

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

**AIR FORCE POLICY DIRECTIVE 38-4**

**23 AUGUST 2018**



***Manpower and Organization***

***CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND  
AIRMEN POWERED BY INNOVATION  
PROGRAM***

**COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY**

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(Mr. Richard W. Lombardi)

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This Air Force Policy Directive implements Department of Defense Instruction 5010.43, *Implementation and Management of the DoD-Wide Continuous Process Improvement/Lean Six Sigma (CPI/LSS) Program*; Department of Defense Directive 5010.42, *DoD-Wide Continuous Process Improvement (CPI)/Lean Six Sigma (LSS) Program*; Department of Defense Instruction 1400.25, *DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Awards*. This Directive was developed in collaboration with the Chief of Air Force Reserve (AF/RE) and the Director of the Air National Guard (NGB/CF). The Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, Management (SAF/MG) develops policy for Continuous Process Improvement policy and the Airmen Powered by Innovation program which apply to all Total Force Airmen (e.g. Regular, Reserve, and Guard Airmen and civilians).

Refer recommended changes and questions about this publication to the Office of Primary Responsibility using the AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*; route AF Forms 847 from the field through appropriate functional's chain of command. Ensure all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with Air Force Manual 33-363, *Management of Records*, and disposed of in accordance with Air Force Records Information Management System Records Disposition Schedule.

### **SUMMARY OF CHANGES**

This Directive has been substantially revised and needs to be completely reviewed. Major changes include a new publication title, formalization of the Air Force's continuous improvement and innovation processes, and the deletion of sample metrics and terms.

**1. Overview.** This Directive outlines the Air Force's continuous process improvement and Airmen Powered by Innovation program constructs and assigns responsibilities to support and implement the same.

**2. Policy.**

2.1. The Air Force will:

2.1.1. Institutionalize continuous process improvement and innovation concepts and tools into the organizational culture to promote transparency and replication of successful continuous process improvement projects;

2.1.2. Implement a common set of continuous process improvement standards for training, and certification;

2.1.3. Establish a knowledge management and information sharing capability to foster continuous process improvement projects and replicate best practices.

2.2. The Air Force will establish Total Force program that connect Airmen to Senior Leaders and provide awards for approved ideas.

**3. Responsibilities.**

3.1. The Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force, Management and Deputy Chief Management Officer (SAF/MG) provides oversight of Air Force policies and execution on behalf of the Under Secretary and issues guidance and directions on all matters pertaining to Continuous Process Improvement and the Airmen Powered by Innovation programs.

3.2. The Deputy Chief of Staff, Manpower, Personnel and Services (AF/A1) will collaborate with SAF/MG to maintain continuous improvement as an Air Force institutional competency.

3.2.1. Include appropriate continuous improvement curricula in professional military education and leadership development opportunities.

3.2.2. Institute continuous improvement and innovation tools in a manner that promotes transparency and replication of successful process improvements across the Air Force.

3.3. All Headquarters Air Force senior leadership, major commands, field operating agencies, and direct reporting units will support SAF/MG by directing, implementing, and supporting this policy directive within their organization(s).

3.4. Commanders and civilian leader equivalents at all levels are responsible for ensuring:

3.4.1. Continuous process improvement tools and methodologies are used to eliminate wasteful, ineffective or unsafe business practices.

3.4.2. A culture of innovation is fostered within the unit to gain efficiencies and positively affect change.

3.4.3. Their organization's managers, supervisors, and Airmen understand and utilize Air Force Continuous Process Improvement and the Airmen Powered by Innovation programs.

HEATHER WILSON  
Secretary of the Air Force

**Attachment 1**

**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

***References***

Department of Defense Directive 5010.42, *DoD-Wide Continuous Process Improvement (CPI)/Lean Six Sigma (LSS) Program*, 15 May 2008

Department of Defense Instruction 5010.43, *Implementation and Management of the DoD-Wide Continuous Process Improvement/Lean Six Sigma (CPI/LSS) Program*, 17 July 2009

Department of Defense Instruction 1400.25 Vol 451, *DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Awards*, 4 November 2013

Air Force Manual 33-363, *Management of Records*, 1 March 2008

***Adopted Forms***

Air Force Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*