

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

**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
POLICY DIRECTIVE 10-9**



25 MAY 2021

Operations

**LEAD COMMAND/LEAD AGENT
DESIGNATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WEAPON SYSTEMS, NON-WEAPON
SYSTEMS, AND ACTIVITIES**

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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This publication implements Department of Defense Instruction 5000.02, *Operation of the Defense Acquisition System*. This Department of the Air Force Policy Directive establishes policy for lead command/lead agent designation and their responsibilities for United States Air Force weapon systems, non-weapon systems, and activities. This publication applies to all uniformed members and civilian employees of all components of the Department of the Air Force who exercise either lead command or using command responsibilities for United States Air Force weapons systems, non-weapons systems, and activities. This directive also applies to all contractors and other organizations and individuals to the extent required by the applicable contract, binding agreement or obligation with the Department of the Air Force. This publication does not apply to the United States Space Force. This publication may not be supplemented. Refer recommended changes and questions about this publication to the Office of Primary Responsibility using Air Force Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*, through the appropriate functional chain of command. Ensure all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with Air Force Instruction (AFI) 33-322, *Records Management and Information Governance Program*, and are disposed of in accordance with the Air Force Records Information Management Systems Records Disposition Schedule which is located in the Air Force Records Information Management System.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This document has been substantially revised. Previous versions of this publication were limited to lead command designations and responsibilities for weapon systems/activities. This publication has been updated to add designations and definitions for non-weapon systems and activities. The “system” refers to both weapon systems and non-weapon systems.

1. Overview. This publication establishes a basis for designating a lead command or lead agent when one or more organizations possesses or is responsible for a portion of a United States Air Force weapon system, non-weapon system, or activity. A lead command or lead agent is an organization designated by the Secretary of the Air Force or delegated representative to provide input and advocacy for developing and maintaining assigned systems and activities under the oversight of Headquarters Air Force (HAF).

1.1. The construct of weapon systems, non-weapon systems, and activities, is inclusive of all the various items requiring a lead and advocate in the Department of the Air Force portfolio. Weapon systems may include, but are not limited to, aircraft, air operations centers, munitions, software, and special warfare capabilities. Non-weapon systems include other directed, funded efforts or initiatives that provide materiel, information system, or service capability. Activities are all other directed, funded efforts or initiatives that are not weapon systems or non-weapon systems. For planning and programming considerations in the Strategy, Planning, Programming, Budgeting, & Execution (SPPBE) process, there is no inherent benefit for an item's categorization between weapon system, non-weapon system, or activity.

1.2. "Lead command" is used for a major command (MAJCOM) whereas "lead agent" is used for a HAF two-letter, HAF field operating agency (FOA), HAF direct reporting unit (DRU), or other organization below the MAJCOM level when designated lead. Department of the Air Force policies referencing or assigning responsibilities to a lead command or lead agent should consider the terms synonymous. Lead designation establishes responsibility for advocacy for systems and activities, and clarifies responsibilities for other stakeholders. Stakeholders are lead commands/lead agents, using commands, implementing commands and other organizations that possess or are responsible for a portion of a weapon system, non-weapon system, or activity. Lead command/lead agent designations are not a replacement for any component of the acquisition program execution.

2. Policy. Within the United States Air Force, all MAJCOMs, FOAs/DRUs, and the Air Force Reserve, must support the United States Air Force's effort to maintain configuration control, commonality, and capability synchronization for interoperability within total force operations. Lead commands for systems and activities operated by USAF MAJCOMs, FOAs/DRUs, and the Air Force Reserve must prioritize validated requirements, resources, and schedules within a total force context. Proactive and thorough communication between lead commands and using commands is paramount in support of these valuable weapon systems/activities. Lead commands/lead agents will provide input and advocacy and develop requirements for weapon systems, non-weapon systems, and activities under the oversight of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Air Force Futures (AF/A5/7) for design and requirements and the Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans and Programs (AF/A8), for planning and programming in the United States Air Force. Among stakeholders, leads have final adjudication authority for staffing requirements and clarifying responsibilities. Stakeholders may readdress final staffing requirements and clarification of responsibilities to the lead command if there is a compelling negative operational impact.

3. Roles and Responsibilities.

3.1. Secretary of the Air Force. The Secretary of the Air Force, as head of the Department of the Air Force, retains ultimate authority on the designation of lead commands and lead agents. The authority to approve new designations and change existing designations is known as the “designation authority.” The Secretary of the Air Force delegates this authority directly to the Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans and Programs (AF/A8) for the United States Air Force. AF/A8 may not re-delegate designation authority without approval from the Secretary of the Air Force.

