

**Commander  
Intent for  
Information Warfare**



**United States Air Force  
Air Force Reserve Command**

**1 April 2023**



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
AIR FORCE RESERVE COMMAND



MEMORANDUM FOR AIR FORCE RESERVE

FROM: AFRC/CC  
555 Robins Parkway, Suite 250  
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SUBJECT: Commander Intent for Information Warfare (IW)

1. As we take steps to transform for the future, integrating our air, space and information operations will be vital to succeeding as we compete now, enable integrated deterrence, prepare for escalation, and win wars across multiple domains.
2. My desired end state is to develop IW-minded leaders and capable units ready to inter-operate with our Total Force, joint, and coalition partners. These leaders will augment IW capabilities, while seamlessly integrated into operational and tactical planning and execution, to support the Joint Force.
3. It is critical we are ready to execute effective, multi-domain IW for, from and through the Air and Space Force to the Joint Force. I have attached my intent for Information Warfare to guide our transformation going forward.

JOHN P. HEALY  
Lieutenant General, USAF  
Commander

Attachment:  
Commander Intent for Information Warfare

## **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Our adversaries are engaged in information operations below the threshold of armed conflict that jeopardize our ability to generate air and space power. Air Force Reserve (AFR) must organize, train, and equip (OT&E) Information Warfare (IW)<sup>1</sup> forces to deter our adversaries today and be ready for future for future conflict.

**KEY THEME:** *Gaining, protecting, defending, and leveraging information advantages<sup>2</sup> in the operational environment is a precondition for air and space power.*

## **NARRATIVE**

Today, our adversaries are increasing the scope, scale, and sophistication of their malign activities in the information environment<sup>3</sup> (IE), jeopardizing our ability to generate air and space power during a high-end conflict at home and while deployed. These adversary information operations synchronize with all instruments of power to shape international institutions, opinions, and norms to their advantage. These operations include stealing intellectual property that reveal both capabilities and vulnerabilities from our Defense Industrial Base, disinformation campaigns targeting our Airmen, attempting to exploit U.S. Air and Space Force weapons systems, challenging U.S. military operations in the electromagnetic spectrum, and infiltrating the infrastructure and supply chains required to generate air and space power. Reserve Citizen Airmen possess unique skills and capabilities resident in the six principal Air Force IW capabilities: Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR), Information Operations (IO), Cyberspace Operations (CO), Electromagnetic Spectrum Operations (EMSO), Public Affairs (PA), and Weather (WX), that are vital to IW operations across the competition continuum.

IW enables USAF and USSF operations by creating and leveraging information advantages in the operational environment. **The IW capabilities AFR presents are critical to the USAF, USSF and Joint Force's operational success in competition and conflict.** Reserve Citizen Airmen are critical to IW operations at the strategic, operational, and tactical level across multiple mission sets and career fields. They provide unique skills and experience often not present in active component forces. It is imperative that this command recognize that gaining advantage in the IE is a precondition for air and space power.

## **DESIRED OUTCOME**

AFR identifies and prioritizes IW capabilities to OT&E, to meet active component requirements to enable air and space operations across the continuum of cooperation, competition, and conflict in support of Joint Forces.

## **COMMANDER'S INTENT AND ACTION**

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<sup>1</sup> Information Warfare is defined, "The employment of military capabilities in and through the information environment (IE) to deliberately affect adversary human and system behavior and preserve friendly freedom of action during cooperation, competition, and conflict. Also called IW." (AFPD 3-99 – DAF Role in Joint All-Domain Operations, 8 October 2020)

<sup>2</sup> Information Advantage is the product of situational understanding, the ability to assure and exchange information, make and communicate decisions by maintaining advantages in all domains.

