



# **Air Force Doctrine**

*We Produce the Future*



# The Role of Doctrine



Develop America's Airmen Today ... for Tomorrow

*At the very heart of warfare lies doctrine. It represents the central beliefs for waging war in order to achieve victory. Doctrine is of the mind, a network of faith and knowledge reinforced by experience which lays the pattern for the utilization of men, equipment, and tactics. It is the building material for strategy. It is fundamental to sound judgment.*

**~ General Curtis Emerson LeMay, 1968**



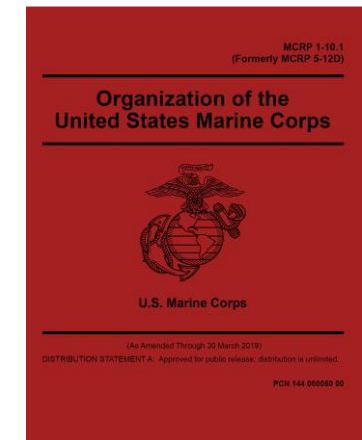
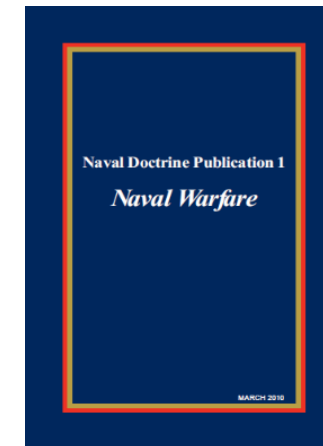
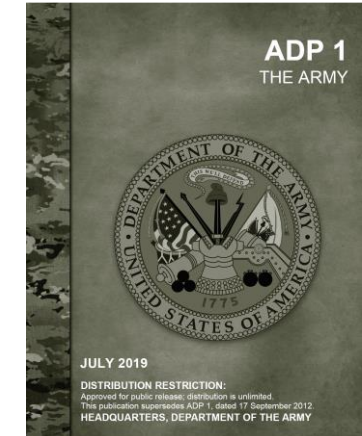
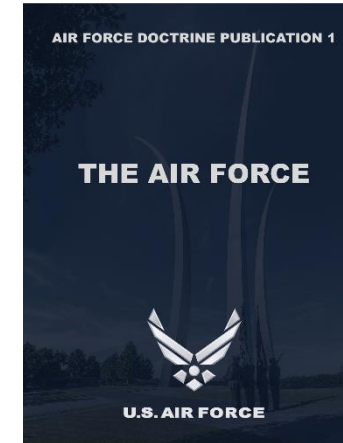


# Doctrine is ...



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- How you **organize** and **employ**
- The **agreed upon**, operationally relevant body of **best practices and principles**
- Supported by:
  - History
  - Debate and analysis
  - Exercises, wargames, contingencies
- **Official advice** (i.e., **authoritative**, but **not directive**)



**NOTE:** Information in this briefing is available in the Doctrine Primer:  
<https://www.doctrine.af.mil/Doctrine-Publications/Doctrine-Primer/>



# Value of Doctrine



*Develop America's Airmen Today ... for Tomorrow*

- **Guides how to organize, present, deploy and employ**
  - Organize based on doctrine, not ad hoc arrangements
- **The two key pillars of our doctrine are:**
  - Principle of War: **Unity of Command**
  - Tenet of Airpower: **Mission Command**
- **Airmen work for Airmen and the senior Airman works for the Joint Force Commander**
- **Normally, doctrine is the best way to proceed**
  - If we must deviate, there should be a clear and compelling operational reason



# Why Learn Doctrine?



*Develop America's Airmen Today ... for Tomorrow*

- Provides **common language** and frame of reference for discussion
  - Essential for communication
- How best to **organize and employ** airpower: operational suitability
- Impacts emerging / future capabilities
- Provides **consistent and “teachable” approach** to warfighting: first step to “think outside the box”