3.2. Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans and Programs (AF/A8). AF/A8 is responsible for Air Force-wide activities associated with planning and programming resource allocation. AF/A8 will provide oversight of lead command/lead agent planning and programming inputs for the United States Air Force in the SPPBE process, ensuring affordability is maintained at the enterprise level. AF/A8 is responsible and accountable to the Secretary of the Air Force as the delegated authority for designating lead commands and lead agents in the United States Air Force. Designation requests will be submitted to the Director of Programs (AF/A8P) for coordination. AF/A8P will adjudicate issues across the Air Staff, SAF/AA, and major commands during coordination and recommend a lead for AF/A8 approval. AF/A8 will assign lead command/lead agent designations for new systems and activities as early as possible, but no later than Milestone A for traditional acquisition programs or equivalent “milestones” for other non-traditional acquisition pathways as applicable. AF/A8P will maintain a table of approved lead command/lead agent designations and publish with changes as new or updated designations are made. The most current version of the table can be accessed at <https://usaf.dps.mil/sites/10940/a8pe/sitepages/home.aspx>

3.3. Deputy Chief of Staff, Air Force Futures (AF/A5/7). AF/A5/7 is responsible for Air Force-wide activities associated with Air Force strategy development, future force design, capability development guidance, and operational capability requirements. AF/A5/7 will provide oversight of lead command/lead agent inputs to strategy, future force design, capability development guidance, and operational capability requirements in the SPPBE process for the United States Air Force.

3.4. Lead Command/Lead Agents. Leads will develop requirements in accordance with design products from Air Force Futures (AF/A5A) and will be defined and prioritized to develop and maintain a force structure that balances complementary capabilities and affordability. Inputs will be provided to Air Staff functional entities or SAF/AA as provided in the table of approved lead command/lead agent designations, to ensure equitable consideration through the SPPBE and capability development requirements processes. Stakeholders will support the development of these inputs and advocate through the lead for all requirements. Inputs for planning and programming will be provided to the appropriate panel for adjudication and submission to the SPPBE process.

3.4.1. Leads will work with program managers to develop programmatic, technical and contractual requirements; establish contracts and infrastructure to achieve operational requirements; and provide life cycle management as applicable. This includes all Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities and Policy (DOTMLPF-P) requirements. Requirements may include fielding and “beddown” activities. Beddown is the allocation of systems/activities to operational locations. Beddown activities include the provision of facilities for troops and any support to create a platform for the projection of force. This includes any manpower, construction, infrastructure modification, new training systems/activities and equipment, environmental protection, operations and maintenance, and support systems/activities (e.g., software, cyber related risks and vulnerabilities, force structure, training simulators, or capabilities). In addition to fielding and beddown activities, this also includes any capabilities-based planning, modernization, sustainment, follow-on operational test and evaluation, and unique logistics requirements.

3.4.2. For beddown of new weapon systems/activities, lead commands/lead agents, in conjunction with stakeholders, will develop, as necessary, program plans, system training plans, organizational and force presentation constructs, readiness reporting products, and memoranda of understanding; and will conduct site activation task force activities, ensure National Environmental Policy Act compliance, and charter a general officer steering group.

3.4.3. Lead commands for the United States Air Force will also coordinate with Air Force Research Laboratory and Air Force Futures to recommend science and technology maturation and development planning efforts that are needed in order to modernize their systems.

3.4.4. Lead commands/agents shall develop implementation strategies and procedures tailored to their systems or activities. Requirements will be staffed among stakeholders to de-conflict anomalies and maintain specific interoperability, commonality, and configuration control, as applicable. Leads will coordinate with implementing commands and any other necessary functions (e.g., system program manager, system program office, contracting agency) to establish and sustain life cycle management processes for their respective systems and activities.

3.4.5. Leads shall develop and maintain system-specific United States Air Force, joint or multi-Service publications, tactics, techniques, and procedures and identify minimum essential systems/activities listing items as required in accordance with applicable Department of Defense policy. Stakeholders will abide by lead command/lead agent weapons system-specific published guidance (e.g., mission design series-specific addenda and minimum essential system listings).

3.4.6. Lead commands/agents are responsible for the daily management and execution of assigned systems and activities. Leads have the final adjudication authority for staffing requirements with stakeholders. Leads may develop, sign, and distribute agreements to execute the responsibilities enumerated in this publication. This includes any applicable standards, business tasks, and formal training requirements for the fielding, operation, support, maintenance, configuration control, and sustainment of the system or activity.

