tiers occurs concurrently. Workforce upskilling and data governance must advance in parallel with IT modernization. See Attachment 1 for specific objectives, tasks, and Measures of Effectiveness for each Line of Effort.

THE FOUNDATION

LOE 1: Modernize the AETC IT Ecosystem

Focus: Deliver a secure, high-performance digital foundation for rapid access to mission-critical services across the training enterprise.

Objectives

- 1.1. **Modernize Base Network Infrastructure:** Upgrade infrastructure to deliver secure, high-bandwidth connectivity that dynamically scales to meet PGL fluctuations, training surges, and heavy virtual learning demands.
- 1.2. **Drive Mobile Device Management (MDM) Adoption:** Mandate command-wide MDM adoption to enhance endpoint security and reduce device-related risk.
- 1.3. **Enforce "SaaS First" Acquisition:** Formalize and enforce a Software-as-a-Service First policy for all new software acquisitions, prioritizing cloud-native solutions.
- 1.4. **Accelerate SaaS Adoption & Legacy Divestment:** Reduce infrastructure overhead by accelerating SaaS adoption while actively divesting from legacy systems in a disciplined, risk-managed manner.

Why It Matters

This infrastructure is AETC's digital backbone. It must deliver the speed, reliability, and security required from the flightline to the classroom while enabling the data flows and AI workloads that will define future training effectiveness. A modernized ecosystem is the non-negotiable prerequisite for every subsequent line of effort.

Measures of Success

- 99.9% network availability and connection success rates at key training locations, validated by automated telemetry.
- 50% reduction in device-related security incidents within 24 months of MDM mandate.

- 100% of new IT investments evaluated against cloud-native SaaS alternatives prior to approval.
- Verifiable 20% reduction in legacy software sustainment costs and on-premises footprint by FY28.

LOE 2: Optimize Enterprise IT Investments

Focus: Ensure every IT investment is explicitly aligned with AETC strategy, maximizes enterprise value, and creates measurable competitive advantage in training effectiveness.

Objectives

- 2.1 **Govern Enterprise IT Investments:** Ensure 100% of IT funding is explicitly linked to AETC strategic goals via the IT Investment Review Board, with full harvesting and reallocation of divested legacy funds.
- 2.2 **Consolidate and Streamline Acquisitions:** Reduce redundant IT expenditure across the command by consolidating acquisition processes and eliminating duplicative purchases.
- 2.3 **Consolidate Program Management Offices (PMO):** Reduce project overhead costs by at least 25% **through** integration of all IT program management functions into a single enterprise PMO

Why It Matters

Every IT dollar must directly support mission outcomes. Disciplined governance, streamlined acquisitions, and centralized program management eliminate waste and accelerate the delivery of modern capabilities to the warfighter. By treating IT as a strategic asset rather than a commodity, AETC can achieve greater training effectiveness at lower cost while maintaining rigorous fiscal and cybersecurity standards.

Measures of Success

- 100% of IT investments meet strategic, fiscal, and cybersecurity governance criteria prior to funding.
- 25% reduction in redundant IT expenditures across the command within 24 months.
- 25% reduction in project overhead costs through centralized enterprise PMO.
- Active quarterly reporting against mission-based performance metrics to the IT Investment Review Board.

LOE 3: Integrate and Strengthen the AETC Information Environment

Focus: Enable a connected, secure, and interoperable IT ecosystem that delivers curated, decision-ready information on demand.

Objectives

- 3.1 **Enable Interoperability:** Publish an Enterprise Architecture (EA) framework and consolidate redundant applications to reduce integration friction and sustainment costs.
- 3.2 **Ensure Seamless Access (ICAM):** Implement robust Identity, Credential, and Access Management (ICAM) solutions for secure, role-based, least-privilege access across the enterprise.
- 3.3 **Accelerate Speed to Information (cATO):** Expedite delivery of secure software by implementing automated compliance monitoring and establishing a Continuous Authorization to Operate (cATO) pathway.

