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AIR COMBAT COMMAND**

**AIR COMBAT COMMAND INSTRUCTION
17-202, VOLUME 3**



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Cyberspace Operations

**CYBERCREW OPERATIONS AND
PROCEDURES**

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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This instruction implements Department of the Air Force Policy Directive (DAFPD) 17-2, *Cyber Warfare Operations*, and establishes basic procedures for the operation of cyberspace mission systems approved by the Chief of Staff of the AF. This publication applies to all Air Combat Command (ACC), AF Reserve (AFR), Air National Guard (ANG), and third-party governmental and contract support agencies serving as crewmembers in accordance with (IAW) appropriate provisions contained in memoranda, support agreements and AF contracts. This publication does not apply to the United States Space Force. Refer to Mission System Volumes (MSV) (e.g., Air Combat Command Manual (ACCMAN) 17-2 [MSV] Volumes) for specific training program requirements unique to individual and crew positions. This publication requires the collection and or maintenance of information protected by 5 United States Code (USC), Section (§) 552a, *Records maintained on individuals* (Privacy Act of 1974), as amended; and Executive Order 9397, *Numbering System for Federal Accounts Relating to Individual Persons*, as amended. System of Records Notice (SORN) F011 AF AFMC B, *Patriot Excalibur (PEX) System Records* applies and is available at <https://pclt.defense.gov/DIRECTORATES/Privacy-and-Civil-Liberties-Directorate/Privacy/SORNsIndex/DOD-Component-Notices/Air-Force-Article-List/>. Ensure all records generated as a result of processes prescribed in this publication adhere to Air Force Instruction (AFI) 33-322, *Records Management and Information Governance Program*, and are disposed in accordance with (IAW) the Air Force Records Disposition Schedule (RDS), which is located in the Air Force Records Information Management System (AFRIMS). Submit suggested improvements to this instruction on DAF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Product*, through _____ unit _____ channels, _____ to _____ ACC/A3/2/6K, acca326k.CyberandNonKineticOperationsDivision@us.af.mil. This publication may be supplemented at any level, but all supplements must be routed to the Office of Primary

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SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This edition has been substantially revised to 1) standardize the format and layout across all three volumes for readability; 2) improve the organization of chapters and content within each chapter; 3) clarify waiver authorities; 4) update position descriptions and associated duties; 5) further clarify position qualification standards; 6) update operational requirements and activities; and 7) update organizational and individual roles and responsibilities.

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Chapter 1

PURPOSE

1.1. General. This instruction establishes procedures for personnel assigned to AF cyber mission systems.

1.2. Specific Applicability. This instruction applies to crewmembers, defined as individuals who conduct cyberspace operations and are assigned to a specific cyberspace mission system (CMS) and position, including those who are augmenting standard mission system units. These positions may include, but are not limited to: Operator, Exploitation Analyst, Mission Commander, and similar duty positions. Specific crew positions for a given CMS may be found in the applicable mission system policy. This publication also applies to members in formal training for immediate assignment to a cyberspace mission system position. Mission Ready (MR)/Combat Mission Ready (CMR) certification applies to all military and civilian personnel who complete Initial Skills Training (IST), Initial Qualification Training (IQT), Mission Qualification Training (MQT), have passed an evaluation, and are certified by an appropriate certifying official. CMR requirements may apply to additional personnel at selected units at the direction of their Major Command (MAJCOM), or as defined in mission system-specific guidance.

1.3. Crew Responsibility. This instruction prescribes operations procedures for cyberspace mission systems under most circumstances, but it is not a substitute for sound judgment or common sense. As a general rule, operations or procedures not specifically addressed in this instruction may be accomplished if they enhance safe, effective mission accomplishment and are approved for execution by appropriate command authorities. [**Note:** Keywords and Definitions related to this document can be found under [Attachment 1](#) of this document.]

Chapter 2

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. Mission Planning. Detailed mission planning helps ensure mission objectives are understood by all members and an effective plan is developed to achieve those objectives. In preparation for and prior to each crew shift, crews will use tactical objectives provided through tasking orders and create tactical tasks for execution in the next crew shift.

2.2. Responsibility.

2.2.1. Squadron (SQ) commanders (SQ/CCs) are responsible for allocating resources, time, and spaces for mission planning. SQ/CCs will establish unit specific mission planning guidance addressing mission essential tasks and will ensure an appropriate level of mission planning is conducted prior to each mission.

