



CSAF ACTION ORDERS

**To Accelerate
Change Across
the Air Force**

DECEMBER 2020

**GENERAL CHARLES Q. BROWN, JR.
AIR FORCE CHIEF OF STAFF**

It is an honor to be your Chief of Staff and it is an exciting time to serve in our United States Air Force. On 31 August 2020, I published my strategic approach titled *Accelerate Change or Lose*. It recognizes that we live in a world that is driven by rapidly changing technology and an environment that includes aggressive and capable global competitors. Therefore, if our Nation's military is to remain the best in the world, we need to do our part to challenge the status quo and make necessary changes in our Air Force today so we are ready for tomorrow. For example, we cannot assume air dominance is guaranteed and we need to recognize good enough today will cause us to fail tomorrow. Leaders have a responsibility to provide clear guidance so that you ... our talented Airmen at all levels ... are informed and empowered to problem-solve, come up with unique solutions, and make smart recommendations and decisions. Acceleration requires harnessing energy and focusing it in a purposeful direction. The consequences of failure – and success – are profound. Only together will we succeed in accelerating the required change.

As we pursue this endeavor, I ask we remain diligent and hold each other accountable to use *Accelerate Change or Lose* in the emails we write, in the presentations we brief, and in the words we speak rather than allow it to become an overused, stale, and forgotten acronym. I came to this revelation shortly after publication that this strategic approach is bigger than an acronym which is why I want us all to embrace *Accelerate Change or Lose*. As we speak the words *Accelerate Change or Lose*, let these words remind us of the importance of this strategic approach to our future and the sense of urgency that is required.

Key areas in which we will focus our efforts to accelerate the change we need are captured in four categories: Airmen, Bureaucracy, Competition, and Design Implementation. These Action Orders were tasked to the Air Staff in September 2020, but most of the Air Force is seeing them now for the first time. You will notice the following is written in five paragraph operation order format, just as you would see as a joint warfighter. This is a journey and there will be many waypoints ahead. Let me walk you through the Action Orders.

Action Order A: Airmen

My first two trips as your Chief of Staff were to Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas and Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama ... two of just a few locations that play a critical role in training, educating, and developing our Airmen. Action Order A emphasizes the Air Force's mission to "recruit, assess, educate, train, experience, develop, and retain Airmen ... with the attributes required to compete, deter, and win in the high-end fight." One way to achieve this is to find and enhance universal skillsets that are important to all Airmen regardless of their specific Air Force Specialty Code. We need to ensure the way we place our Airmen in specific jobs offering opportunities for advancement fosters a diverse and inclusive culture promoting dignity and fairness.

Leaders owe Airmen and their families the Quality of Service and Quality of Life where all can reach their full potential. Leaders have a responsibility to provide clear guidance so our Airmen are able to make decisions at the lowest levels. This is critical so we can execute the mission even if the guidance is unclear or our ability to communicate is disrupted in a contested environment. Ultimately, Airmen must be resilient and ready to operate and succeed in the future high-end fight.

Action Order B: Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy exists in any large organization -- it is a necessity to address complex Air Force-wide decisions, but not a requirement for all of our decisions. I believe our bureaucracy requires a "tune-up" to enable us to make decisions at the speed needed in the dynamic global environment. Even with the best Airmen, poor organizational structure and bureaucratic processes can be a barrier to achieving effectiveness, driving innovation, and achieving success. Per Action Order B, the Air Force "must change its decision processes in order to make analytically-informed and timely decisions ... to enable the USAF to outpace key competitors' decision cycles." Starting with my Headquarters Air Force staff here in the Pentagon, we are streamlining decision-making, eliminating redundancies, and limiting bureaucratic layers. We are also making sure roles and responsibilities at all organizational levels (Headquarters Air Force, Major Commands, Numbered Air Forces, and Wings) are balanced correctly. Finally, we must increase speed and efficiency to effectively work with industry partners. The current acquisition process is not built to maintain our advantage in tomorrow's fight.