# Doctrine is about...



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- **Warfighting...not physics**
- **Effects...not weapon systems or platforms**
- **Using domains...not owning domains**
- **How to organize...not organizations**
- **Synergy...not segregation**
- **Integration... not just synchronization**
- **The right force ... not equal shares of the force**



# Terminology



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- **Military operations are guided by the interplay of**
  - **Policy**
  - **Strategy**
  - **Doctrine**
- **Important to understand their differences**

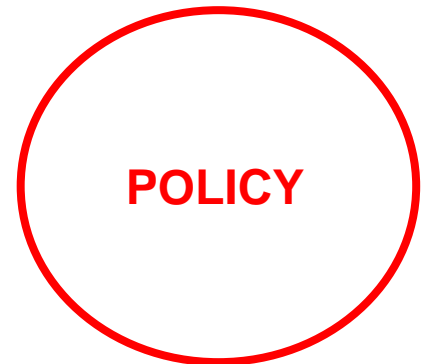


# Policy



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- **Directive** guidance stating what is to be accomplished
- **Sets overall priorities/direction**
  - Defines national interest
  - States political direction/guiding principles
- **Sets political limits**
  - Bounds the response
- **Directive guidance**
  - Determined by senior national and military leadership
  - Mandatory compliance
- **Policy sets the boundaries for doctrine and strategy**
- **Examples:**
  - **Circumstances for use of nuclear weapons**
  - **Address terrorism in a religion-neutral manner**







# Strategy



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- **Is about how to **apply available capabilities****
  - To gain desired ends
  - Using approved means
  - Within the existing environment
- **Considers:**
  - Objectives
  - Threat, politics, personalities, public opinion
  - Alliances, private volunteer organizations, nongovernmental organizations, government agencies
  - Current capabilities/doctrine
- **Example:**
  - **Campaign strategy devised to target insurgents with minimum necessary forces and reduce collateral effects; attack insurgents' legitimacy; gain support of population**



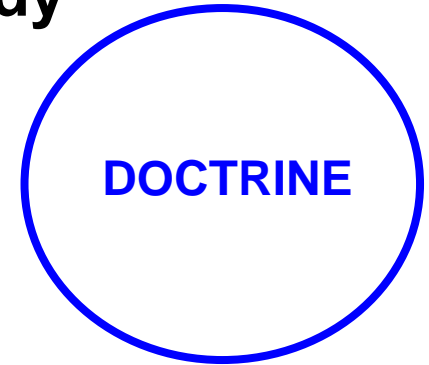


# Doctrine



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- Is about how you **organize and employ**
  - Presentation of forces
  - Command and control
  - Command relationships
- The Air Force's agreed upon, operationally relevant body of best practices and principles supported by:
  - History
  - Debate and analysis
  - Exercises, contingencies
- **Doctrine is not dogma**
- **Example:**
  - Irregular warfare doctrine developed to provide consistent guidance in any region; emphasis on decentralized planning and decision making