2.2.2. Squadron Directors of Operations (SQ/DOs) are responsible for ensuring all operations are planned, briefed, executed, and debriefed in accordance with Higher Headquarters (HHQ) and squadron standards.

2.2.3. The lead crewmember is ultimately responsible to ensure all aspects of mission planning are accomplished and all necessary members are present.

2.3. Procedures. Effective mission accomplishment requires thorough mission planning and preparation. Failures in execution often result from poor mission preparation; therefore, units will conduct thorough planning prior to every mission. General mission planning considerations are addressed in Air Force Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (AFTTP) 3-1/3-3, *Integrated Planning and Employment (IPE)*, and other mission system specific AFTTP 3-1/3-3 volumes. While not directive, these publications are useful to ensure adequate mission planning is conducted, thereby greatly improving mission success probability.

2.3.1. Units will accomplish planning in accordance with all regulations and authoritative guidance sufficient to ensure proper mission execution for all phases of operations. At a minimum, mission planning will include mission objectives and taskings, intelligence assessment on adversary tactics and relevant reporting, terrain, cancel/abort/rollback criteria, contingency plans, preplanned mission execution communications (also known as "contracts"), Rules of Engagement (ROE), risks, and applicable Special Instructions (SPINS). Rehearsal of Concepts (ROCs) drills should be conducted as necessary. The Crew Information File (CIF) will be reviewed and signed by all operators.

2.3.2. Unit staff will provide crews sufficient time and resources to accomplish crew mission planning and mission briefings. Units will ensure other activities, such as recurring academic training, training device periods, additional duties, etc., do not interfere with time allotted for mission planning and crew mission briefing. The lead crewmember is ultimately responsible for the proper conduct of mission planning and must ensure sufficient time and materials are available to effectively plan the mission.

2.3.3. All crewmembers will receive a mission briefing.

2.4. Debriefs. Will be conducted after each mission and at a minimum include whether tasks and objectives were met; lessons learned; identification of successes; new Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP) used; new procedures developed; anomalies encountered; and task completion

status. Using a "who, what, where, when, and why" framework is recommended to produce substantive and actionable debriefs.

2.5. Intelligence Support. Lead crewmembers will request support from unit-level intelligence or wing intelligence to provide current relevant intelligence pertaining to mission tasking. (as applicable)

Chapter 3

GUIDANCE AND PROCEDURES

3.1. Crew Logs.

3.1.1. The crew log is the official record of events that occur during a crew shift or mission (live or simulated). The purpose of the log is to maintain an accurate and detailed record of all significant events, including any deviations from guidance in this instruction pertaining to operations occurring during each crew shift. Of primary importance are events that may result in follow-up actions.

3.1.2. Crew logs should include identification of on-duty personnel, major operational activities, significant communications, major system degradations, mission required system, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), Operating Instruction(s) (OI(s)), Checklists, TTP deviations, and other abnormal system responses. For historical reference, maintain crew logs for a period of 1 year or when no longer needed, whichever is later, per AFRIMS RDS.

3.2. Crew Information File (CIF). The CIF provides information essential to the conduct of operations and response to emergency conditions. The CIF centralizes significant, time-sensitive issues, and ensures procedures are disseminated to operations personnel. All crewmembers are required to review the CIF crew read file and acknowledge completion prior to beginning crew duties. Refer to Air Combat Command Instruction (ACCI) 17-202 ,Volume 2, *Cybercrew Standardization/Evaluation Program*, for information on the structure and content of the CIF.

3.3. Go/No-Go Procedures.

3.3.1. Units will establish a positive control system that ensures crewmembers have completed all training and Standardization/Evaluation (Stan/Eval) qualification required for missions. Units will provide written guidance on this system.

3.3.2. As a minimum, the Go/No Go system will monitor:

3.3.2.1. Crew qualifications and restrictions.

3.3.2.2. Training and mission currency items required for duty IAW ACCI 17-202 Volume 1, *Cybercrew Training*, and ACCMAN17-2 [MSV] Volume 1.

3.3.2.3. Currency on all CIF (Volume 1, Part B) items.

3.4. Briefing. The lead crewmember will ensure mission briefing are accomplished. A successful briefing covers mission objectives, assigns tactical tasks to achieve those objectives, and ensures all crewmembers understand the plan.

3.5. Debriefing. The lead crewmember will ensure a debrief is accomplished for every mission. The debrief will cover the following at a minimum; whether tasks and objectives were met, lessons learned, identification of successes, new TTP(s) used, new procedures developed, anomalies encountered, and task completion status. When required, lessons learned and learning points will be generated and instructional fixes implemented.