Action Order C: Competition

Accelerate Change or Lose ... but lose to who? While the stakes are clear enough, we must fully understand our competitors. Our National Defense Strategy acknowledges "an increasingly complex global security environment, characterized by overt challenges to the free and open international order and the re-emergence of long-term, strategic competition between nations." For example, China is re-modernizing their military and Russia seeks to disrupt the North Atlantic Treaty Organization alliance with emerging technology. We ... as our Nation's Airmen ... need to understand these competitions are at the heart of our mission and understand how each of us fit in mission execution. Action Order C states, "[T]he USAF must accelerate its understanding and mastery of these competitions to accrue warfighting advantages to the United States and U.S. allies and partners; enhance collective deterrence credibility; and drive the competitions to areas of U.S. advantages and/or competitors' weaknesses." We need to understand the competition's ambitions and understand how they may conduct future warfare. Similarly, we need to understand and capitalize on our advantages and identify areas we need to improve our capabilities. To do this, Airmen must be taught the background and context of our competitors from language and culture, to professional military education and strategy. Chinese and Russian objectives, mindset, and ways of warfare must be second nature so we can better shape the future together.

Action Order D: Design Implementation

We must learn how to be agile and adapt to the future. No matter what happens with the budget, it will require us to make tough choices. We need to continue developing a lethal and affordable force that Congress supports. Action Order D drives the Air Force to "make force structure decisions in Fall 2020 and amend force planning processes to create the fiscal flexibility required to design and field the future force we need." We need to begin by determining what we will need in the future and then make decisions now that support that vision. We need to identify systems and programs that are outdated and/or unaffordable to make way for capabilities that will make us competitive in the future high-end fight. Finally, and most importantly, we as an Air Force need to understand our future design so that we can consistently explain it to all stakeholders, to include Congress and our industry partners.

Conclusion

It is a consequential time to be in the Air Force as we have an opportunity to make decisions today to shape the Air Force we need in the future. Change is critical and speed is paramount. My strategic approach of *Accelerate Change or Lose* explains the why. These Action Orders provide the what. It's the way we address these Action Orders that will provide the how. It is all of us ... our talented Airmen ... that are key to cutting unnecessary bureaucracy, recognizing and understanding our competition, and thinking of creative ways we can reshape the design of our Air Force. The Air Force must accelerate, must change, and must prepare for the future! I'm excited to serve with you during this pivotal time.



CHARLES Q. BROWN, JR.
General, U.S. Air Force
Chief of Staff

CSAF ACTION ORDER A: AIRMEN

REF A ACCELERATE CHANGE OR LOSE

REF B 2018 NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY

REF C CSAF ACTION ORDER C (COMPETITION)

REF D CSAF ACTION ORDER D (DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION)

1. SITUATION. Per REF A-D, a competitive and dangerous strategic environment demands the Air Force reexamine its approach to competition and make difficult force structure decisions that support new operational concepts designed to deter and defeat adversaries' ways of war. The USAF must devote similar time, energy, and resources to build and retain the Airmen we need.

2. MISSION. The USAF must recruit, access, educate, train, experience, develop, and retain Airmen—officer, enlisted, and civilian—with the attributes required to compete, deter, and win in the high-end fight characterized by ambiguity and uncertainty.

3. EXECUTION.

3.A. CSAF INTENT. Headquarters, U.S. Air Force (HAF) must evaluate and update, as required, personnel and talent management systems to ensure the USAF has the Airmen we need for the high-end fight. The attributes of the Airmen we need, and how the USAF develops and manages them, may not be the same as today; Airmen must be able to adapt, innovate, and apply lessons learned to enable a culture of continuous improvement. The HAF must conduct a comprehensive, cross-disciplinary review of how to optimally develop and manage the USAF's most valuable resource.

3.A.1. PURPOSE. Per REF A, past success is no guarantee of future performance. The USAF must ensure the future force reflects the identity and attributes required for success in the high-end fight. Tomorrow's Airmen must be organized, trained, and equipped to succeed in the most challenging and lethal combat scenarios since World War II.

3.A.2. METHOD. Assess the current state of personnel and talent management systems; identify attributes of the Airmen we need; determine materiel and non-materiel options to close the gap. Synchronize culture and values-based efforts to ensure USAF organizational health.

