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AIR FORCE HANDBOOK DATED 15 FEB 2025 CHANGES

On 19 Feb 2025, the [Air Force Study Guide website](#) posted a new version of the Air Force Handbook, dated 15 February 2025. It's exactly the same as the 1 November 2024 edition except that references to diversity and inclusion were removed. Below are all the differences found between the two editions. If a chapter is not listed, it means there are no changes in that chapter. [PDF Copy](#)

Chapter 3, USAF Heritage

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

3.25. USAF Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Response

~~**Operation Warp Speed.** In 2020, Operation Warp Speed was a collaboration effort between the Department of Defense and Departments of Health and Human Services. They partnered with each other to accelerate the development, production, and distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines. The USAF responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by quickly halting non-essential operations, maximizing teleworking efforts for all Airmen, and enforcing policies such as mask mandates and social distancing. When the vaccines became available to military members it was announced that Airmen could obtain it on a volunteer basis. Since then, the Secretary of Defense has mandated vaccinations for all Service members and the USAF has continued tracking COVID-19 cases all over the world and has made every effort to keep Airmen healthy, safe and in a constant state of readiness.~~

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

3.25. USAF Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Response

DELETED

Chapter 5, Military Organization and Command

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

5.10. One Team

The USAF Total Force is one team-the USAF. It is comprised of military and civilian members (including contractors), serving within three components: the RegAF, USAF Reserve, and Air National Guard. Each component brings ~~unique~~ talents and capabilities that must be integrated to perform the USAF mission. Elevated requirements and the demands of recurring deployments of the Air National Guard and USAF Reserve over the past few decades have transformed a traditionally strategic Reserve Force

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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Chapter 7, Enlisted Force Development

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7.2. Continuum of Learning

Operational Competence. Development at the operational competence leadership level includes developing a broader understanding of the USAF perspective and the integration of diverse ~~people and~~ capabilities in operational execution. It is a time to transition from specialists to leaders with an understanding of themselves as leaders and followers, while applying an understanding of organizational and team dynamics. It is a time to lead teams by developing and inspiring others, taking care of people, ~~and taking advantage of diversity.~~ It is a time to foster collaborative relationships through building teams and coalitions, especially within large organizations, and negotiating with others, often external to the organization. The majority of enlisted Airmen operate at the tactical expertise and operational competence levels.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

7.3. Core Competencies

Occupational Competencies. Occupational competencies are required of Airmen within a specific workforce category or specialty. Occupational competencies describe technical/functional knowledge, skills, abilities, ~~and other characteristics~~ needed to perform that function's mission successfully. Refer to AFH 36-2647, *Competency Modeling*, for additional details.

Airman's Foundational Competencies. Foundational competencies prepare Airmen to operate successfully across the widest array of USAF tasks and requirements, and to adapt in a constantly changing operational environment. They are broadly applicable across (enlisted, officer, and civilian) USAF members, spanning all occupations, functions, and organizational levels, and form the framework for force development in the USAF. Foundational competencies are observable, measurable patterns of knowledge, skills, abilities, ~~and other characteristics~~ needed to perform successfully across a USAF career. The Foundational competencies are enduring and encompass attributes the USAF believes are critical to mission success. The Foundational competencies are grouped into four major categories: Developing Self, Developing Others, Developing Ideas, and Developing Organizations. Each of these competency categories is addressed in subsequent chapters of AFH 1. Refer to AFH 36-2647, *Competency Modeling*, for additional details.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

7.4. Enlisted Force Structure Framework

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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To best leverage our resources, we must have a consistent, well-defined set of expectations, standards, and growth opportunities for all Airmen, regardless of rank or specialty. The enlisted force structure fulfills a compelling need for a deliberate and common approach to force development, career progression, increased supervisory, and leadership responsibilities. The enlisted force structure provides the framework to best meet mission requirements while developing foundational and occupational competencies. It is comprised of three distinct and separate tiers, each correlating to increased levels of education, training, and experience, which build increasing levels of proficiency, leadership, and managerial responsibilities. ~~Responsibilities of enlisted tiers are outlined in detail in The Little Brown Book, The Enlisted Force Structure, Chapter 4.~~

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

7.8. Enlisted Duty Titles

When properly applied, duty titles facilitate a quick understanding of a person's role and level of responsibility. Enlisted duty titles are assigned based upon the scope of responsibility and the duties being performed. The following duty titles are the official, authorized duty titles for the enlisted force. ~~Exceptions include specific enlisted positions listed in The Little Brown Book, The Enlisted Force Structure, Chapter 4, and limited instances when a person's position or duties do not meet the established criteria.~~

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

7.10. Enlisted Force Development Construct

Talent Management. Our USAF culture should attract the right Airmen, professionals ready to represent the world's greatest USAF. Talent management begins with recruiting and is continued through training and education, where it is cultivated. The USAF's ability to continue to respond faster than our adversaries rely on the flexibility and adaptability of our Airmen. Not only do we want to be innovators, but our nation also depends on it. The way we manage talent directly impacts the way we fight and win wars. The system that is designed to manage people must be as ~~inclusive and~~ agile as we expect our Airmen to be.