Why It Matters

A mature enterprise architecture enables agile investment, reduces costs, and improves data sharing. Streamlining cybersecurity authorizations dramatically reduces “time-to-ATO,” allowing the command

to rapidly deploy secure, mission-critical tools directly to learners while outpacing evolving cyber threats. Integration is the bridge between modern infrastructure and trusted data.

Measures of Success

- 20% reduction in system integration costs and duplicative application sustainment fees within 24 months.
- 100% integration of Tier 1 applications with enterprise ICAM.
- 40% reduction in average time required to secure an Authority to Operate (ATO) for new software.

THE ENGINE

LOE 4: Establish Enterprise Data Management to Deliver Trusted, Decision-Ready Data

Focus: Establish the governance, standards, and infrastructure required to manage data as a critical strategic asset that enables mission success.

Objectives

- 4.1 **Formalize the AETC Data Ecosystem:** Establish enterprise-wide data governance, assign organizational Data Stewards, and ensure all critical mission data is cataloged within the AETC Data Fabric.
- 4.2 **Expand Cloud and Edge Computing:** Deploy infrastructure that ensures mission-critical data is accessible in real time at the tactical edge.
- 4.3 **Implement API-First Design:** Enforce “Data by Design” principles by requiring newly procured systems to utilize API integrations and digitize data collection at the operational origin.
- 4.4 **Drive Empowerment:** Deliver decision-ready data products and technical sharing standards to increase enterprise adoption.
- 4.5 **Modernize Infrastructure:** Build a centralized data platform and engineer automated data pipelines to transform the command’s data landscape.

Why It Matters

Trusted, decision-ready data is the fuel that powers every subsequent innovation. Advanced capabilities such as AI, predictive analytics, and adaptive learning systems cannot function without a defined architecture and curated enterprise data. LOE 4 is the critical enablement layer for the entire strategy.

Measures of Success

- 100% of critical mission data explicitly cataloged and governed within the AETC Data Fabric.
- 80% of identified mission-critical data accessible in real time at the tactical edge.
- 90% of newly procured systems actively utilize API integrations for automated data exchange.
- 50% increase in adoption rate of CDO-provisioned data products via standardized APIs.
- 75% of command data automatically ingested by FY28; user satisfaction score of 8/10 or higher for the AETC data platform.

LOE 5: Strengthen Data Analytics & AI Capabilities

Focus: Leverage the enterprise data foundation and advanced analytical methods to solve operational challenges, delivering quantifiable improvements to training effectiveness and efficiency.

Objectives

- 5.1 **Refine the AI Data Foundation:** Ensure tier-one mission data is graded as “AI-Ready” based on established quality standards.
- 5.2 **Build a Standardized AI Development Environment:** Mandate that all approved AI models are developed, tested, and governed within the secure AETC sandbox.
- 5.3 **Streamline Analyst Processes:** Simplify workflows and establish clear governance to eliminate **obstacles** for enterprise analysts.
- 5.4 **Deliver High-Impact Analytic Capabilities:** Field a prioritized portfolio of decision-support tools that **improve** training effectiveness, efficiency, and throughput.

Why It Matters

This is the operational engine that translates trusted data into decisive training and decision-making advantage. Centralizing expert-level capabilities under AETC/A9 eliminates fragmented, duplicative efforts. Applying advanced analytic talent directly to the command’s most pressing mission needs guarantees measurable return on investment.

Measures of Success

- 90% of tier-one mission data graded “AI-Ready” based on established quality standards.
- 100% of approved AI models developed and tested within the secure AETC sandbox.
- 25% increase in analyst-generated products with measurable decrease in support tickets.
- Demonstrated improvement in training pipeline throughput and student competency scores, with measurable reduction in manual reporting hours.

THE ADVANTAGE

LOE 6: Develop Force-Wide Data, Analytics, and AI Literacy

Focus: Embed data literacy competencies and analytical skills across the entire force as a foundational warfighting capability.