3.A.3. KEY TASKS. Conduct mission analysis of REF A and this Action Order to ensure KEY TASKS below are sufficient to achieve the mission and CSAF INTENT of this order.

3.A.3.A. Review and identify the cross-functional attributes of the Airmen we need to implement the National Defense Strategy.

3.A.3.B. Assess ability of current personnel and talent management systems to produce and support the Airmen We Need, from recruitment through separation or retirement. Propose updates based on public and private-sector best practices to 1) ensure quality future force that meets USAF needs, and 2) makes USAF an attractive career choice for Airmen and families, and 3) leverages modern IT approaches to enhance and deliver talent management

solutions to leaders and Airmen.

3.A.3.C. Permeate diversity, inclusion, and belonging actions with this AO to cultivate and sustain both a USAF culture and environment of excellence in which all Airmen and families can reach their full potential. Diversity, inclusion, and belonging will not succeed as a standalone program.

3.A.3.D. Assess lessons from USAF response to COVID-19 pandemic. Eliminate or re-prioritize low-value activities or processes not critical to Service function and mission success. Where feasible, propose modifications to military and civilian mission execution processes to leverage expanded telework and collaborative IT tools. Capture best practices to maximize effectiveness, efficiency, and minimize redundancy.

3.A.3.E. Transform the way we learn across all facets of USAF education and training curricula, including but not limited to PME, to reflect renewed emphasis on competition and warfighting.

3.A.3.F. Ensure military (and civilian, where applicable) evaluation and promotion systems measure, incentivize, and reward Airmen who possess and positively apply the attributes identified in 3.A.3.A. above to achieve mission success.

3.A.3.G. Normalize and streamline career field management across functional areas for military (officer and enlisted) and civilian employees.

3.A.4. WAYPOINT #1. USAF Airmen have renewed focus on preparation and readiness for the high-end fight. USAF, as an institution, has shared understanding of the challenges posed by key competitors and enhanced appreciation of how USAF intends to fight. Personnel and talent management systems produce the Airmen we need and make USAF an attractive career choice for Airmen and their families. Systems incentivize pursuit and demonstration of desired Airmen attributes when executing and delivering mission success. As work related to this AO continues beyond the initial deliverables, be prepared to adapt as conditions change or new information becomes available.

3.B. COORDINATING INSTRUCTIONS.

3.B.1. Collaborate across Directorates and with MAJCOM stakeholders to develop integrated solutions for the HAF.

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS.

4.A. DELIVERABLES. Mission analysis brief for decision at CORONA in October 2020, including an action plan and proposed first steps.

5. COMMAND AND CONTROL.

5.A. COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS.

5.A.1. A1 is the designated OPR and supported Directorate for this order. DS will track OPR progress and schedule IPRs with CSAF and other senior leaders as required. All other Air Staff entities and MAJCOMs are supporting. DIRLAUTH approved.

5.B. COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMPUTER SYSTEMS (C4).

5.B.1. All deliverables associated with this order will be controlled and disseminated at the appropriate classification level.

CSAF ACTION ORDER B: ADDRESSING BUREAUCRACY

REF A ACCELERATE CHANGE OR LOSE

REF B 2018 NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY

1. SITUATION. Per REF B, the USAF must reexamine its decision processes and organizational scheme in order to compete effectively and win the high-end fight. Current processes are too slow, allow “soft vetoes” without accountability, incentivize counterproductive inter-MAJCOM and inter-functional fighting, and too often deliver sub-optimized solutions for the sake of compromise and consensus. The current USAF structure is optimized for an obsolete strategic context and must be updated to compete, deter, and win the high-end fight.

2. MISSION. The USAF must change its decision processes in order to make analytically-informed and timely decisions, accepting anticipated ambiguity or uncertainty, to enable the USAF to outpace key competitors’ decision cycles. Starting with the HAF, the USAF must restructure in order to maximize decision effectiveness and efficiency, realign internal USAF roles and responsibilities, and rebalance manpower to allow healthy organizations at all echelons of command.

3. EXECUTION.

3.A. CSAF INTENT. The HAF must amend decision processes to ensure timely and consistent decisions in an increasingly-competitive security environment. In coming years, the USAF must also restructure to better support emerging force generation and force presentation models, incentivize enterprise-wide perspectives and decision making, and provide for a sustainable workload for Airmen and their families.