Competitive Edge. The USAF as an institution recognizes the importance of an innovative, ~~inclusive,~~ and agile work environment for maintaining a competitive edge and being considered an employer of choice for our nation's best and brightest talent. Training and education are steadily becoming more aligned with capitalizing on talents of those within the USAF. USAF programs are designed to develop, manage, and execute realistic and flexible training and education to produce a highly skilled, motivated force that is capable of carrying out all tasks and functions in support of the USAF mission. Innovative Airmen power the force. To keep pace, we must continuously modernize our education and training to be relevant and responsive. The unpredictable landscape we operate in requires the USAF to continue to revisit, improve, and evolve our personnel management processes to ensure we retain our talented Airmen. While some initiatives are force- wide and others are more targeted, they all have the same objective - to increase our competitive position for top talent.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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Chapter 8, Assessments and Recognition

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

8.5. 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.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

8.9. Documenting Performance

Include at least one performance statement in each section of the evaluation being accomplished. A performance statement is a standalone sentence that must include two elements: 1) the behavior or action taken by an Airman; and 2) the impact, results, or outcome of that behavior or action.

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.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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Chapter 9, Enlisted Promotions

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

9.1. Enlisted Promotion Systems

The enlisted promotion system supports DoD Directive 1304.20, Enlisted Personnel Management System (EPMS), 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*, provides

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

9.15. Promotion Test Development

Air Education and Training Command, 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 and Technical 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.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

9.19. Promotion Evaluation Boards

The promotion evaluation board is very important because it accounts for over half the total promotion score points. Understanding how board members are selected, the evaluation board process, and those areas considered by board members, can provide valuable insight into what is required to get promoted.

Selection of Board Members. The number of promotion eligible personnel, identified by major commands and Air Force Specialty Codes (AFSC), determines the career field backgrounds of board members. Board members are divided into panels, each consisting of one Colonel and two Chief Master Sergeants. The board president is always a General Officer. Before evaluating records, board members are briefed and sworn to complete the board's task **without prejudice or partiality**. They also participate in an extensive trial-run process to ensure scoring consistency before evaluating any "live" records.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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Chapter 10, Assignments and Occupational Codes

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

10.1. Assignment Eligibility and Restrictions

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

10.1. Assignment Eligibility and Restrictions

The USAF classifies and assigns Airmen worldwide equitably to ensure a high state of readiness to accomplish the mission. The Air Force uses a coherent and logical classification system to identify valid manpower requirements, to identify and describe each USAF occupational specialty, to ensure minimum prerequisite standards are set for each specialty, and to ensure qualified Airmen are placed into each specialty. The Air Force also recognizes the importance of special assignment considerations for Airmen with exceptional needs. To the maximum extent possible, the USAF assigns a permanent change of station (PCS) to Airmen on a voluntary basis. When required, the USAF equitably distributes involuntary assignments among similarly qualified Airmen to minimize family separation or allow Airmen to tend to essential military and personal responsibilities. Air Force Reserve assignment may be full-time or part-time, and are all voluntary, thus new assignments must be applied for, particularly when pursuing promotion opportunities.

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

10.12. Air Force Enlisted Classification Directory (AFECD)

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Religious Affairs Career Field (5R). The religious affairs career field builds a culture of spiritual care and facilitates the free exercise of religion for USAF members, their families, and other authorized personnel. As experts in principles of religious diversity, accommodation, major faith group requisites, privileged communication, and religious program management, religious affairs advises leaders at all levels on religious accommodation, ethical, moral, and morale issues. As the enlisted component of religious support teams, religious affairs personnel are uniquely trained in crisis intervention to include intervention counseling in moments of crisis, response to crises, and suicide prevention/intervention. In addition, they are actively engaged and intentionally integrated into unit engagement plans to include unit meetings, commander's calls, training with the unit, and other unit activities. They are also trained in religious support to hospitals and mortuaries. Religious affairs meets the diverse needs of military communities by managing religious programs and providing administrative, financial, and facility support. They recruit, train, and organize volunteers for specific religious ministries. Religious affairs brings credit, pride, and honorable distinction to the USAF and its chaplain corps.

