

**BY ORDER OF THE  
COMMANDER 435TH AIR GROUND  
OPERATIONS WING**



**435TH AIR GROUND OPERATIONS  
WING INSTRUCTION 38-401**

**3 AUGUST 2018  
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Manpower and Organization**

**CONTINUOUS PROCESS  
IMPROVEMENT (CPI)**

**COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY**

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This publication establishes the groundwork for the 435th Air and Ground Operations Wing (435 AGOW) by formalizing a structured innovation culture. This publication implements Air Force Instruction (AFI) 38-401, *Continuous Process Improvement (CPI)*. This instruction applies to all 435 AGOW personnel, Air National Guard, and Air Force Reserves. Ensure that all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with (IAW) Air Force Manual (AFMAN) 33-363, *Management of Records*, and disposed of IAW Air Force Records Information Management System (AFRIMS) Records Disposition Schedule (RDS). Refer recommended changes and questions about this publication to the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) using the AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*; route AF Forms 847 from the field through the appropriate functional chain of command. This publication may not be supplemented or further extended. Submit requests for waivers through the chain of command to the Publication OPR.

**1. Overview.**

1.1. CPI is an essential step in ensuring our Airmen are “first to the fight - lethal and light.” Airmen, and their natural inclination toward innovation, are critical enablers as we respond to challenges and opportunities throughout our areas of responsibility. Channeling their innovative ideas ensures we gain the most return on investments made with our time, training and money.

1.2. 435 AGOW leadership firmly believes that innovation is integral to executing and improving the mission. However, unlike larger host wings, the 435 AGOW does not have a manpower office to provide dedicated oversight of an innovation program.

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities.

### 2.1. Wing Process Owner will:

2.1.1. Be the 435th Air Ground Operations Wing Vice Commander (435 AGOW/CV).

2.1.2. Promote innovation by acting as the lead advocate for CPI.

2.1.3. Chair the quarterly wing Continuous Process Improvement Council (CPIC).

2.1.4. Select and share 435 AGOW “Capturing Innovation” Program submissions for United States Air Force in Europe-Air Forces Africa (USAFE-AFAFRICA) Innovation and Transformation Council (ITC) meetings.

2.1.5. Appoint in writing, a primary and alternate Wing Process Manager (WPM), who will act as the execution and synchronization arm for the 435 AGOW/CV.

2.1.6. Promote the 435 AGOW Innovation Awards Program and recognize awardees.

2.1.7. Provide direction and guidance to group commanders on the program and metrics.

### 2.2. WPM will:

2.2.1. Serve as the Wing’s OPR and subject matter expert (SME) for CPI.

2.2.2. Once certified by USAFE-AFAFRICA ITO Master Black Belt, instruct USAFE-AFAFRICA approved CPI courses to wing personnel.

2.2.3. Advise 435 AGOW Innovation Facilitators on CPI programs, procedures and practices.

2.2.4. Track, assist and administer group and squadron-level innovations.

2.2.5. Establish a process to share innovations with the rest of the United States Air Force (USAF), through USAFE-AFAFRICA Innovation and Transformation Office (ITO). This will be accomplished primarily through participating at USAFE-AFAFRICA ITO’s quarterly “WPM Call” meetings. However, other relevant avenues of sharing information may be created to meet the spirit and intent of sharing innovations.

2.2.6. Develop the agenda and ensure preparations for the quarterly 435 AGOW CPIC.

2.2.7. Prepare the following information at each 435 AGOW CPIC: Project status and impact, number of practitioners trained (including Black Belt [BB] and Green Belt [GB] practitioner status) and upcoming CPI opportunities.

2.2.8. Attend GB practitioner training and attain certification within six months of appointment.

2.2.9. Attend BB practitioner training and attain certification within one year of appointment.

2.2.10. Track and coordinate all wing BB and GB practitioner training, by coordinating with USAFE ITO.

2.2.11. Administer, assist, and track wing CPI events.

2.2.12. Provide quarterly 435 AGOW updates to the USAFE ITO “Green Belt Tracker” and “Capturing Innovations Tracker” found at the USAFE-AFAFRICA Innovation and Transformation Office SharePoint site.

2.2.13. Ensure that innovations are tracked using the 435 AGOW “Leave it Better” site found on the 435 AGOW SharePoint site.