3.A.1. PURPOSE. Adjust decision processes and structures to more effectively organize, train, and equip the USAF to compete, deter, and win the high-end fight that will be characterized by ambiguity and uncertainty. Preserve decision space for CSAF to influence the development of options and decisions while there is still time and the potential to do so.

3.A.2. METHOD. Focus initially on HAF decision processes and structures. Leverage POM22 rebuilds to experiment with ways to streamline decision-making, bring MAJCOM/CCs into the process earlier, and provide CSAF more space to influence options and decisions. Examine HAF structure first, then propose USAF-wide structural options.

3.A.3. KEY TASKS. Conduct mission analysis of REF A and this Action Order to ensure KEY TASKS below are sufficient to achieve the mission and CSAF INTENT of this order.

3.A.3.A. Determine which USAF decisions require enterprise-wide perspective. Ensure decision processes incentivize and enable enterprise-wide decision-making and collaboration.

3.A.3.B. Map HAF decision processes and organizations to eliminate redundancies. Each map must describe organizational or process inputs, outputs, and value added to USAF.

3.A.3.C. Accelerate communication within HAF staff, limit bureaucratic layers that add little value, and improve cross-Directorate collaboration and integration. Propose new HAF processes and supporting organizational

structure NLT CORONA in October 2020.

3.A.3.D. Assess current division of roles and responsibilities between HAF and MAJCOMs. Develop alternatives for consideration at CORONA in Fall 2020 with an emphasis on increasing enterprise-wide roles and responsibilities at 4-star level. BPT discuss alternative MAJCOM structures in support of proposed changes to HAF/MAJCOM roles and responsibilities.

3.A.4. WAYPOINT #1. USAF processes and structure prepare USAF to compete, deter, and win the high-end fight, accounting for ambiguity and uncertainty. Roles and responsibilities are clarified and deconflicted between HAF and MAJCOMs, eliminating redundancies. Airmen serve at a sustainable pace in manpower-healthy organizations with direct linkages to how USAF generates and presents forces to the Joint Force. As work related to this AO continues beyond the initial deliverables, be prepared to adapt as conditions change or new information becomes available.

3.B. COORDINATING INSTRUCTIONS.

3.B.1. Collaborate across Directorates and with MAJCOM stakeholders to develop integrated solutions for the HAF.

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS.

4.A. DELIVERABLES. Mission analysis brief for decision at CORONA in October 2020, including an action plan and proposed first steps.

5. COMMAND AND CONTROL.

5.A. COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS.

5.A.1. A5/7 is the designated OPR and supported Directorate for this order. DS will track OPR progress and schedule IPRs with CSAF and other senior leaders as required. All other Air Staff entities and MAJCOMs are supporting. DIRLAUTH approved.

5.B. COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMPUTER SYSTEMS (C4).

5.B.1. All deliverables associated with this order will be controlled and disseminated at the appropriate classification level.

CSAF ACTION ORDER C: COMPETITION

REF A ACCELERATE CHANGE OR LOSE

REF B 2018 NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY

1. SITUATION. The United States is engaged in long-term strategic competitions with the People's Republic of China (PRC) and the Russian Federation (RF). Per REF A, the USAF must take immediate action to compete more effectively with these two actors with an initial focus on China. While competition affects all aspects of the defense enterprise, the implications of competing effectively, or not, are most significant to the USAF.

2. MISSION. Per REF A, the USAF must accelerate its understanding and mastery of these competitions to accrue warfighting advantages to the United States and U.S. allies and partners; enhance collective deterrence credibility; and drive the competitions to areas of U.S. advantages and/or competitors' weaknesses.

3. EXECUTION.

3.A. CSAF INTENT. HAF must improve its competitive approach. Renewed emphasis on competitive thinking and comparative analysis is required across all HAF elements and decision processes in order to advance the USAF's ability to successfully out-compete potential adversaries.

3.A.1. PURPOSE. In any joint warfighting scenario, the USAF will have a pivotal role responding to conflict with either China or Russia. Effectiveness in deterring or prevailing in high-end conflict depends upon actions taken in peacetime competition, particularly given the time required to affect structural change in developing and fielding air forces.