Objectives

- 6.1 **Establish Foundational Competencies:** Integrate data and AI literacy standards into 100% of core AETC training doctrines.
- 6.2 **Embed Literacy Across Accession Points:** Ensure all BMT and Tech Training graduates demonstrate **baseline** data literacy competencies.
- 6.3 **Create Data Skills Certification Program:** Establish and integrate a formal AETC Data Skills Certification into talent management pipelines.
- 6.4 **Cultivate a Culture of Awareness:** Drive data stewardship and integrity through individual and organizational accountability.

Why It Matters

Embedding data literacy and AI fluency as core competencies on par with marksmanship equips every Airman to leverage evidence-based decision-making and human-machine teaming at the point of need. A formal certification program and cultural emphasis on data stewardship will institutionalize this intellectual edge and drive innovation across the force.

Measures of Success

- 100% of core AETC training doctrines updated with data and AI literacy standards.
- 100% of BMT and Tech Training graduates demonstrate baseline data literacy competencies.

- 10% of targeted workforce achieves AETC Data Skills Certification within 24 months.
- Measurable reduction in user-attributable data errors and policy non-compliance incidents.
- Validated increase in unit-level, data-driven process improvements and measurable reductions in time-to-train.

LOE 7: Leverage AI to Accelerate Mission Readiness

Focus: Direct the strategic exploration, adoption, and governance of emerging AI technologies to solve complex operational challenges and multiply training effectiveness.

Objectives

- 7.1 **Cultivate and Manage AI Talent:** Identify and track 100% of personnel with advanced AI skills via Special Experience Identifiers (SEIs) and integrate into talent management.
- 7.2 **Implement AI in Technical Training:** Reduce average time-to-train for technical specialties by 20% using AI-augmented and adaptive instruction.
- 7.3 **Enhance Flight Training Operations:** Increase pilot production throughput using AI-driven scheduling optimization and resource allocation.
- 7.4 **Enable Innovation at the Point of Need:** Deploy an enterprise-approved AI sandbox and low-code platform accessible to all AETC personnel to solve complex operational challenges.
- 7.5 **Establish Responsible AI Governance:** Implement AI risk management frameworks, human-in-the-loop requirements for high-stakes decisions, and ethical guidelines aligned with Department of War (DoW) principles.

Why It Matters

This LOE translates data and infrastructure investments into decisive training advantages. AI empowers the command to shift from retrospective analysis to predictive insights, optimizing training pipelines to outpace adversaries. Applying AI to scheduling, resourcing, personalized instruction, and instructor augmentation ensures high return on investment while sustaining the advantage through deliberate talent management and responsible governance.

Measures of Success

- 100% of personnel possessing advanced AI skills identified and tracked via SEIs.
- 20% reduction in average time-to-train for technical specialties utilizing AI-augmented instruction.
- Measurable increase in pilot production throughput via AI-driven scheduling and resource optimization.
- Increase in successfully deployed, unit-developed AI projects from the enterprise sandbox.
- All high-stakes AI applications operating under documented human oversight and risk management frameworks.

CROSS-CUTTING ENABLERS

Successful execution of the seven Lines of Effort requires deliberate attention to three cross-cutting enablers that span the entire strategy.

1. Offset Discipline and Fiscal Stewardship

The offset-to-modernize strategy is the financial engine of this transformation. Every leader is responsible for identifying divestment opportunities, challenging the sustainment of legacy systems, and ensuring recovered resources are reinvested in higher-yield capabilities. The IT Investment Review

Board will enforce this discipline with authority to redirect or deny funding that does not meet enterprise standards.

2. Cultural Transformation and Change Management

Technology and policy alone will not deliver results. AETC must overcome institutional inertia, parochial interests, and risk-averse culture. The I-Plan will include a comprehensive change management strategy with leadership communication plans, incentive realignment, visible quick wins, and accountability mechanisms. Wing and group commanders will be held responsible for driving adoption within their organizations.

3. Responsible and Ethical AI

As AI capabilities are deployed in training, assessment, and operational decision support, AETC will implement robust responsible AI practices. This includes bias detection and mitigation, explainability requirements for high-impact decisions, human oversight for any system affecting career progression or certification, and alignment with DoW AI ethical principles. Innovation will be pursued responsibly to maintain trust and mission effectiveness.