2.2.14. Update the list of 435 AGOW CPI practitioners at least quarterly.

2.2.15. Establish a mentorship program for 435 AGOW wing practitioners. The program assists practitioners in building and submitting certification packages, achieving GB certification and provides general awareness of wing-level innovation events. The WPM also ensures each GB trainee has a certified GB or Black Belt “mentor” assigned to him/her.

2.2.16. Whenever possible, ensure that Group Innovation Facilitators are using USAFE’s Practical Problem Solving Method (PPSM) Excel Spreadsheet (also known as an A3) as a primary means to scope and describe problems as well as a means of communication with USAFE ITO. The PPSM Spreadsheet can be found at the USAFE-AFAFRICA Innovation and Transformation Office SharePoint site.

2.3. 435 the AGOW Group Commanders will:

2.3.1. Provide direction and guidance to squadron commanders regarding innovative efforts.

2.3.2. Appoint primary and alternate group innovation facilitators, who may be squadron-level innovation experts and certified as a GB practitioner.

2.3.3. Nominate and endorse candidates for Black Belt practitioner certification.

2.3.3.1. Nomination authority must be O-6/GS-15 or higher.

2.3.3.2. Candidates will have GB practitioner certification.

2.3.3.3. Candidates will have two years of Air Force retainability (applies to military only).

2.3.4. Review facilitator innovation events before submission to 435 AGOW WPM.

2.4. Black Belt (BB) Practitioners will:

2.4.1. Will be nominated by O-6/GS-15 or higher and endorsed by the USAFE-AFAFRICA ITO to attend the Black Belt Practitioner Training Course at Maxwell AFB, AL.

2.4.2. Will received BB practitioner certification within two years of attending the BB Practitioner Training Course.

2.4.3. Ensure they are SEI coded upon BB practitioner certification.

2.4.4. Once certified, BB practitioners will participate in 435 AGOW CPIC meetings and vote on wing innovation submissions to the USAFE-AFAFRICA ITO’s Quarterly ITC.

2.4.5. Will be wing assets and act as a “mentor” for GB practitioners once assigned by WPM.

2.4.6. Will assist the WPM, once certified by USAFE-AFAFRICA ITO Master BB, in instructing approved CPI courses.

2.4.7. BB practitioners will act as facilitators for a process addressing multiple issues.

2.5. Group Innovation Facilitators will:

2.5.1. Administer, assist, and track group and squadron CPI events.

2.5.2. Hold at least quarterly meetings with squadron designees and CPI practitioners to discuss CPI issues and initiatives within their respective groups.

2.5.3. Be at least 12 months from DEROS at the time of appointment.

2.5.4. Ensure innovations are displayed within the units.

2.5.5. Assist with capturing innovation validation as needed.

2.5.6. Track group and squadron implementations of innovations highlighted in the USAFE ITC.

2.5.7. Participate in 435 AGOW CPIC quarterly meetings as voting members.

2.5.8. Track group status of CPI metrics to support wing CPI sight picture of innovation.

2.5.9. Promote 435 AGOW Innovation Programs by providing support to squadron CPI events.

2.5.10. Attend GB practitioners training and attain certification within one year.

2.5.11. Ensure that innovations are shared across the wing by using the 435 AGOW “Leave it Better” innovation page, found on the 435 AGOW SharePoint site.

2.5.12. Whenever possible, use the A3 to properly scope and describe problems as well as facilitate communication between the WPM and USAFE-AFAFRICA ITO. An A3 can be found at the USAFE-AFAFRICA Innovation and Transformation Office SharePoint site. It is the primary means to initiate problem solving.

2.6. Squadron Commanders will:

2.6.1. Ensure innovations are displayed within facilities and/or via electronic means.

2.6.2. Track squadron-level innovations and submit to group facilitators by using the 435 AGOW “Leave it Better” innovation page, found on the 435 AGOW SharePoint site.

2.6.3. In coordination with the 435 AGOW WPM and Group Facilitator, ensured Airmen have the opportunity to attend GB practitioner training.

2.6.4. Support and afford CPI Practitioners/trainees the necessary time and resources to execute CPI projects and initiatives.