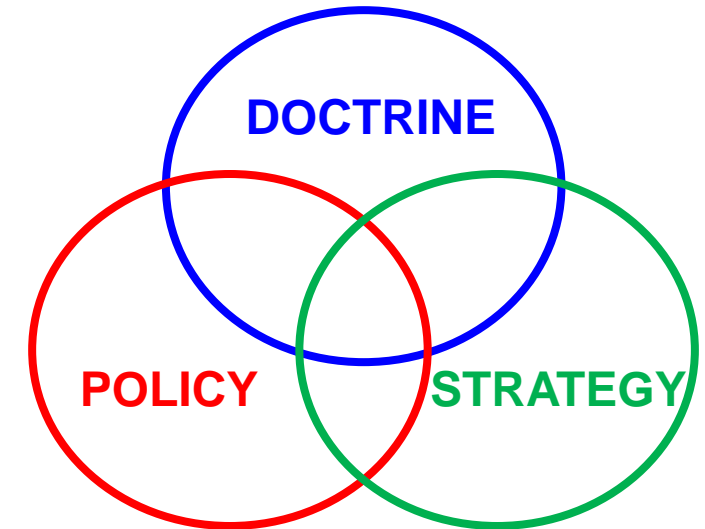


# Interplay



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- **Policy governs the use of force**
  - Shapes strategy
  - May affect application of doctrine (e.g., ROE)
    - Commanders should advise policy makers on the potential impacts of deviating from doctrine
- **Doctrine provides a knowledge base for making strategy decisions**
  - How best to apply and organize forces for a given scenario
- **Success or failure of strategy may affect policy and doctrine**





# Doctrine and Concepts



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## Concepts are:

Used to develop capabilities to meet national strategic goals

Unproven ideas that should be rigorously tested; *not authoritative*

A notion or statement expressing how something might be done

Developed to respond to a range of future challenges

Concepts should propose a clear alternative to existing doctrine

## Doctrine is:

Based on *extant* capabilities for force employment

Designed to describe operations conducted with *extant* capabilities

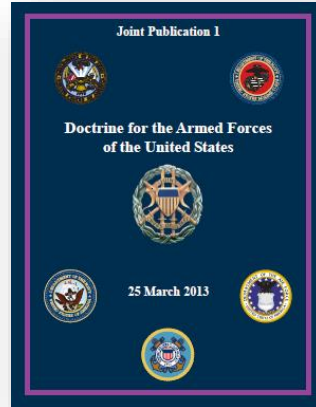
Subject to policy, treaty, and legal constraints



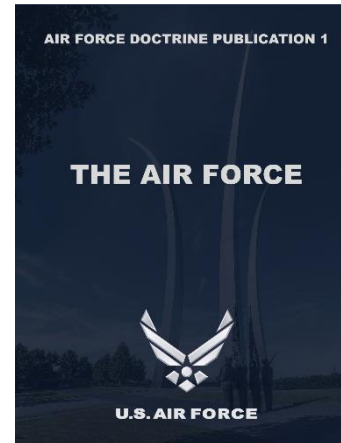
# Doctrine Development Venues



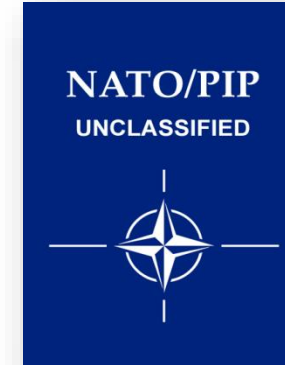
*Develop America's Airmen Today ... for Tomorrow*



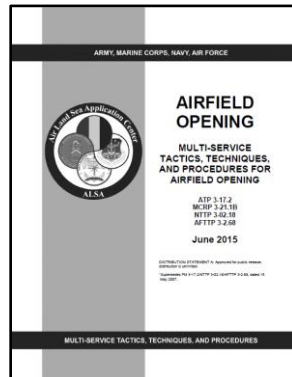
**Joint Doctrine**  
75+ publications



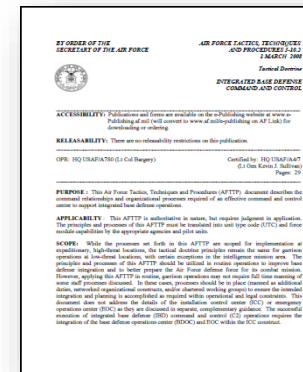
**Air Force Doctrine**  
30 AFDPs  
<https://www.doctrine.af.mil/>



**Multinational Doctrine**  
100+ publications



**Air Land Sea Space  
Application Center**  
33 publications



**Air Force TTPs**  
101 publications

*Air University: The Intellectual and Leadership Center of the Air Force*  
**Fly – Fight – Win**



