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SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE**

**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
POLICY DIRECTIVE 62-6**



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Developmental Engineering

AIRWORTHINESS

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(Darlene J. Costello USSF: SF/SQ
(Stephen G. Purdy, Senior Coordinator))

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This publication implements Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 5030.61, *DoD Airworthiness Policy*. This publication defines how the Department of the Air Force (DAF) ensures airworthiness is established and maintained throughout the life cycle of air systems. This publication applies to all civilian employees and uniformed members of the entire Department of the Air Force, and those with a contractual obligation to abide by the terms of DAF publications. Ensure all records generated as a result of processes prescribed in this publication adhere to Air Force Instruction 33-322, *Records Management and Information Governance Program*, and are disposed in accordance with the Air Force Records Disposition Schedule, which is located in the Air Force Records Information Management System. Refer recommended changes and questions about this publication to the office of primary responsibility using the DAF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*; route DAF Form 847 from the field through the appropriate functional chain of command. This Department of the Air Force policy directive (DAFPD) may not be supplemented.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This revision updates the format to comply with Department of the Air Force Instruction 90-160, *Publications and Forms Management*, implements guidance to streamline and clarify publications, and reflects the stand-up of the United States Space Force (USSF).

1. Overview. Airworthiness, as defined in DoDI 5030.61, is the property of an air system configuration to safely attain, sustain, and complete flight in accordance with approved usage limits. DAF airworthiness uses risk management principals to provide DAF government and contractor personnel the appropriate level of safety of flight adapted to Department of Defense (DoD)-unique requirements. DAF airworthiness activities encompass the entire lifecycle management of DAF owned or contracted air systems, to include design, production, operation, and maintenance.

1.1. Design. DAF ensures air system designs are assessed in accordance with airworthiness criteria appropriate for the air system type and intended use. The DAF, when appropriate, issues airworthiness approvals governing the design and associated technical data.

1.2. Production. The DAF ensures manufacturers evaluate and control their production processes in order to reliably produce each individual DAF air system in accordance with its approved design.

1.3. Operation. The DAF ensures air systems are operated in accordance with the approved design and associated technical data.

1.4. Maintenance. The DAF ensures air systems are maintained in accordance with the approved design and associated technical data.

2. Policy. It is DAF policy that all air systems that are owned, leased, operated, used, designed, or modified by the DAF must have completed an airworthiness assessment and must have an airworthiness approval issued by an appropriate airworthiness authority prior to first DAF flight. The DAF shall:

2.1. Design and/or modify air systems to comply with airworthiness criteria appropriate for the air system type and intended use (when applicable, using Military Handbook-516, *Airworthiness Certification Criteria*). Prior to fielding, DAF-designed or DAF-modified air systems shall substantially comply with their appropriate airworthiness criteria and therefore pose reduced risk to the warfighter and to the mission.

2.2. Conduct airworthiness assessments, when appropriate, to evaluate air system configurations, utilizing airworthiness criteria appropriate for the air system type and intended use, assess airworthiness risks, if present, and define operating limitations and other operating information necessary to ensure appropriately safe air systems.

2.3. Utilize, when appropriate, airworthiness approvals issued by the Federal Aviation Administration and other military department airworthiness authorities.

2.4. Ensure each air system configuration is produced, operated, and maintained in accordance with the design and associated technical data identified in the airworthiness approval.

2.5. In cases where a timely airworthiness assessment or approval is not feasible, military commanders retain the prerogative to conduct missions while employing prudent risk mitigation measures.

3. Responsibilities.

3.1. Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics (SAF/AQ):

3.1.1. Is responsible for DAF-level airworthiness policy and guidance.

3.1.2. Ensures airworthiness requirements are included in acquisition, contracting, and sustainment policies, including those addressing joint programs.

3.1.3. Through air system Program Executive Officers and Program Managers (as defined in Air Force Policy Directive 63-1/20-1, *Integrated Life Cycle Management*):

3.1.3.1. Ensures air systems are designed and/or modified in compliance with airworthiness criteria appropriate for the air system type and intended use.

3.1.3.2. Obtains DAF airworthiness approvals for managed air systems.

3.1.3.3. Ensures managed air systems conform to approved designs and associated technical data.

3.2. DAF Airworthiness Authority, Commander, AF Materiel Command (AFMC/CC):

3.2.1. Works with SAF/AQ to maintain DAF-level airworthiness policy and guidance.

3.2.2. Works with stakeholders to resolve inconsistencies in DAF airworthiness-related policies.

3.2.3. Conducts airworthiness assessments and issues DAF airworthiness approvals.

3.2.4. Designates a Technical Airworthiness Authority to lead the engineering organization that independently assesses airworthiness for the DAF. The Technical Airworthiness Authority has delegated and delegable authority to oversee airworthiness assessments and issue airworthiness approvals on behalf of the DAF Airworthiness Authority.