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

10.13. Air National Guard (ANG) Strength Management

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Recruiting Retention Manager (RRM). The recruiting retention manager (RRM) develops annual unit recruiting plans, to include goals and objectives, recruiting activities, advertising initiatives, and financial planning under the strength management team structure per NGB guidance. RRM's serve as the primary recruiting and retention on-the-job trainer for PRRs; maintain training records, conduct training for all assigned PRRs; supervise all wing PRRs; and coach assigned PRRs. RRM's review all PRR accession process actions for accuracy, ensure PRRs understand how to properly review applicant eligibility factors, and oversee applicant processing to ensure proper placement of prior and non-prior service applicants into the wing/unit. RRM's assist state recruiting and retention superintendents (RRS) in establishing local recruiting

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and retention production standards based on unit strength requirements. RRM's serve as the primary or alternate resource advisor for the operations and maintenance wing funds and provide input for execution of local advertising program funds; ensure Air Force Recruiter Information Support System-Total Force (AFRISS-TF), Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC), and Military Personnel Data System (MilPDS) are utilized to their full capabilities by all recruiting and retention personnel; manage office administration as the point of contact for all wing recruiting and retention activities; coordinate monthly with co-located RRM's and the unit manpower document monitor to identify current and projected vacancies; provide recruiting and retention statistics and analyses to the wing commander monthly or quarterly (as appropriate) in coordination with the RRS; inform RRS of recruiting and personnel force management issues and concerns and route all issues requiring NGB involvement through the RRS; establish recruiting zones for PRR's for accountability purposes and tracking per NGB guidance; ensure state RRS and NGB recruiting and retention goals are met; assign production goals to PRR's; and ensure recruiting efforts reflect NGB initiatives ~~and meet state and wing strength requirements to include mirroring the local diversity demographics~~. RRM's are responsible for inputs and updates to the recruiting and retention admin website, as required; utilizing local recruiting advertising support, develop local awareness publicity programs using media, such as direct mail, press, radio, and television presentations; managing center of influence events in accordance with NGB guidance; providing marketing support to assigned recruiters; and developing marketing information sources. RRM's plan and conduct recruiter marketing training; conduct training and evaluate PRR's oral and film presentations; serve as the liaison between unit commanders and state military officials; and assist the state RRS in the management and implementation of the local recruiting advertising support state budget.

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Chapter 14, Developing Others

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

14.1. Team Building

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 selfish goals ~~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.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

14.1. Team Building

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~~.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

14.1. Team Building

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 team spirit. A sign that a team is not performing

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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cohesively is when unhelpful 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.

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

14.4. Sources of Conflict

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 fewer 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.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

14.6. Leadership Responsibility

~~"I believe we are all moldable clay, and leaders are grown, although it takes more than having the right character traits and personality to be grown into a leader."
General Charles Q. Brown, Jr.
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff~~

Leadership is often indicated by a person's title or position of authority. But 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.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

14.19. 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

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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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.

respect and credibility and have a positive influence on others are self-awareness and empathy.

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

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Section 14E, Fosters Inclusion

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Chapter 15, Developing Self

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

15.5. Communication as a Foundational Competency

Communication (oral, written, and nonverbal) is critical throughout a 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

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

15.27. 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

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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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.

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

15.34. The Internet

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.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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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.

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Chapter 16, Developing Ideas

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

16.5. Cognitive Bias

~~In thinking about problems or challenges, we are influenced by a number of factors that shape how we interpret information, weigh its relevance, and ultimately decide upon a course of action or inaction as the situation dictates. Cognitive biases are common ways of thinking that can cause individuals to make irrational decisions in some circumstances.~~

~~Cognitive bias in our decision process results in several 'traps' decision-makers need to guard against. Some common types of cognitive bias are briefly described here.~~

~~**Overconfidence bias.** Humans are overconfident in their own judgments, often unreasonably so.~~

~~**Sunk-cost effect.** The sunk-cost effect is the tendency to escalate commitment to a course of action where there has already been a substantial investment or resources in time, money, or personnel, despite poor performance.~~

~~**Availability bias.** Availability bias is the tendency to place too much emphasis on the most immediate examples to come to mind (e.g., vivid, unusual, or emotionally charged examples).~~