# Types of Doctrine



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- **Service** - USAF, USA, USN, USMC, USSF, USCG
- **Joint**
  - Command relationships & authority
  - Guidance for use of authority
  - Fundamental principles for C2
  - Guidance for organizing forces





# Types of Doctrine



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- **Multi-Service**

- Two or more Services
- Approved by Service Reps
- Typically tactical, not high level doctrine
- Air Land Sea Space Application (ALSSA) Center



- **Multinational**

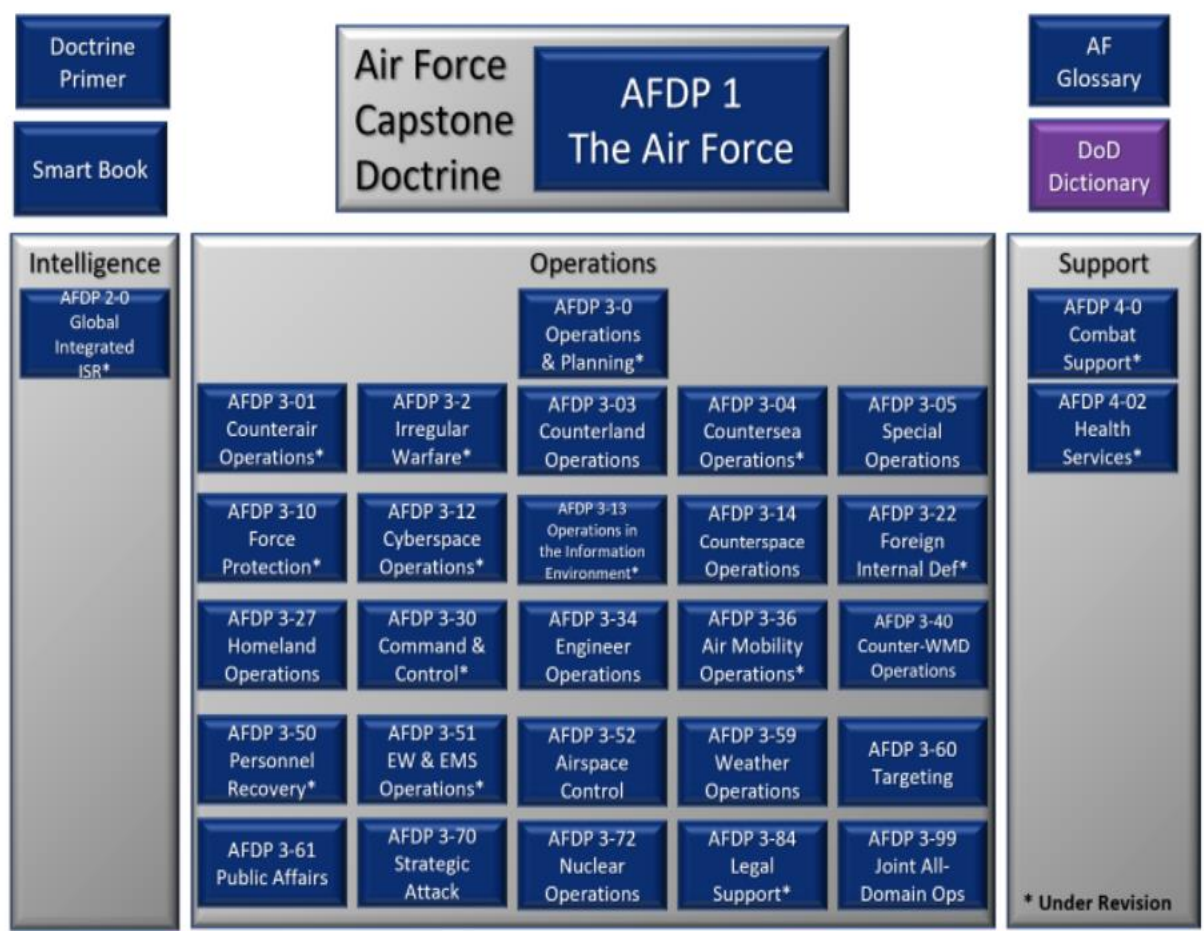
- NATO / OTAN
  - Standardization Agreements (STANAGS)
  - Allied Joint, Administrative, Tactical, and Procedural Pubs
- Air Force Interoperability Council
  - Tactical and Procedural Pubs