FROM GUIDANCE TO OUTCOMES

Strategic guidance holds value only when translated into measurable outcomes. The execution of these seven Lines of Effort represents the Command's deliberate transition from conceptual planning to decisive action. Each achieved objective will directly yield tangible mission results: a highly proficient force, a more resilient training enterprise, and a sustained decision advantage over adversaries.

While this document provides the strategic blueprint, leadership at every echelon remains accountable for executing these directives, overcoming resistance, and securing mission success. The I-Plan and quarterly governance processes will provide the mechanism for transparency, course correction, and sustained momentum.

AETC will lead the Air Force in demonstrating how a large-scale training enterprise can modernize responsibly, fiscally, and at the speed of relevance. The First Command will set the standard.

ATTACHMENT 1: TRANSITION GUIDANCE — STRATEGY - to - TASK

1. Operational Planning Mandate

This Strategic Guidance establishes overarching priorities, objectives, and desired end states. Designated offices of Primary Responsibility (OPRs) are directed to develop comprehensive AETC Data, IT, and AI Implementation Plans (I-Plan) within 90 days of publication.

The I-Plan will serve as the living operational document detailing specific key tasks, sub-tasks, phased timelines, resource requirements, risk assessments (particularly for legacy divestment), change management strategies, and granular Measures of Performance (MOPs) mapped directly to the HQ-mandated Measures of Effectiveness (MOEs) detailed in Section 3.

2. Accountability and Governance

The AETC IT Investment Review Board will serve as the primary governance body overseeing I-Plan execution. To support the Operation Assessment process, Primary OPRs will be held accountable for achieving the mandated MoEs, while actively reporting on the development and execution of their supporting MoPs.

- Overall **Strategic Lead:** AETC/A3/6
- Data & AI **Strategic Leads:** AETC Command Data Office (CDO) & AETC/A9
- Resource & Investment **Lead:** AETC/A5/8

3. Strategic Objectives and Measures of Effectiveness (MoE)

The following tables outline specific objectives for each Line of Effort and the high-level Measures of Effectiveness that will determine mission impact. Detailed tasks and supporting MoPs will be developed and documented by the OPRs within their respective I-Plans.

LOE 1: Modernize the AETC IT Ecosystem

Objective	Measure of Effectiveness (MoE)	Primary OPR
1.1 Modernize Base Network Infrastructure	99.9% network availability and connection success rates at key training locations, validated by automated telemetry.	AETC/A3/6
1.2 Drive MDM Adoption	50% reduction in device-related security incidents within 24 months.	AETC/A3/6
1.3 Enforce “SaaS First” Acquisition	100% of new IT investments evaluated against cloud-native SaaS alternatives prior to approval.	AETC/A3/6
1.4 Accelerate SaaS Adoption & Legacy Divestment	Verifiable 20% reduction in legacy software sustainment costs and on-premises footprint by FY28.	AETC/A3/6

LOE 2: Optimize Enterprise IT Investments

Objective	Measure of Effectiveness (MoE)	Primary OPR
2.1 Govern Enterprise IT Investments	100% of IT funding linked to strategic goals with full harvesting and reallocation of divested legacy funds.	AETC/A5/8

2.2 Consolidate and Streamline Acquisitions	25% reduction in redundant IT expenditures across the command within 24 months.	AETC/A5/8
2.3 Consolidate Program Management Offices	25% reduction in project overhead costs through centralized enterprise PMO structures.	AETC/A5/8

LOE 3: Integrate and Strengthen the AETC Information Environment

Objective	Measure of Effectiveness (MoE)	Primary OPR
3.1 Enable Interoperability	20% reduction in system integration costs and duplicative application sustainment fees.	AETC/A3/6
3.2 Ensure Seamless Access (ICAM)	100% integration of Tier 1 applications with enterprise ICAM.	AETC/A3/6
3.3 Accelerate Speed to Information (cATO)	40% reduction in average time required to secure an ATO for new software.	AETC/A3/6

LOE 4: Establish Enterprise Data Management to Deliver Trusted, Decision-Ready Data

