



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

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Fellow Airmen,

As I step into my new role as the 23rd Chief of Staff of the US Air Force, I do so with humility, pride, and a sense of urgency. We are a remarkable team, at our best because our family enables us to be, but we have formidable challenges ahead. However, I also realize many of the solutions to these challenges are not a mystery. We have been on a journey to address the changing character of war and the USAF role in it for some time. Standing on the shoulders of giants who have led—and are still leading—our team, we can see further and more clearly.

Nearly ten years ago, General Welsh (CSAF #20) posited “The Air Force’s ability to continue to adapt and respond faster than our potential adversaries is the greatest challenge we face over the next 30 years.” General Goldfein (CSAF #21) was a driving leadership voice behind expanding command and control to all domains—JADC2. General Brown (CSAF #22) has been, among other things, our conscience—reminding us not only of the need to accelerate, but the consequences of failure to do so . . . losing. Secretary Kendall has led the Department of the Air Force in focusing that acceleration on not only modernizing our capabilities, but the type of deep, honest assessment into all parts of our Air Force needed to execute the National Defense Strategy, and to better optimize us for the strategic environment we face.

We know this assessment is necessary but not sufficient. Together, we face a security environment which grows more complex by the day and a pacing competitor which continues to advance at an alarming rate. The attributes of the changing character of war are ones well suited for our service. Speed, tempo, range, agility, flexibility, precise lethality, and resilience have been the hallmarks of airpower since our inception. Therefore, we have a responsibility to lead and advance the integration of the joint force to achieve excellence in these characteristics. The future holds ambiguity, but our task is clear: **we must now follow through.**

Follow through—on the changes our Airmen and their families expect and deserve. Changes worthy of their commitment and sacrifice, and suited to fulfill the oaths we take on service of this Nation.

Follow through—to transform the products of our *Operational Imperatives* into actual meaningful operational capability. This requires thoughtful consideration and integration, with the ultimate aim of maximizing combat effectiveness.

Follow through—to ensure our *force presentation* and *force generation* models are aligned to the way we intend to fight as articulated in our current Air Force Future Operating Concept. This

means adapting many of our current paradigms for units of action, and orienting toward team preparation for deployment to be combat effective more rapidly.

Follow through—to define and refine the *force design* that provides the optimum size, shape, and composition of our force. This entails not only incorporation of currently unfielded classes of capabilities (e.g., collaborative combat aircraft (CCA)), but also new competencies and skill sets for which we must organize and train future Airmen.

Follow through—to adapt our *organizational structure* to optimize for great power competition. This entails applying “integrated by design” to capability development. This organizational design should focus on ensuring designated commanders can focus on training, readiness, and warfighting—with both the requisite authority and accountability. Meanwhile, other commanders will focus on supporting capability development and sustainment. However, all will be oriented on providing well trained, equipped, and ready forces for deterrence and conflict.

Follow through—on *training transformation*. This requires continued focus on learner-centric training and education to optimize individual human performance. We have demonstrated new ways to leverage technology to not only improve information absorption and application for specific skill sets, but also ways to tailor training to individual Airmen and enable them to learn and apply skills more rapidly and effectively throughout their years of service.

Follow through—on harnessing the *innovative talent* and spirit that exists in every corner of our Air Force by vectoring that energy towards solving our key Air Force challenges. We must continue to connect and empower the innovation ecosystem so the brilliance of individuals can better serve the entire Air Force team.

Most importantly, we must **follow through** on our *commitment to the success of the team*. This includes demanding and protecting an environment in which *all Airmen* can reach their full potential. It means uplifting our wingmen, while *holding ourselves accountable* for our actions. It means *removing barriers* while *maintaining and enforcing standards*. It means *all-axis leadership*—top-down, peer-to-peer, and even “leading up.”

We know each of us is serving in a place of importance in this great Air Force, and in a time of extraordinary consequence. I can think of no cause more honorable than this, and I could not be more proud to serve as your Chief of Staff. We know the challenges . . .let’s follow through and meet them head on!



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