*Air University: The Intellectual and Leadership Center of the Air Force  
Fly – Fight – Win*

# U.S. AIR FORCE DOCTRINE

## Air Force Operational Doctrine



### PODCASTS



### DOCTRINE VIDEOS

Doctrine PlayList

Visualizing the ACE Concept  
(Click to open Video)

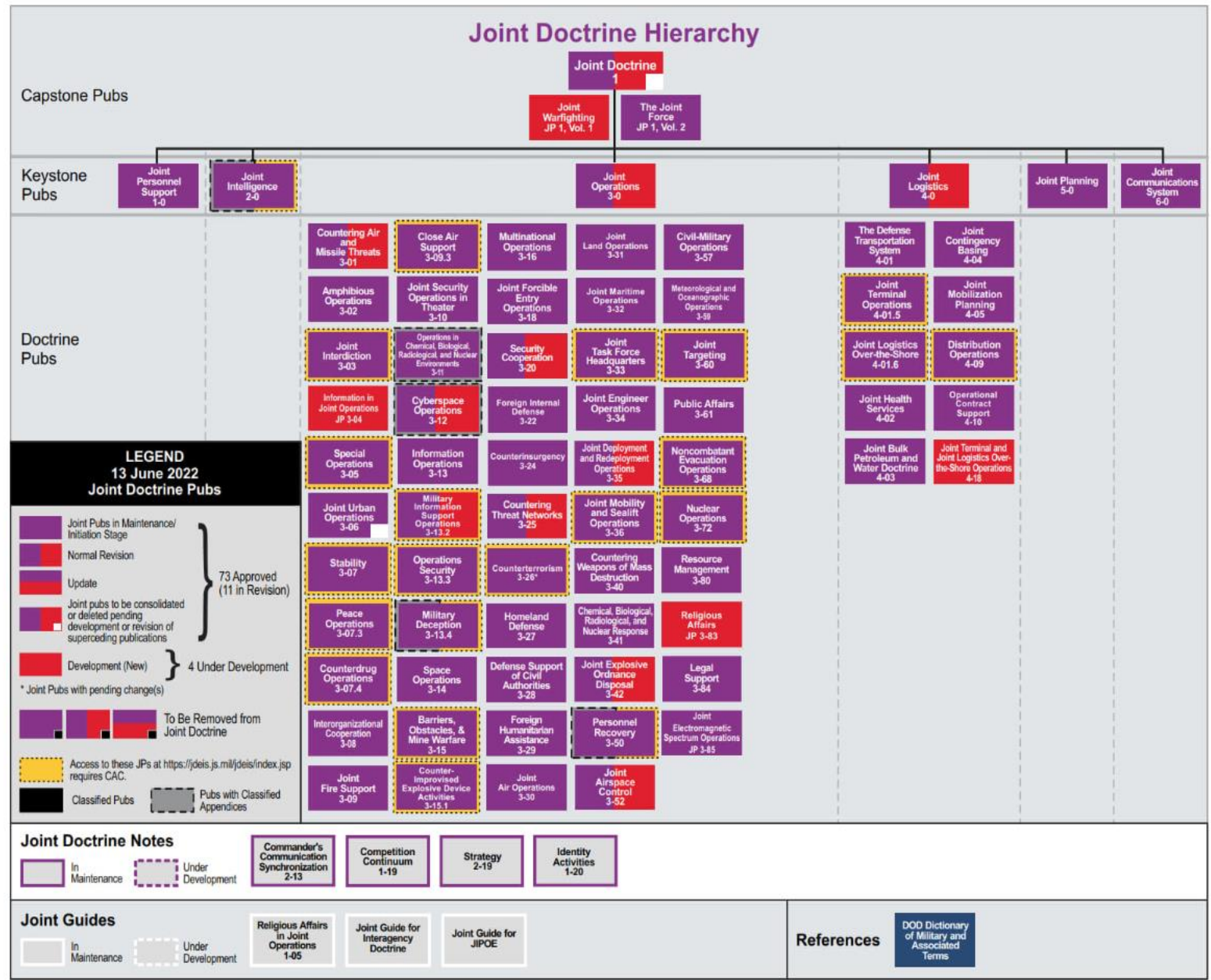


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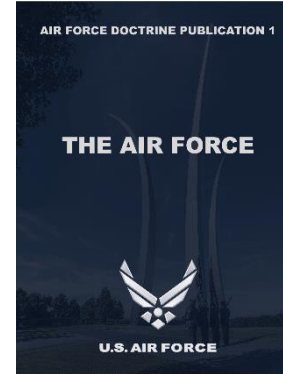
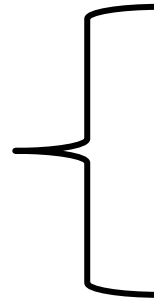


# Levels of Service Doctrine

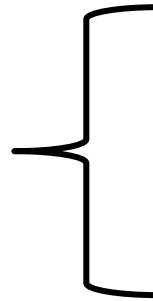


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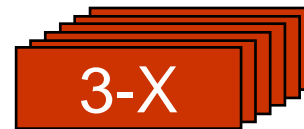
**The Air Force  
(CSAF signs)**



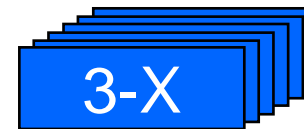
**Operational Doctrine  
(LeMay Ctr/CC signs)**



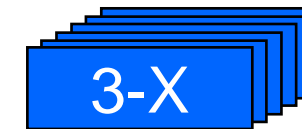
**Tactical Doctrine  
(TTP)  
(Various Signators)**