2.6.5. Participate in 435 AGOW CPIC meetings or select a designee to represent them.

2.7. Green Belt (GB) Practitioners will:

2.7.1. Will received GB practitioner certification within a year of attending the GB Practitioner Training Course.

2.7.2. Ensure they are SEI coded upon GB practitioner certification.

2.7.3. Once certified, can participate in 435 AGOW CPIC meetings as squadron commander's designee and voting member.

2.7.4. If possible, lead and/or participate in at least one CPI event per calendar year.

2.7.5. Support the 435 AGOW as a wing asset to lead CPI events within the wing (any group). GB practitioners will act as facilitators for a single issue within a process.

2.8. Problem Identification Training (PIT):

2.8.1. PIT will serve as an induction to CPI processes, terminology and stepping stone towards attending belt training.

2.8.2. Members whom have attended PIT can be utilized by BB/GB practitioners to assist with innovation projects.

2.9. 435 AGOW Inspector General will:

2.9.1. Inspect IAW AFI 90-201, *The Air Force Inspection System* all aspects of the CPI Program to include consideration of any process improvement for "Benchmark" submission to the Major Command Inspector General office.

2.10. 435 AGOW CPI Council will:

2.10.1. Work under direction of the wing process owner, the 435 AGOW/CV.

2.10.2. Meet quarterly to discuss 435 AGOW status of current innovations and new innovations. Ensure innovations met the criteria set forth in AFI 38-401 for the General Larry O. Spencer Innovation Award (USAFE-AFAFRICA ITO's annual "Innovation Madness" [award period: 1 January - 31 December] is the nomination process for this award). Nominations will be handled via the Task Management Tool (TMT).

2.10.3. Ensure lessons learned and innovations are documented and shared across groups, squadrons and with USAFE-AFAFRICA ITO.

2.10.4. Review and approve WPM quarterly 435 AGOW updates to the USAFE ITO "Green Belt practitioner Tracker" and "Capturing Innovation Tracker" found at USAFE-AFAFRICA Innovation and Transformation Office SharePoint site.

2.10.5. Select "Innovation of the Quarter" to be presented at USAFE-AFAFRICA ITC by majority vote. In case of a tie, the 435 AGOW/CV will cast the tie-breaking vote. POC of the winning innovation will be formally recognized at the following Wing Staff Meeting.

**3. CPI Training and Processes.**

3.1. All CPI practitioners will comply with the training requirements and processes found in AFI 38-401.

MICHAEL T. RAWLS, Col, USAF  
Commander

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

AFI 38-401, *Continuous Process Improvement*, 15 April 2016

AFI 90-201, *The Air Force Inspection System*, 26 January 2017

AFMAN 33-363, *Management of Records*, 2 June 2017

***Prescribed Forms***

None

***Adopted Forms***

AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*

***Abbreviations and Acronyms***

**AFI**—Air Force Instruction

**AFMAN**—Air Force Manual

**AFRIMS**—Air Force Records Information Management System

**AGOW**—Air Ground Operations Wing

**CPIC**—Continuous Process Improvement Council

**CPI**—Continuous Process Improvement

**CV**—Vice Commander

**DEROS**—Date Eligible for Return from Overseas

**GB**—Green Belt

**IAW**—In Accordance With

**IG**—Inspector General

**ITC**—Innovation and Transformation Council

**ITO**—Innovation and Transformation Office

**MAJCOM**—Major Command

**OPR**—Office of Primary Responsibility

**RDS**—Records Disposition Schedule

**SEI**—Special Experience Identifier

**SME**—Subject Matter Expert

**USAFE**—United States Air Forces in Europe

**USAF**—United States Air Force

**WPM**—Wing Process Manager

*Terms*

**A3**—The standard approach to documenting the 8-step problem-solving method, named after the size of paper that practitioners at Toyota use for this purpose.

**Green Belt (GB)**—Green Belts are entry-level process improvement practitioners. They operate under the mentorship of experienced BBs and/or MBBs. Green Belts are equipped with basic problem solving skills and competencies to eliminate waste and maximize customer value to solve process problems that do not cross organizational boundaries. Green Belt work includes the deployment and application of lean principles, concepts and methods locally, within a work cell, work group or value stream. Problems requiring more complex tool/technique application require the GB to seek out a BB for assistance.

**PPSM**—Is a standard, repeatable method to produce accurate root cause analysis. This training is designed to cultivate an innovative, critical thinking culture to improve the way we work. Solving day-to-day work area problems, regardless of organizational level, goes to the heart of CPI efforts. This proven, systematic problem-solving model serves as the framework for the application of all CPI approaches, methodologies, tools, and techniques available to the practitioner.