~~**Confirmation bias.** Confirmation bias, the most prevalent bias. It refers to our tendency to gather and use information that confirms our existing views while downplaying or avoiding information that challenges our working hypothesis.~~

~~**Anchoring bias.** Anchoring bias is the unconscious tendency to allow an extreme reference point to distort our estimates, even when that initial reference point is completely arbitrary. In a negotiation, this bias can work in favor of the side that stakes out the initial reference point- both sides tend to use the initial position as a reference point for the solution.~~

~~**Illusory bias.** Illusory bias is the tendency to jump to conclusions about the relationship between two variables when in fact no relationship (correlation) exists.~~

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

16.5. Cognitive Bias

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Hindsight bias. Hindsight bias is the tendency to judge past events as easily predictable when in fact they were not easily foreseen. This bias limits our ability to learn from past mistakes and may affect how leaders evaluate subordinate decision-making.

Egocentrism. Egocentrism is when we attribute more credit to ourselves for group or collaborative outcome than an outside party that made significant contributions to the end result.

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

16.7. Critical Thinking in Groups

Conventional wisdom holds that groups make better decisions than individuals because they draw from a **diverse** base of talent and experience. However, Airmen must be conscious of how group decisions are made and create teams capable of applying critical thought to problems in group settings. Airmen engaged in group decision-making must consciously structure the process to encourage critical thinking to prevent momentum from simply leading the group toward conformity. There are a few things to consider when using groups for decision-making.

Who should be involved in the decision process?

In what sort of environment should the decision take place?

How will the participants communicate?

How will the leader control the decision process?

Wisdom of Groups. While keeping in mind that groupthink does exist, consider establishing groups for decision-making **diverse**, made up of members that represent many different disciplines, **perspectives**, and areas of expertise. Have the group discussions in a decentralized location, be able to effectively aggregate all the individual judgments, and seek group members who are independent, meaning not subordinate to one another.

Hindrances to Groups. Behaviors that are contradictory to working in groups, such as withholding information for personal reasons or filtering information **to accommodate a personal bias**, should not be tolerated. Another behavior that should not be allowed is selectively presenting information up the chain of command to inadvertently affect the group's efforts. In addition to this, leaders who are in positions to make decisions based on the recommendations of a group should be aware of how the group was set-up and how well it operated to have an understanding of what the decision was, as well as the dynamics of how the decision was made.

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

16.8. Groupthink

Reducing Groupthink. If groupthink is present, outside consultation may be required to get the group on the right track. In other cases, Airmen can work to minimize structural barriers to candid dialogue and reduce groupthink tendencies within their organization. Some ways to reduce groupthink include: defining roles within decision-making teams by giving responsibility to members for aspects of the analysis process and holding them accountable for representing these perspectives within the group,

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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reducing homogeneity of team composition to bring in diverse or alternative perspectives, reducing status difference and rating chain conflicts between team members that might hinder candid dialogue, and inviting healthy disagreement during the analysis process to encourage candid dialogue.

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

16.9. Influence of Dissenting Airmen

What should you do if you are part of a group, and you are concerned the group will make a bad decision? It may seem obvious, but it is important that you speak up during the group's discussions.

Groups tend to make better decisions when exposed to an opposing view because group members become more likely to see the situation from different angles and reexamine premises.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

16.10. Critical Judgment

Professor Andrew J. DuBrin, Doctor of Industrial/Organizational Psychology, stated that a high performance team demands sincere and tactful criticism among members. In the USAF, it is imperative that feedback is welcomed and encouraged among team members, as well as from a broad spectrum of sources. Receiving information is a way of giving consideration to new, different, and often better ways of performing. The willingness to accept and show appreciation for constructive criticism increases self-awareness and improves team effectiveness. By encouraging and considering critical feedback, teams can redirect focus and energy to correct problems quickly rather than allowing them to intensify. For feedback or criticism to be productive, the collective purpose for the feedback must be for all parties involved to ultimately have the same expected outcome - to improve a process or procedure that positively contributes to the mission. **Note:** Despite the possibility that feedback can be negative, it can positively contribute to the mission if it is delivered without being shrouded in bias, hidden agendas, or unhealthy competition. Honesty is important; however, brutal honesty can be offensive. Giving constructive criticism requires a focus on fixing or improving upon a problem, not focusing on problems for personal or oppositional gain.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