ALSSA



561 WPS



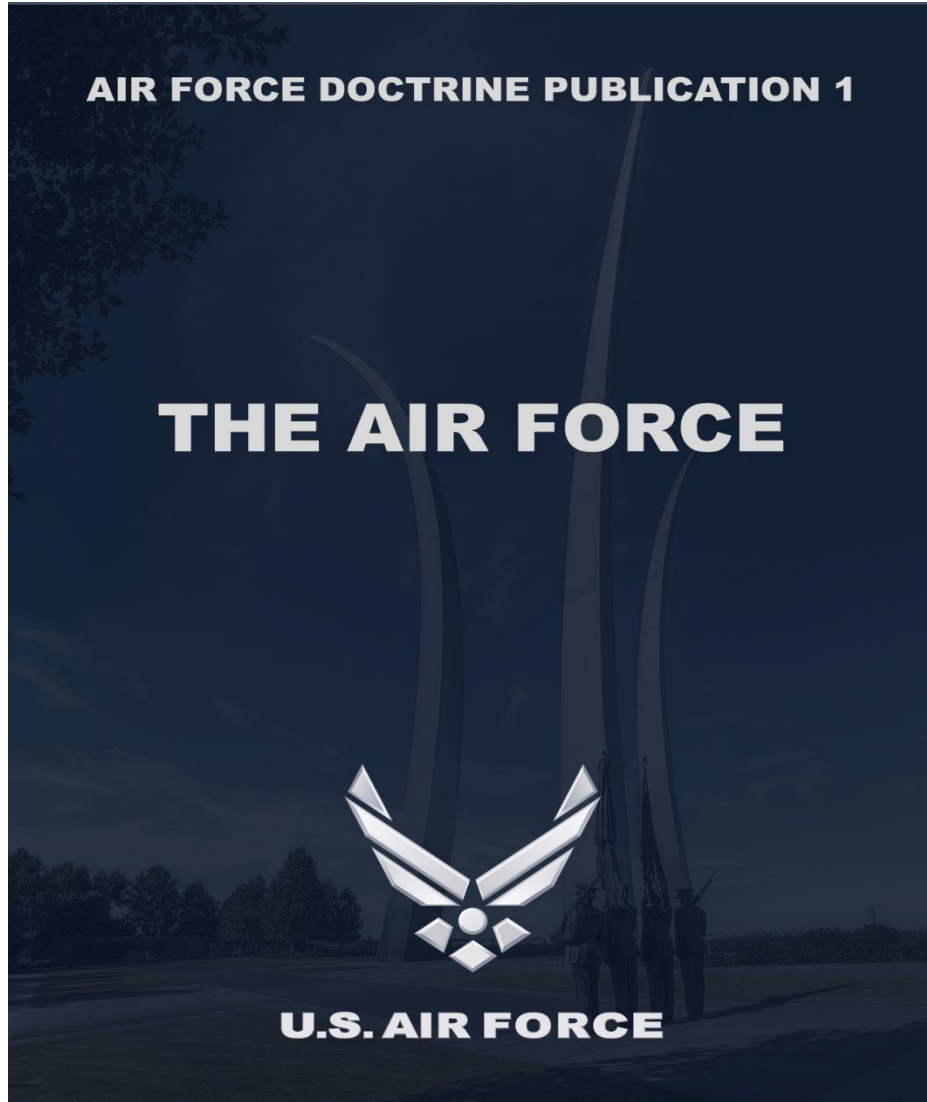
423 MTS/MAJCOM/A-Staff



# Basic Doctrine



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- Foundation of airpower doctrine
- Elemental properties of airpower
- Discussion on the nature of war
- **Slow to change** compared to other levels



# Operational Doctrine



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**AIR FORCE DOCTRINE PUBLICATION 3-0**

**OPERATIONS AND PLANNING**



**U.S. AIR FORCE**

- **Applies principles of basic doctrine to military action**
- **Guides proper organization and employment in the context of....**
  - **Distinct objectives**
  - **Force capabilities**
  - **Broad functional areas**
  - **Operational environments**
- **Provides focus for mission and task development executed at the tactical level of war**
- **Changes after deliberate internal debate**





# Tactical Doctrine



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- Describes proper employment of specific assets
- Considers:
  - Objectives
  - Conditions
- Closely associated with weapons systems and therefore changes more rapidly



# What Doctrine Provides



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- **Description of AF operations across all domains to achieve effects throughout the competition continuum**
  - Informs the **Air Component Commander and staff** on the best ways to organize, plan, support, and *fight* with Airpower
  - Must provide guidance from peace through major ops
- **Expression of the Airman's perspective in terms best suited to Airmen and airpower**
  - Airmen have a different view of operations that complements, but does not replace, other military instruments of national power
  - Should integrate with joint team and sister Services without compromising basic tenets of Airpower

***Focusing on the Air Component Commander keeps the discussion at the operational level***



# Who is Doctrine For?



*Develop America's Airmen Today ... for Tomorrow*

- Air Force doctrine should focus on the **Air Component Commander**
  - Focused at the **operational** level
  - Defines **functions** and **tasks** (common terminology)
  - Defines **Air Component Commander roles and responsibilities**
  - Explains roles and responsibilities of the **Air Component Commander's staff**
  - Explains **command relationships**
  - Provides **organizational templates**
- Because of this operational-level warfighting focus, not everything the Air Force does will be visible in doctrine
  - Not written to highlight the relevancy of career fields or specific organizations
  - Not written to justify programmatics
  - Not written to capture buzzwords or catch-phrases of the moment



**Questions?**

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