3.6. Guidance.

3.6.1. Crewmembers will adhere to all HHQ directed procedures (e.g., Technical Orders (TOs)).

3.6.2. HHQ will generate guidance to address procedures or guidance not addressed in a TO or other directive.

3.6.3. Units will develop local procedures specific to their mission when operations fall outside existing HHQ guidance.

3.6.3.1. Local procedures will not be used to re-create or consolidate existing directives or HHQ guidance.

3.6.3.2. Units will adhere to directions published in TO 00-5-1, *Air Force Technical Orders System* or any directed templates from HHQ when developing local workcards, checklists, and job guides.

3.6.4. Crew Aids. Units may develop local Crew Aids such as guides, charts, or other visual aids and processes. Crew Aids are not directive in nature and are used to enhance operational guidance located within approved TOs or checklists. The squadron DO will review and recommend SQ/CC approve or disapprove all locally developed crew aids.

3.6.5. Operational Checklists. When TOs are not available squadrons will conduct operations with only approved operational checklists. Units will draft checklists that will be coordinated through Group Stan/Eval or equivalent and approved by the Group (GP) CC (GP/CC) or his/her designee. **(T-3)**

3.6.6. Briefing Guides. Units will develop local briefing guides to ensure all necessary items are covered prior to each mission. Group-level Stan/Eval, or the designated stan/eval entity, will determine minimum requirements for these guides and ensure standardization.

Chapter 4

CREW FORCE MANAGEMENT

4.1. Crew Rest, Fatigue Management and Duty Limitations. This section prescribes mandatory crew rest and maximum duty periods (DPs) for all personnel who operate AF cyberspace mission systems. Basic guidance for fatigue management strategies and waiver authority procedures are also addressed.

4.1.1. DP begins when a crewmember reports for a mission/crew shift, briefing, or other official duty and ends with the completion of the debrief and mission/crew shift.

4.1.2. The normal crew DP will not exceed 12 hours.

4.1.3. The SQ/CC or designated official may extend the maximum DP up to two hours to compensate for unplanned mission delays, provided the mission requirements justify the increased risk. Extended DP must be annotated in the appropriate log, at a minimum, detailing authorizing official and crewmembers affected. Mission or environmental needs requiring longer than a 14-hour DP require GP/CC approval (see [Table 4.1.](#)).

Table 4.1. Maximum Duty Period Length.

Crew	Hours
All crew positions	12
With SQ/CC Approval	14
With GP/CC Approval	>14

4.1.4. If safety or mission may be compromised by fatigue, regardless of authorized DP, the lead crewmember will restrict duty time, extend crew rest periods, notify squadron leadership to generate alternate crews, or terminate a mission.

4.1.5. Crew Rest Period.

4.1.5.1. The crew rest period is a 10-hour non-duty period before the DP begins. Its purpose is to ensure the crewmember is adequately rested before performing a cyberspace mission or mission-related duties. Crew rest is free time, and includes time for meals, transportation, and the opportunity for eight hours of uninterrupted sleep.

4.1.5.2. Any reduction from 10 hours of crew rest requires pre-coordination for transportation, meals, and quarters as necessary so crewmembers are provided an opportunity for at least eight hours of uninterrupted sleep. **(T-3)**

4.1.6. Crew rest is compulsory for any crewmember prior to performing any crew duty on any cyber mission system.

4.1.7. Each crewmember is individually responsible to ensure they obtain sufficient rest during crew rest periods.

4.1.8. Any official business or duty that requires the active participation of a crewmember, not during the DP, interrupts the crew rest period. This includes official business conducted via telephone or other electronic means. Intentional crew rest interruptions shall only be made

under the most exceptional circumstances. If crew rest is interrupted, individuals will inform a supervisor and a decision will be made by the lead crewmember for removal from the mission schedule, when necessary.

4.2. Operations Scheduling.

4.2.1. Units will publish, post and monitor prior schedules for the crew force and initiate changes to the schedules based on tracking of qualifications, certifications, restrictions, crew rest, and other factors as required to meet mission objectives.

4.2.2. Operations schedulers should notify crewmembers of changes to scheduled operations no later than (NLT) 12 hours before scheduled show time. Make notifications as soon as practical after the change is official.