<sup>3</sup> Information Environment is defined, "The aggregate of social, cultural, linguistic, psychological, technical and physical factors that affect how humans and automated systems derive meaning from, act upon, and are impacted by information, including the individuals, organizations, and systems that collect, process, disseminate, or use information." (JP 3-4, 14 Sep 2022)

Because the United States is currently engaged with our adversaries in the IE, there is an immediate strategic imperative to invest in the IW capabilities AFR provides to the Joint Force. The Air and Space Force must gain and sustain information advantage over our strategic competitors and pacing threats<sup>4</sup> to enable joint campaigning to achieve objectives in operations below the level of armed conflict. Should integrated deterrence fail, the Joint Force must be decisive in conflict. AFR enabling the Air and Space Force's core missions are crucial to success across the spectrum of conflict.<sup>5</sup> **AFR must prioritize and accelerate IW OT&E efforts in lockstep with ACC to make a difference at the tactical edge and operational-level now to prevent Air and Space Force mission failure across the competition continuum in pursuit of its operational imperatives; while AFR is taking actions to support all seven operational imperatives, Readiness to Deploy and Fight will be one of AFR's critical and priority efforts.** Successful development, design, and management of AFR IW forces are key to leveraging the unique talents of Citizen Airmen in building additional capacity to conduct USAF, USSF, and Joint IW operations. AFR must build the capacity and capability to ensure its contributions are ready to be actively integrated into IW planning for campaigning across the competition continuum and enabling deterrence across warfighting domains. Specifically, AFR staff will focus on Airmen and organizations, of all Reserve statuses, assigned or aligned to individual principal IW missions and organizations.

The AFR staff will execute two lines of effort (LOE) in conjunction with the Total Force IW efforts to understand, institutionalize, and operationalize current IW capabilities.

- **Objective 1: Ready Now! Build mission qualified IW Airmen and capabilities to develop and support planning of Total Force IW capabilities at the tactical and operational level enabling USAF and USSF missions in support of the Joint Force Commander.**
  - Tactical level: Prioritize efforts to OT&E organically-assigned IW forces and capabilities; support the integration of Reserve Airmen into mission execution and planning in support of Air Force, Space Force and joint requirements for Operations in the Information Environment.
  - Operational level: Prioritize efforts to OT&E forces assigned to *planning organizations* within AFFOR to conduct integrated IW planning and execution with the Air and Space Force for Joint Force campaigns.
- **Objective 2: Transform for the Future Build out Reserve IW capacity based on existing requirements to maximize Total Force convergence and synchronization while posturing for future needs.**
  - Tactical Level: Continue to OT&E current IW capabilities and work with MAJCOM staff and Total Force partners to prioritize current and future requirements that maximize efficiency and value while minimizing cost burdens to AFR.
    - Deliberately develop functional IW experts with relevant education, training, and expertise; optimize our ability to capture active component talent to optimize training costs.
    - Continue with and seek classic associate constructs to ensure Airmen are integrated into active component mission sets with the appropriate authorities that allow them to

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<sup>4</sup> People's Republic of China is the most consequential U.S. strategic competitor and DoD's pacing challenge, and Russia poses acute threats. (*U.S. National Defense Strategy, 2022*)

<sup>5</sup> The U.S. Air Force Core Missions are: Air Superiority, Global Strike, Rapid Global Mobility, Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance (ISR), and Command & Control (C2)

leverage IW capabilities with maximum impact.

- Operational Level: AFR Staff will coordinate with HAF A2/6 and ACC, as the DAF's lead IW MAJCOM to stay in synch with IW policy developments and mission requirements; build out future planning, programming, and budgeting to maintain strategic depth and invest in future IW capabilities as USAF leads determine their augmentation requirements. Identify best locations and organizational structures for IW missions.

***DESIRED END STATE***

AFR's desired end state is to develop IW-minded leaders and capable units ready to inter-operate with our Total Force, joint, and coalition partners. AFR's end state is effective, multi-domain IW for, from and through the Air and Space Force to the Joint Force. These leaders will augment IW capabilities, while seamlessly integrated into operational and tactical planning and execution, to support the Joint Force's ability to actively campaign to compete now, enable integrated deterrence, prepare for escalation, and win wars across multiple domains.