16.22. Empowered Airmen Culture

The USAF aims to build a culture where we identify Airmen's needs, champion their solutions, eliminate roadblocks, push back detractors, and celebrate the innovative mindset. The Airmen of today are already well-versed in innovative technologies and will propel us into the USAF of tomorrow by integrating data-centric processes at the core of our operations. Machine learning and new technologies will lead us to a new age of human-to-machine teaming by putting Airmen 'on' the loop instead of 'in' the loop. The USAF will automate where appropriate to free Airmen to do human things while letting machines do machine things.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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Maintaining our ability to adapt and innovate quickly is the greatest challenge we face in the future. ~~Employing agility and inclusiveness,~~ we are charged with a no-fail mission of providing effective Global Vigilance, Global Reach, and Global Power-today, tomorrow, and into the future. In modern war, no other nation has achieved such an asymmetric advantage. If the past two decades have taught us anything, it is that the demand for airpower is growing. The USAF will seek to increase innovation, and research where we need to maintain a competitive advantage.

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

16.23. Collaboration Fosters Innovation

Airmen at all levels participate in decision-making. The habits of mind necessary to assure we apply critical thought are something we must consciously foster. Our ~~diverse and~~ highly educated force brings to the table a wide variety of views, experiences, and abilities; providing the USAF a deep pool of talent from which to draw ideas. By using the techniques of good decision-making and fostering the development of habits of mind, we tap into that rich pool of talent.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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Chapter 20, Enforcing Military Standards

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

20.13. Political Activities

Military Criminal Investigative Organizations, Security Police, military commanders, and other military organizations and officials must report all allegations to Wing, Delta, or servicing IG office no later than 30 calendar days after receiving an allegation that an Airman or Guardian engaged in an activity prohibited under DoDI 1325.06. For Reserve Component officials, transmission is required not later than 60 calendar days. ~~The IG will ensure the reports are forwarded to the DoD Office of Inspector General, Deputy Inspector General for Diversity and Inclusion and Extremism in the Military. See DAFI 90-301 for all reporting requirements regarding such prohibited activities.~~

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

20.18. Equal Opportunity

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, 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

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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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

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).

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

20.19. 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.~~

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

20.21. 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*, 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.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

20.23. Sexual Assault Reporting Options

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 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.

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Chapter 22, Fitness and Readiness

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

22.5. BCA Roles & Responsibilities Snapshot

The BCP is a unit commander driven program. Units will adhere to the following policy guidance published on 5 January 2023 when administering the BCP:

Commanders or equivalents. Commanders or equivalents will execute, enforce, and ensure administration of BCA across the unit by providing safe facilities and equipment, necessary resources, and funding to support the BCP. Identify male and female Body Composition Managers (BCM) within units to administer BCAs and manage the IT system platform (myBodyComp) for their unit/PAS Code. Units must have at least one of each ~~gender~~; there is no grade requirement. Purchase required equipment (e.g., non-stretch tape measure in inches). Enroll Airmen initially identified during the adaptation period with a WHtR of > 0.55 into a 12-month required informal self-directed Body Composition Improvement Program (BCIP) using the DAF Form 108, Department of the Air Force Fitness Education and Intervention Processing, until publication of the new DAF Form 113, Department of the Air Force Body Composition Assessment Scorecard and Intervention Worksheet.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

22.5. BCA Roles & Responsibilities Snapshot

Body Composition Managers (BCM). BCMs will attend mandatory training before executing duties as required by the BCP. Training dates are forthcoming via MyPers messaging. Administer BCAs within the unit and only assess members of the same **gender**. BCMs will utilize members' **gender** reflected in Military Personnel Data System for BCAs. Input WHtR results into myBodyComp to include exemptions. Communicate program requirements (e.g., body composition improvement plan) for Airmen enrolled in informal and formal self-directed BCIP and assist members using the DAF Form 108 until publication of the new DAF Form 113. Provide unit BCP metrics and reports available in the myBodyComp platform to the unit commander upon request. Inform the unit commander of Airmen who do not meet program requirements (i.e., overdue BCA, not meeting BCP standards, non-compliance with program requirements).

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

22.7. Fitness Assessment Composite Score

Minimum Scores. The minimum component scores are established to ensure members test adequately in all components. Meeting the minimum score in each of the components does not constitute the minimum points required to earn a passing fitness assessment score. Scoring the minimum component values in all components will not generate enough points to earn a composite score of 75 or greater. Age and **gender**-specific fitness assessment score charts are provided in myFSS. Note: When reviewing the charts, make note of both the minimum and maximum requirements associated with specific categories to assess progress and tailor training to strive for higher scores in each of the components for overall fitness assessment results and personal fitness levels.

