

**BY ORDER OF THE
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE**

AIR FORCE POLICY DIRECTIVE 36-28

26 APRIL 2016



Personnel

**AWARDS AND DECORATIONS
PROGRAMS**

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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This Air Force Policy Directive (AFPD) implements Department of Defense (DoD) Instruction (DoDI) 1348.19, *Award of Trophies and Similar Devices in Recognition of Accomplishments* and DoDI 1348.33, *Military Awards Program*. This directive establishes the framework for the Air Force Awards, Decorations, and Special Recognition Program and applies to units and personnel of the Regular Air Force, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserve and Air Force civilian employees specified by Air Force instructions. In collaboration with the Chief of Air Force Reserve and the Director of the Air National Guard, the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel and Services (AF/A1) develops personnel policy for Air Force Awards, Decorations, and Special Recognition programs. This AFPD may not be supplemented. Refer recommended changes and questions about this publication to the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) using Air Force (AF) Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*; route AF Form 847's from the field through the appropriate functional chain of command. Ensure that all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained IAW Air Force Manual 33-363, *Management of Records*, and disposed of IAW the Air Force Records Disposition Schedule located in the Air Force Records Information Management System.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This directive has been significantly revised and should be reviewed in its entirety. This revision provides new requirements for quarterly and annual awards (para 2.2.2), clarifies functional areas authority to administer their awards programs (para 2.4), and changes the board

composition for the 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year and First Sergeant of the Year awards (para 3.3.1).

1. Overview. Air Force personnel make many personal and professional sacrifices to ensure the Air Force accomplishes its missions and is a respected part of our society. Acts of valor, heroism, exceptional service, and outstanding achievement deserve special recognition, and this policy establishes guidance for recognizing individuals and groups.

2. Policy. The Air Force will have a recognition program to foster morale, incentive, and esprit de corps.

2.1. The Air Force will have an Awards and Decorations Program. Personnel or units who receive awards and decorations under this program must clearly demonstrate sustained and superior performance. This program will include campaign, expeditionary, and service medals.

2.2. The Air Force will have a Special Recognition Program. It will recognize acts of bravery, outstanding achievements, or periods of meritorious service. This program will also encompass awards from private organizations that seek Air Force participation.

2.2.1. In an effort to streamline the workload and to standardize the nomination process, nomination packages for Air Force level awards are limited to one page and will be submitted on an Air Force Form 1206, *Nomination for Award*. Exceptions to this requirement must be approved by the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel, and Services (AF/A1).

2.2.2. When evaluating significant self-improvement for quarterly and annual awards for officers, do not consider course enrollment and/or completion for Advanced Academic Degrees, Developmental Education and Distance Learning.

2.3. Major Commands (MAJCOM) may create and administer their own awards programs.

2.4. Functional areas administer their awards programs, but may not create new awards. Functional areas requiring the use of base visits to help determine award winners are limited to one visit per base per award.

2.5. MAJCOMs and functional areas may participate in awards programs sponsored by national organizations. When they do participate in such programs, they will process their own submissions.

3. Responsibilities. This policy directive establishes the following responsibilities and authorities:

3.1. The Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (SAF/MR) serves as an agent of the Secretary of the Air Force and provides guidance, direction, and oversight for all matters pertaining to the formulation, review, and execution of plans, policies, programs, and budgets addressing the Air Force Awards and Decorations Program. SAF/MR also interfaces with the Office of the Secretary of Defense concerning development of DoD policy and legislative initiatives pertaining to the Awards and Decorations Program.

3.2. The AF/A1 develops, coordinates, and executes personnel policy and essential procedural guidance for the management of the various award programs.

3.3. With AF/A1 guidance and approval, the Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC) will develop specific requirements for each Air Force award and decoration. At a minimum, AFPC will specify the establishing authority, nomination or selection criteria, eligibility criteria, and the awarding authority for each award and decoration.

3.3.1. A general officer or civilian equivalent will chair all military and civilian nomination or selection boards for USAF, DoD and National award programs, except the boards for the 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year and First Sergeant of the Year.

3.3.2. The 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year and First Sergeant of the Year boards will be chaired by the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force and consist of four Major Command or Combatant Command level Chief Master Sergeants.

3.4. Commanders and Civilian Directors administer and ensure compliance with the various Air Force recognition programs.

Deborah Lee James
Secretary of the Air Force

Attachment 1**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION*****References***

DoDI 1348.19, *Award of Trophies and Similar Devices in Recognition of Accomplishments*, 3 February 2014

DoDI 1348.33, *Military Awards Program*, 1 July 2004

AFMAN 33-363, *Management of Records*, 1 March 2008

Adopted Forms

AF Form 1206, *Nomination for Award*

AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*

Abbreviations and Acronyms AF—Air Force

AF/A1—Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Manpower, Personnel and Services

AFMAN—Air Force Manual

AFPC—Air Force Personnel Center

AFPD—Air Force Policy Directive

DoD—Department of Defense

DoDI—Department of Defense Instruction

MAJCOM—Major Command

OPR—Office of Primary Responsibility

SAF/MR—Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs

USAF—United States Air Force