3.4.7. Lead commands will coordinate with stakeholders to advocate for the sustainment of weapon systems/activities to ensure sustainment requirements associated with weapon systems/activities receive comprehensive and equitable consideration in the planning, programming, and budget execution of resources to sustain weapon systems/activities under Centralized Asset Management.

3.5. Stakeholders. Stakeholders will comply with U.S. laws, policies, and regulations requiring adherence to international agreements to include arms control agreements and regimes, and required law of war legal reviews, arrangements, etc. Stakeholders will advocate for sustainment and modernization requirements through the lead. Throughout the SPPBE process, stakeholders will provide programming and planning input to the lead for subsequent input to the appropriate panel for hardware and software modifications and unique system requirements for the United States Air Force. Inputs for planning and programming will be provided to the appropriate panel for adjudication and submission to the appropriate governance structure for the Service. The lead command/lead agent, system program manager, and system operator must approve modifications before they become permanent by submitting an AF Form 1067, *Modification Proposal*, consistent with AFI 63-101/20-101, *Integrated Life Cycle Management*. Stakeholders may issue lead command/lead agent weapons system-specific published guidance prescribing their own specific requirements, if necessary. Stakeholder-published guidance, when required for unique mission considerations, may not be less restrictive than that prescribed in this policy directive or in other applicable superior guidance.

JOHN P. ROTH
Acting Secretary of the Air Force

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

Air Force Instruction 63-101/20-101, *Integrated Life Cycle Management*, 30 June 2020

Air Force Instruction 33-322, *Records Management and Information Governance Program*, 23 March 2020

Department of the Air Force Instruction 33-360, *Publications and Forms Management 1*
December 2015

Prescribed Forms

None

Adopted Forms

AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*

AF Form 1067b, *Modification Proposal*

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AF/A5/7—Deputy Chief of Staff, Air Force Futures

AF/A5A—Air Force Futures

AF/A8—Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans and Programs

AF/A8P—Director of Programs

AFI—Air Force Instruction

AFRL—Air Force Research Laboratory

DOTMLPF-P—Doctrine, Organization, Training, Materiel, Leadership and Education, Personnel, Facilities and Policy

DRU—Direct Reporting Unit

FOA—Field Operating Agency

HAF—Headquarters Air Force

SPPBE—Strategic Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution

TMRR—Technology Maturation & Risk Reduction

Terms

Activity—A directed, funded effort or initiative that is not a weapon system or non-weapon system. It may include a specific task, mission, action, or collection of actions. Activities may be assigned through directive policy and in accordance with an organization's Mission Directive and responsibilities. Activities may be expressed in one or more resource allocation groups in the accomplishment of a definitive objective or plan.

Implementing Command—Implementing commands provide the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Program Executive Officers, program managers, major command Commanders, support for requirements formulation and phasing, continuous capability and technology planning, and development of acquisition and product support strategies. Implementing commands collaborate with lead commands and program managers; they collect, validate, and maintain current requirements, priorities and funding data by system, for all elements of depot activation; and they report data to the Air Staff or SAF/AA as applicable upon request. Implementing commands establish a central repository for depot activation requirements data, to include associated rationale and impacts.

Lead Command/Lead Agent—Designated major command, field command, Air Staff two-letter, field operating agency subordinate to the Air Staff, direct reporting unit, SAF/AA, or other organization leader providing input and advocacy for developing and maintaining assigned weapon systems, non-weapon systems, and activities during their life cycle.

Milestone A—Milestone A is a Milestone Decision Authority-led review at the end of the Materiel Solutions Analysis Phase in the Defense Acquisition Process. Its purposes are to make a recommendation or seek approval to enter/approve entry into the Technology Maturation & Risk Reduction (TMRR) phase. Approve the program acquisition strategy, and release the final request for proposals for TMRR activates.

Non-Weapon System—A directed, funded effort or initiative that provides a materiel, information system, or service capability, that is not explicitly designed or primarily employed with the intent to inflict bodily harm, death or damage to property, in response to an approved need. It may be expressed in one or more resource allocation groups in the accomplishment of a definite objective or plan.

Stakeholders—Stakeholders are lead commands/lead agents, using commands, implementing commands, and other organizations that possess or are responsible for a portion of a weapon systems, non-weapon system, or activity.

Using Command—A command, agency or unit identified in relation to an assigned weapon system, non-weapon system, or activity.

Weapon System—A combination of one or more weapons with all related equipment, materials, services, personnel, and means of delivery and deployment (if applicable) required for self-sufficiency.