3.2.5. Organizes, trains, and equips an airworthiness office that is familiar with federal regulations and Departmental policy, guidance, and standards to manage and control the DAF airworthiness process. The airworthiness office will be sufficiently independent of acquisition program and operational influence to conduct objective airworthiness assessments and support the Airworthiness Authority's and Technical Airworthiness Authority's issuance of airworthiness approvals and oversight of DAF airworthiness.

3.2.6. Organizes, trains, and equips engineering workforce to provide expertise and direction to design and assess air systems.

3.3. Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Space Acquisition and Integration (SAF/SQ) ensures that Space acquisition program offices operate or use only those air systems (including but not limited to leased or contracted air systems) that have a valid airworthiness approval.

3.4. Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations (AF/A3) ensures operational policies and implementing direction are consistent with DAF airworthiness policy and instruction.

3.5. Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, Engineering and Force Protection (AF/A4) ensures maintenance and logistics policies and implementing direction are consistent with DAF airworthiness policy and instruction.

3.6. Deputy Chief of Staff for Air Force Futures (AF/A5/7) ensures that requirements policies and implementing direction are consistent with DAF airworthiness policy and instruction.

3.7. Chief of Safety (AF/SE):

3.7.1. Ensures safety and risk management policies and implementing direction are consistent with DAF airworthiness policy and instruction.

3.7.2. Collects airworthiness-related flight safety information and makes it available to organizations consistent with safety privilege guidelines.

3.8. Director, Air Force Test and Evaluation (AF/TE) ensures test policies and implementing direction are consistent with DAF airworthiness policy and instruction.

3.9. Deputy Chief of Space Operations for Operations, Cyber, and Nuclear (SF/COO) coordinates United States Space Force participation in DAF airworthiness assurance activities, primarily for air systems owned, leased, operated, used, or modified by the field commands.

3.10. Major Command Commanders, Field Command Commanders, and Director, Air National Guard:

3.10.1. Ensure major commands, field commands, and the Air National Guard's policies and implementing directions are consistent with DAF airworthiness policy and instruction.

3.10.2. Operate or use only those air systems (including but not limited to leased or contracted air systems) having a valid airworthiness approval.

3.10.3. Operate or use only those air systems (including but not limited to leased or contracted air systems) with qualified aircrew and maintenance personnel in accordance with approved technical data.

3.10.4. Ensure modifications of assigned air systems are authorized by the Program Manager.

3.10.5. Obtain an airworthiness assessment prior to passenger or crew flight in foreign owned military aircraft.

GARY ASHWORTH
Acting Secretary of the Air Force

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

Department of Defense Instruction 5030.61, *DoD Airworthiness Policy*, 4 Dec 2024

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

Department of the Air Force Instruction 90-160, *Publications and Forms Management*, 14 April 2022

Military-Handbook-516, *Airworthiness Certification Criteria*, 12 December 2014

Military-Standard-882, *Department of Defense Standard Practice – System Safety*, 11 May 2012

Air Force Policy Directive 63-1/20-1, *Integrated Life Cycle Management*, 7 Aug 2018

Adopted Forms

DAF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFPD—Air Force Policy Directive

DAF—Department of the Air Force

DAFPD—Department of the Air Force Policy Directive

DoD—Department of Defense

DoDI—Department of Defense Instruction

USSF—United States Space Force

Office Symbols

AF/A3—Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations

AF/A4—Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics, Engineering and Force Protection

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

AF/SE—Chief of Safety (AF/SE)

AF/TE—Director, Air Force Test and Evaluation

AFMC/CC—Commander, AF Materiel Command

SAF/AQ—Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics

SAF/AQR—Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Science, Technology and Engineering

SAF/SQ—Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Space Acquisition and Integration

SF/COO—Deputy Chief of Space Operations for Operations, Cyber, and Nuclear

Terms

Airworthiness—The property of an air system configuration to safely attain, sustain, and complete flight in accordance with approved usage limits.

Airworthiness Approval—Documents issued by an empowered airworthiness authority and may take a number of different forms (e.g., airworthiness release, military-type certificate, flight clearance) depending on specific airworthiness authority policy.

Air system—An air vehicle plus the training and support systems for the air vehicle (e.g., communications, control, ground/surface/control station, launch and recovery, and support elements, electronic flight bags, aircrew flight equipment), and any weapons to be employed on the air vehicle. For example, an unmanned aircraft system is an air system. An air vehicle, manned or unmanned, is a subset of its associated air system (Military Handbook-516). This definition does not include space systems or space vehicles.

Passenger—An individual (to include service members, DoD civilians, and contractors) onboard the aircraft who is not identified as aircrew, operational support, and authorized non-interference members on aeronautical orders or other flight authorizations.