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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Chapter 23, Dress and Appearance

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

23.2. Dress and Personal Appearance Standards

Dress and personal appearance standards are established to ensure every Airman reflects pride in personal appearance, professionalism, and esprit de corps. Deeply rooted in our USAF heritage, our dress and appearance standards provide visible examples of self-discipline, commitment, and a willingness to set aside individuality for the betterment of the whole. As outlined in DAFI 36-2903, *Dress and Personal Appearance of United States Air Force and United States Space Force Personnel*, standards of dress and personal appearance consist of five elements: neatness, cleanliness, safety, uniformity, and military image. It is every Airman's responsibility, regardless of position or rank, to comply with and respectfully enforce the prescribed standards. Note: More restrictive standards regarding personal appearance maybe imposed on- or off-duty, ~~to adhere to cultural sensitivities~~, for those

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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performing highly visible special mission requirements, or for those in special duty positions.

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

23.3. Hair Standards

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Unauthorized Styles. Mohawk, mullet, or etched design. Other ~~cultural or~~ societal trends that reasonably appear unnatural or that display vastly different shades of natural colors, regardless of the universally applied name. Males only: dreadlocks, coils, braids, twists, designs, and/or hair extensions are not authorized; see Figure 23.1 for examples. Females only: Partially shaved sides and/or back of the head with long hair on the top (requiring the wear of a ponytail, bun, or braid) is prohibited. See Figure 23.2 for examples of unauthorized hairstyles.

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[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

23.3. Hair Standards

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Extremist tattoos/brands/body markings are those affiliated with, depicting, or symbolizing extremist philosophies, organizations, or activities. Sexually discriminative tattoos/brands/body markings are those that advocate a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person ~~based on gender~~. Racially discriminative tattoos/brands/body markings are those that advocate a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on race, ethnicity, or national origin. Religiously discriminative tattoos/brands/body markings are those that advocate a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on religion. Tattoos/brands/body markings with unauthorized content that are prejudicial to good order and discipline, or the content is of a nature that tends to bring discredit upon the DAF are prohibited both in and out of uniform. Airmen and Guardians may not cover up tattoos, brands, and/or body markings with bandages or make-up in order to comply with unauthorized content tattoo policy.

Extremist tattoos/brands/body markings are those affiliated with, depicting, or symbolizing extremist philosophies, organizations, or activities. Sexually discriminative tattoos/brands/body markings are those that advocate a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person. Racially discriminative tattoos/brands/body markings are those that advocate a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on race, ethnicity, or national origin. Religiously discriminative tattoos/brands/body markings are those that advocate a philosophy that degrades or demeans a person based on religion. Tattoos/brands/body markings with unauthorized content that are prejudicial to good order and discipline, or the content is of a nature that tends to bring discredit upon the DAF are prohibited both in and out of uniform. Airmen and Guardians may not cover up tattoos, brands, and/or body markings with bandages or make-up in order to comply with unauthorized content tattoo policy.

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

23.18. Flight Duty Uniform (FDU) and Desert Flight Duty Uniform (DFDU) Wear Guidance.

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Distinctive Clothing. For guidance on those items that are unique to the uniform and are worn only when performing the duties for which they are issued see DAFI 36-2903, Chapter ~~10~~.

Distinctive Clothing. For guidance on those items that are unique to the uniform and are worn only when performing the duties for which they are issued see DAFI 36-2903, Chapter **9**.

Functional clothing items such as parkas, protective footwear, and specialized winter flight clothing will be issued as required. MAJCOM or Installation Commanders will prescribe wear instructions in supplements to DAFI 36-2903.

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Exceptions. Organizations requiring exception to FDU/DFDU wear policy should submit an Exception to Policy request through their MAJCOM/A3 or equivalent channels to HAF Total Force Aircrew Management (AF/A3T).

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Maintain the FDU/DFDU and Flight Jacket in accordance with Technical Order (T.O.) 14P3-1- 112, *Maintenance Instructions Nomex Flight Gear, Coveralls, Gloves, Jacket*.

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Chapter 24, Military Customs and Courtesies

[Air Force Handbook 1 Nov 2024](#)

24.9. 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 DAFI 90-1202 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 8, The U.S. Air Force lyrics, for all four verses of song. ~~Recently, 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, the USAF announced all male-only references had been changed.~~

[Air Force Handbook 15 Feb 2025](#)

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