Objective	Measure of Effectiveness (MoE)	Primary OPR
4.1 Formalize the AETC Data Ecosystem	100% of critical mission data explicitly cataloged and governed within the AETC Data Fabric.	AETC CDO
4.2 Expand Cloud and Edge Computing	80% of identified mission-critical data accessible in real time at the tactical edge.	AETC CDO
4.3 Implement API-First Design	90% of newly procured systems actively utilize API integrations for automated data exchange.	AETC CDO
4.4 Drive Empowerment	50% increase in adoption rate of CDO-provisioned data products via standardized APIs.	AETC CDO
4.5 Modernize Infrastructure	75% of command data automatically ingested by FY28; user satisfaction score $\geq 8/10$ for the AETC data platform.	AETC CDO

LOE 5: Strengthen Data Analytics & AI Capabilities

Objective	Measure of Effectiveness (MoE)	Primary OPR
5.1 Refine the AI Data Foundation	90% of tier-one mission data graded “AI-Ready” based on established quality standards.	AETC/A9
5.2 Build a Standardized AI Development Environment	100% of approved AI models developed and tested within the secure AETC sandbox.	AETC/A9
5.3 Streamline Analyst Processes	25% increase in analyst-generated products; measurable decrease in support tickets.	AETC/A9
5.4 Deliver High-Impact Analytic Capabilities	Demonstrated improvement in training throughput and student competency scores with measurable reduction in manual reporting hours.	AETC/A9

LOE 6: Develop Force-Wide Data, Analytics, and AI Literacy

Objective	Measure of Effectiveness (MoE)	Primary OPR
6.1 Establish Foundational Competencies	100% of core AETC training doctrines updated with data and AI literacy standards.	AETC/A3/6
6.2 Embed Literacy Across Accession Points	100% of BMT and Tech Training graduates demonstrate baseline data literacy competencies.	AETC/A3/6
6.3 Create Data Skills Certification Program	10% of targeted workforce achieves AETC Data Skills Certification within 24 months.	AETC/A3/6
6.4 Cultivate a Culture of Awareness	Measurable reduction in user-attributable data errors and policy non-compliance incidents.	AETC/A3/6

LOE 7: Leverage AI to Accelerate Mission Readiness

Objective	Measure of Effectiveness (MoE)	Primary OPR
7.1 Cultivate and Manage AI Talent	100% of personnel possessing advanced AI skills identified and tracked via SEIs.	AETC/A9
7.2 Implement AI in Technical Training	20% reduction in average time-to-train for technical specialties utilizing AI-augmented instruction.	AETC/A9
7.3 Enhance Flight Training Operations	Measurable increase in pilot production throughput via AI-driven scheduling and resource optimization.	AETC/A9
7.4 Enable Innovation at the Point of Need	Increase in successfully deployed, unit-developed AI projects from the enterprise sandbox.	AETC/A9
7.5 Establish Responsible AI Governance	All high-stakes AI applications operating under documented human oversight and risk management frameworks.	AETC/A9

ATTACHMENT 2: GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND TERMS

AETC — Air Education and Training Command

AI — Artificial Intelligence

API — Application Programming Interface

ATO / cATO — Authority to Operate / Continuous Authority to Operate

BMT — Basic Military Training

DoW — Department of War

EA — Enterprise Architecture

HAF — Headquarters Air Force

ICAM — Identity, Credential, and Access Management

IT — Information Technology

LOE — Line of Effort

MDM — Mobile Device Management

MoE / MoP — Measure of Effectiveness / Measure of Performance

OPR — Office of Primary Responsibility

PGL — Program Guidance Letter

PME — Professional Military Education

PMO — Program Management Office

ROI — Return on Investment

SaaS — Software as a Service

SEI — Special Experience Identifier

AETC Organizational Directorate Codes

- **A1:** Manpower, Personnel, and Services
- **A3:** Operations
- **A5/8:** Strategic Plans, Programs, and Requirements
- **A3/6:** Operations and Communications
- **A9:** Analysis, Assessments, and Lessons Learned
- **CDO:** Command Data Office