BRIAN S. LAIDLAW, Brigadier General, USAF
Director of Operations

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

5 USC § 552a, *Records maintained on individuals* (Privacy Act of 1974)
ACCI 17-202V1, *Cybercrew Training*, 10 September 2025
ACCI 17-202V2, *Cybercrew Standardization/Evaluation Program*, 10 September 2025
AFI 33-322, *Records Management and Information Governance Program*, 23 March 2020
AFTTP 3-1, *Integrated Planning and Employment*, 19 February 2019
AFTTP 3-3, *Integrated Planning and Employment*, 27 August 2018
DAFPD 17-2, *Cyber Warfare Operations*, 27 October 2020
EO 9397, *Numbering System for Federal Accounts Relating to Individual Persons*, 22 November 1943
JP 3-12, *Cyberspace Operations*, 8 June 2018
TO 00-5-1, *Air Force Technical Order System*, 19 November 2024

Prescribed Forms

None

Adopted Forms

ACC Form 4418, *Certificate of Cybercrew Qualification*
DAF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Product*

Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACC—Air Combat Command
ACCI—Air Combat Command Instruction
ACCMAN—Air Combat Command Manual
AF—Air Force
AFI—Air Force Instruction
AFR—Air Force Reserve
AFRIMS—Air Force Records Information Management System
AFTTP—Air Force Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures
ANG—Air National Guard
CC—Commander
CIF—Crew Information File

CMR—Combat Mission Ready
CMS—Cyberspace Mission System
DAF—Department of the Air Force
DAFPD—Department of the Air Force Policy Directive
DO—Director of Operations
DoD—Department of Defense
DP—Duty Period
GP—Group
GP/CC—Group Commander
HHQ—Higher Headquarters
HQ—Headquarters
IAW—In Accordance With
IPE—Integrated Planning and Employment
IQT—Initial Qualification Training
IST—Initial Systems Training
JP—Joint Publication
MAJCOM—Major Command
MQT—Mission Qualification Training
MR—Mission Ready
MSV—Mission System Volumes
NLT—No Later Than
OI—Operating Instruction
OPR—Office of Primary Responsibility
PII—Personally Identifiable Information
RDS—Records Disposition Schedule
ROC—Rehearsal of Concept
ROE—Rules of Engagement
SOP—Standard Operating Procedures
SORN—System of Records Notice
SPINs—Special Instructions
SQ—Squadron
Stan/Eval—Standardization and Evaluation

TO—Technical Order

TTP—Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures

USAF—United States Air Force

USC—United States Code

Office Symbols

ACC/A3—ACC Director of Operations

ACC/A3/2/6/K—Information Warfare Division

ACC/A3T—ACC Flight Operations Division

Terms

Certification—Procedure used to document competency in a particular task as determined by a certifying official. Not interchangeable with “qualification”, which requires ACC Form 4418, *Certificate of Cybercrew Qualification*, documentation.

Checklist—A Ftype of crew aid used to reduce failure by compensating for potential limits of human memory and attention. It helps to ensure consistency and completeness in carrying out a task.

Combat Mission Ready (CMR)—The status of a combatant crewmember who has satisfactorily completed mission qualification training and maintains qualification and proficiency in the command or unit operational mission.

Compliance Language—Terminology defined as follows:

- 1) Will—Indicates a mandatory requirement.
- 2) Should—Indicates a preferred, but not mandatory, method of accomplishment.
- 3) May—Indicates acceptable or suggested means of accomplishment.
- 4) Normally—Indicates under normal or usual conditions, as a rule.
- 5) **Note:**—Indicates operations procedures, techniques, etc., considered essential to emphasize.

Crew Aid—A sign, worksheet, guides, charts, or other visual aids and processes, or other object which includes diagrams or a brief summary of instructions, such as a checklist. Designed to reduce avoidable mistakes by helping a person remember what to do or be sure that they have completed all steps required.

Cyberspace Operations—The employment of cyberspace capabilities where the primary purpose is to achieve objectives in or through cyberspace (JP 3-12, *Cyberspace Operations*).

Lead Crew Member—Member responsible for mission execution. Refer to mission system specific instructions for name and definition.

Mission—Unit objective encompassing one or more crew shifts to conduct operations within cyberspace.

Mission Ready (MR)—The status a non-combatant crewmember who has satisfactorily completed mission qualification training and maintains qualification and proficiency in the command or unit operational mission.

Technical Order (TO)—A document that contains operational or maintenance instructions, parts lists or parts breakdown, or other related technical information or procedures (exclusive of administrative procedures) for a mission system, mission system component, support equipment or other item procured by DoD. This data can be presented in any form (e.g., hard copy, audio and visual displays, magnetic tape, disks, or other electronic devices). The term TO is equivalent to the DoD term Technical Manual.