



The Secretary's Vector

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Secretary of the Air Force

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SecAF Focus Areas

The events of the past year offered an opportunity to demonstrate the contributions of the world's finest air and space force to the joint and coalition effort to defend our nation and friends. As we adapt to a new era, we will continue to leverage those capabilities that deliver military advantages. To date, we've made great progress in applying this approach to several focus areas, which General Jumper and I refer to as "Phase One" of an Air Force-wide effort to realize Secretary Rumsfeld's vision of transformation. Some highlights included:

Strategy: We've refocused Air Force strategic thinking on core competencies, concepts of operation, and joint doctrine consistent with the asymmetric nature of warfare. We've refined our AEFs, and focused our training to support a series of missions, including homeland defense, Close Air Support (CAS), and close partnering with land, maritime, and special operations forces. We have our space programs on track; we've increased the unity of effort among the Air Force, NRO, and Intelligence Community; and we have enhanced space support to the warfighter.

People: We've adopted a new Force Development program to provide focused education, training, and experience for our officers, enlisted, and civilians across the Total Force. We've expanded our pool of deployable Airmen to 75% of our active force; and we have a renewed focus on fitness. We're adjusting our skill mix to reduce demand on stressed specialties, and we are reshaping our force to meet the new demands, while respecting and caring for our people and their families.

Efficiency: We delivered a transformed Air Force to the battlefield, with armed Predators, Global Hawk, bombers working with our Airmen on the ground to support the CAS mission, new tactics for Time Sensitive Targets, networked ISR, and advanced capabilities in our Combined Air Operations Centers. Where it makes sense, we've integrated active, guard, and reserve units as part of our Future Total Force. We've created new expeditionary organizations, such as our Contingency Response Groups and Air Component Coordination Elements. And, we consolidated the B-1 Bomber fleet, achieving its highest mission capable rate in 20 years.

Industrial Base: We transformed the F/A-22 by integrating new avionics and weapons that will make it the premier air-to-ground strike system in heavily defended areas, as well as highly effective against cruise missiles. And, we've engaged with industry to stabilize production of critical Air Force capabilities -- the F/A-22, C-17, Predators, Global Hawks, and other systems.

Throughout, we have made the point that we are one Air Force. Whether our Airmen are in strike, space, mobility, support, or special operations, we are one Air Force. As we move forward with the next phase of transformation, General Jumper, Under Secretary Teets, General Moseley and I ask you to apply your intellect, energy, and ideas to further adapt to the needs of this new era. In doing so, we ask you to remain focused on the following Air Force priorities:

Air Force Priorities

Sustain our Warfighting Readiness and Expeditionary Focus: At the height of OIF, nearly 55,000 Airmen were deployed. Our engineers, maintainers, and logisticians bedded down and sustained nearly 900 aircraft at 38 new or improved expeditionary bases. Our communications professionals established bandwidth capability eight times larger than we had in OEF. And our work continues, at home in Operation NOBLE EAGLE, in our CONUS operational and training missions, and around the globe, with more than 23,000 Airmen and over 300 aircraft deployed to Iraq, Afghanistan, the Balkans, and elsewhere. Our mobility team is swapping out 240,000 people from the combat zone; our base defenders are conducting convoys and security patrols outside the wire; our medics are treating combat casualties. In short, we remain at war and we will continue to take the fight to the enemy. Every Airman must be ready -- fit and trained when called to serve. As we complete our reconstitution and reenter the AEF cycle, every Airman must maintain an *expeditionary* mindset.

Expand our Contributions to the Joint Fight: This priority underscores the rationale behind our integration efforts -- we are all on the joint team, and our Air Force exists to produce battlefield effects. Our future is closely tied to the future of our land forces. We have done a good job making this shift. But, we can do more. It is important that our land forces continue to see us demonstrate our obvious commitment to air-to-ground support, both deep interdiction and close air support. We will be fully integrated with them, whether they are Army, Marines, SOF, or coalition forces. As we modernize, we are also committed to delivering operational space support to the combatant commanders, expanding our sensing portfolio and global mobility capabilities, reorganizing our Numbered Air Forces to enable a total focus on warfighting planning and execution, and preserving a rapid, persistent long range strike capability.

Increase our Focus on Special Operations: Special Operations in our Air Force is not a peripheral capability. We need to provide our Airmen with the advanced systems they need to continue their transformation into a single community of warfighting specialization. We intend to bring together our Battlefield Airmen -- combat controllers, pararescuemen, combat weather, TACPs, and others -- under a common training and organizational structure to strengthen the combat power they bring to the fight. Plus, we will realistically modernize our Special Operations aircraft and systems, starting with our helicopter force, and continuing with the tools essential to link air and ground capabilities.

Protect our Airmen: The threat of terrorism is real, it is persistent, and it is aimed at us. Yet, recent history has shown that terrorists prefer to attack soft, weak, or unprotected targets. Thus, we cannot let our guard down for a moment. Every Airman must be a sensor, and we must, at all times, ensure that our bases and facilities are hard targets. In addition to protecting our force, we must preserve our force. Virtually every week, General Jumper and I receive a report that an Airman was killed in a preventable accident or that a member of our Air Force family has taken his or her own life. We urge you to place a renewed focus on caring for each other, engaging early and often with those around you to prevent accidents before they occur, and to rescue those who, without our help, may make an irreversible choice to take their lives. Please make this part of your daily cross check.

I am extremely proud of your contributions to protecting America and supporting our allies around the world. Together, we've liberated two nations, and achieved significant objectives in our war on terrorism. With these priorities, and a sustained commitment to our core values of integrity, service, and excellence, we'll sustain our position as the world's premier air and space power.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James G. Roche".

James G. Roche
Secretary of the Air Force