

The Department of the Air Force (USAF) was established as part of the National Military Establishment by the National Security Act of 1947 (61 Stat. 502) and came into being on September 18, 1947. The National Security Act Amendments of 1949 redesignated the National Military Establishment as the Department of Defense, established it as an executive department, and made the Department of the Air Force a military department

within the Department of Defense (63 Stat. 578). The Department of the Air Force is separately organized under the Secretary of the Air Force. It operates under the authority, direction, and control of the Secretary of Defense (10 U.S.C. 8010). The Department consists of the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, the Air Staff, and field organizations.

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

The Office of the Secretary consists of the offices of the Under Secretary, four Assistant Secretaries, the General Counsel, the Administrative Assistant, Legislative Liaison, Public Affairs, International Affairs, Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization, the Auditor General, and the Inspector General of the Air Force. The heads of these offices are staff advisers to the Secretary for functions the Secretary assigns to them.

The Department of the Air Force is administered by the Secretary of the Air

Force, who is responsible for and has the authority to conduct all affairs of the Department. The Secretary's responsibilities include matters pertaining to organization, training, logistical support, maintenance, welfare of personnel, administrative, recruiting, research and development, and other activities prescribed by the President or the Secretary of Defense. The principal assistant to the Secretary is the Under Secretary, who acts with the full authority of the Secretary on all affairs of the Department.

AIR STAFF

The mission of the Air Staff is to furnish professional assistance to the Secretary, Under Secretary, and Assistant Secretaries of the Air Force and to the Chief of Staff in executing their responsibilities.

Structure The Air Staff is a management headquarters functional organization under the Chief of Staff, United States Air Force. Titles throughout all organizational levels reflect functions involved.

Functions and Activities Air Staff functions are specialized into well-defined areas to effect the management principles of functionality, integration, flexibility, simplicity, and decentralization. The Air Staff retains those management functions that legally cannot be delegated or decentralized,

are needed by the Secretary and Chief of Staff, are essential to respond promptly to the Secretary of Defense, or are required to determine the design and structure of the Air Force in the future.

Chief of Staff The Chief of Staff is directly responsible to the Secretary of the Air Force for the efficiency and operational readiness of the USAF. He is a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) of the Department of Defense. The Chief of Staff is assisted by the Vice Chief of Staff in all areas of responsibility except JCS. The Assistant Vice Chief of Staff assists the Chief and Vice Chief in the discharge of their duties.

Special Staff The Special Staff is an adjunct to the Chief of Staff, independent of the basic staff structure, and provides advisory and support services to both the

Chief of Staff and the Air Staff. The Special Staff consists of: the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence; the Civil Engineer; the Chief of Safety; the Chief of Security Police; the Air Force Historian; the USAF Scientist; the Chief of Air Force Reserve; the National Guard Bureau; the Scientific Advisory Board; the Judge Advocate General; the Director, Test and Evaluation; the Director, Programs and Evaluation; the Surgeon General; the Chief of Chaplains; the Director, Services; and the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force.

Deputy Chiefs of Staff The four Deputy Chiefs of Staff (Personnel; Plans and Operations; Logistics; and Command, Control, Communications, and Computers) function primarily as a coordinating level on policy matters and represent the corporate structure. Substantive functions are organized under them in homogeneous groups called directorates. Under the directorates, functions are further broken down into divisions and branches.

FIELD ORGANIZATIONS

The major commands, field operating agencies, and direct reporting units together represent the field organizations of the USAF. These are organized primarily on a functional basis in the United States and on an area basis overseas. These commands are

responsible for accomplishing certain phases of the worldwide activities of the USAF. They also are responsible for organizing, administering, equipping, and training their subordinate elements for the accomplishment of assigned missions.

Major Commands

The Continental U.S. Commands

Air Combat Command This Command is responsible for CONUS-based fighters, bombers, ICBM's, reconnaissance aircraft, C3I platforms, and some theater airlift and tankers. It provides forces directly to Unified Commands or augments theater air forces already forward deployed.

Air Force Materiel Command This Command researches, develops, tests, acquires, delivers, and logistically supports every Air Force weapon system. It has responsibilities from inception of a weapon system on the drawing board, support through its operational life, and its final disposition. It operates major product centers, logistics centers, test centers, and laboratories.

Air Mobility Command This Command is responsible for all inter-theater airlift assets and most of the tanker and theater airlift force.

Air Force Space Command This Command provides resource management and operation of assigned assets for space control, space force application, force enhancement, space support, and strategic aerospace defense. It operates space and ballistic missile systems. The Command provides a close link between its space activities and, through the U.S. Space Command, the unified command structure.

Air Force Special Operations Command This Command organizes, trains, and equips Air Force special operations forces. It is the USAF component of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM).

Air Education and Training Command This Command recruits, commissions, and trains Air Force enlisted and officer personnel. It provides basic military training, initial and advanced technical training, undergraduate and graduate flying training, and professional military