3.A.2. METHOD. Define the nature of the competition and strategic environment; identify adversaries' objectives, strengths and weaknesses, and ways of warfare; identify USAF objectives, strengths and weaknesses, and ways of warfare; and align USAF decision and support processes to apply comparative analysis and risk assessments to key USAF decisions. Focus efforts on China as the primary competitor, then Russia.

3.A.3. KEY TASKS. Conduct mission analysis of REF A and this Action Order to ensure KEY TASKS below are sufficient to achieve the mission and CSAF INTENT of this order.

3.A.3.A. Define the USAF-specific elements of the military-technological competition that underpins the geopolitical competition between the United States and China. The definition must reflect the key operational challenges Airmen must solve (see REF B).

3.A.3.B. Conduct cross-disciplinary, comparative analysis to assess current USAF standing in the competition and identify trends. Increase intelligence interactions throughout program and operational concept development, with specific focus on the competitive move/counter-move/counter-counter-move cycle to identify critical USAF and competitors' strengths, vulnerabilities, interdependencies, and opportunities.

3.A.3.C. Informed by 3.A.3.B. above, identify USAF competitive aim points and develop plans and supporting strategies to drive the competition towards areas of U.S. advantages and/or competitors' weaknesses.

3.A.3.D. Develop future force design and operating concepts to defeat the adversaries' ways of war (e.g., informationalized warfare, systems confrontation warfare, and systems destruction warfare). Develop solutions to

bridge current force structure to future design through novel operating concepts and adaptation.

3.A.3.E. ICW with industry partners, develop and resource a viable plan for operations, sustainment, and maintenance in a high-end warfight. Consider supply chain vulnerability, mobilization and surge capacity, and combat replenishment in potentially-protracted campaigns.

3.A.3.F. Ensure accessions programs, professional military education (officer and enlisted), and civilian education and professional development courses educate and train Airmen for competition, including the strategy, force design, and warfighting approaches of key adversaries.

3.A.3.G. Integrate homeland defense with nuclear, conventional, and unconventional deterrence concepts.

3.A.4. WAYPOINT #1. USAF able to assess its position in, and adapt to, the changing elements of the competitions over time. Airmen across the force understand that China is the pacing competitor and that the USAF has a unique role in responding to Chinese aggression in the event of conflict. USAF decision processes reflect a competitive mindset and incorporate the highest-fidelity intelligence available in order to influence USAF investments and operational concepts. As work related to this AO continues beyond the initial deliverables, be prepared to adapt as conditions change or new information becomes available.

3.B. COORDINATING INSTRUCTIONS.

3.B.1. Collaborate across Directorates and with MAJCOM stakeholders to develop integrated solutions for the HAF.

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS.

4.A. DELIVERABLES. Mission analysis brief for decision at CORONA in October 2020, including an action plan and proposed first steps.

5. COMMAND AND CONTROL.

5.A. COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS.

5.A.1. A5/7 is the designated OPR and supported Directorate for this order. DS will track OPR progress and schedule IPRs with CSAF and other senior leaders as required. All other Air Staff entities and MAJCOMs are supporting. DIRLAUTH approved.

5.B. COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATIONS AND COMPUTER SYSTEMS (C4).

5.B.1. All deliverables associated with this order will be controlled and disseminated at the appropriate classification level, SECRET minimum.

CSAF ACTION ORDER D: DESIGN IMPLEMENTATION: USAF FORCE STRUCTURE

REF A ACCELERATE CHANGE OR LOSE

REF B 2018 NATIONAL DEFENSE STRATEGY

1. SITUATION. Per REF A, budget pressures will require difficult force structure decisions to ensure a lethal, survivable, sustainable, and affordable force. Increasing budget pressures are due to growing costs of sustainment for current and aging force structure, continuous combat operations, and long-deferred recapitalization and modernization. Immediate action is required.

2. MISSION. The USAF, ICW key stakeholders, must make force structure decisions in Fall CY20 and amend force planning processes to create the fiscal flexibility required to design and field the future force we need while managing operational risk.

3. EXECUTION.

3.A. CSAF INTENT. HAF must accelerate the transition from the force we have to the force required for a future high-end fight, focusing on China then Russia, at acceptable levels of risk to mission, force, and security, within USAF budget constraints.

3.A.1. PURPOSE. Develop an affordable, analytically defensible, and congressionally supported force structure capable of winning the future high-end fight while maintaining sufficient capacity in homeland defense and understanding capability application and associated risk to other National Defense Strategy threats.

3.A.2. METHOD. Focus analysis and proposals first on missions and capabilities vice platforms. Prioritize current and future programs based on their relevance to the high-end fight, consistency with emerging USAF operating concepts, total system affordability across the lifecycle, and relevance to defeating competitors' warfighting strategies.

3.A.3. KEY TASKS. Conduct mission analysis of REF A and this Action Order to ensure KEY TASKS below are sufficient to achieve the mission and CSAF INTENT of this order.

3.A.3.A. Determine the capability and capacity requirements for the USAF force structure needed in 2030 and beyond, informed by comprehensive understanding of competitors' capabilities, strategies, and operational concepts. Incorporate emerging USAF operational concepts and force generation and force presentation models.

3.A.3.B. Determine the min-viable force structure to provide required capability and capacity to the combatant commands at moderate risk as the force transitions from 2020 to 2030.

3.A.3.C. Identify underperforming and/or unaffordable programs (both fielded and planned, new starts, and modernization programs) with limited utility to, or timeliness for, a high-end fight for possible termination, deferral, or restructuring.

3.A.3.D. Develop and execute HAF-level decision processes that translate CSAF direction into a balanced program and a balanced long-range plan. ICW SAF/AQ, propose USAF-standard funding stability requirements: beyond Milestone X, programs must be funded to the Y percentile at Z level of confidence.

3.A.3.E. Ensure future force requirements capture comprehensive manpower requirements. Account for total lifecycle sustainment costs, including combat surge capacity and battle damage repair capability. Revalidate existing assumptions regarding the potential for protracted high-end conflict and adjust sustainment posture to support.

3.A.3.F. Present USAF force generation and force presentation models for decision at CORONA in October 2020. Include proposed changes to Wing structures in this brief.

3.A.3.G. Develop narrative to articulate how divestments, terminations, and/or restructures relate to the specific capabilities the USAF needs in the future, including strategic basing decisions and other areas of specific interest to Congress.

3.A.4. WAYPOINT #1. USAF successfully divests, terminates, and/or restructures programs to create the fiscal flexibility to build the force required for the high-end fight. USAF plan and program reflects unique value proposition (per REF A) and deliberately balances investments across core missions IAW CSAF and SecAF guidance and direction informed by planning factors to meet Congressional approval. Planning and programming choices informed by Service foundational beliefs, strategy, and operational concepts accrue warfighting advantage to U.S., allied, and partner armed forces. As work related to this AO continues beyond the initial deliverables, be prepared to adapt as conditions change or new information becomes available.

3.B. COORDINATING INSTRUCTIONS

3.B.1. Collaborate across Directorates and with MAJCOM stakeholders to develop integrated solutions for the HAF.

3.B.2. Coordinate with SAF/LL to map current legislative landscape, assessing opportunities and known friction points to best identify potential trades or offsets.

3.B.3. Coordinate with SAF/AQ for assistance in identifying underperforming and late-to-need programs and with SAF/FM for affordability concerns.

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS.

4.A. DELIVERABLES. Mission analysis brief for decision at CORONA in October 2020, including an action plan and proposed first steps. Be prepared to adjust FY21 and FY22 POMs in accordance with CORONA decisions.

5. COMMAND AND CONTROL.

5.A. COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS.

5.A.1. A8 is the designated OPR and supported Directorate for this order. DS will track OPR progress and schedule IPRs with CSAF and other senior leaders as required. All other Air Staff entities and MAJCOMs are supporting. DIRLAUTH approved.

5.B. COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATIONS, AND COMPUTER SYSTEMS (C4).

5.B.1. All deliverables associated with this order will be controlled and disseminated at the appropriate classification level, SECRET minimum.

