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OF THE AIR FORCE**

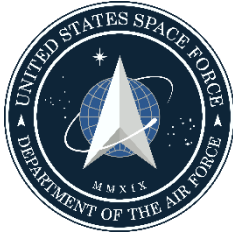
**SPACE FORCE INSTRUCTION 16-403**

**26 OCTOBER 2023**

*Incorporating Change 1, 24 JULY 2024*

**Operations Support**

**SPACE FORCE WEAPON  
SYSTEM NAMING AND DESIGNATORS**



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This publication implements Air Force Policy Directive (AFPD) 16-4, *Accounting for Aerospace Vehicles at Units and Installations*, and AF/A8 Delegation of Authority to SF/S8P – *Space Force Weapon System Naming and Designations*, 18 August 2023. It provides guidance and procedures for designating and naming United States Space Force (USSF) weapon systems to include military spacecraft. This Space Force Instruction (SPFI) defines the roles and responsibilities of required organizations, the processes for requesting new or retiring old designators and popular names, and the relationship between military designators and names. Additionally, descriptions of standardized weapon system designator symbols, military department contacts, and sample weapon system designator and popular name request letters are provided. This publication may not be supplemented or further implemented/extended. 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 (OPR) using the Department of the Air Force (DAF) Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*; route DAF Forms 847 from the field through the appropriate functional chain of command. The authorities to waive wing or unit level requirements in this publication are identified with a Tier (“T-0, T-1, T-2, T-3”) number following the compliance statement. See Department of the Air Force Manual (DAFMAN) 90-161, *Publishing Processes and Procedures*, for a description of the authorities associated with the tier numbers. Submit requests for waivers through the chain of command to the appropriate tier waiver approval authority or alternately to the requestor’s commander for non-tiered compliance items.

## SUMMARY OF CHANGES

This update modifies SPFI 16-403 by redefining the nomenclature for spacecraft vehicle designators. The changes reflect updates to expanding the roles and responsibilities, and the nomenclature for space-based and terrestrial vehicles, as listed in [Figure 3.1](#). The new implementation aims to simplify and clarify the existing basic mission sets and environments and includes the terrestrial nomenclature for a consolidated listing of weapon system designation. The update adds new designators and terminology to the nomenclature system for "systems, platforms, and vehicles," which must be considered as part of mission designation. In addition, [Chapter 4](#) has been removed and merged into [Chapter 3](#), simplifying the nomenclature for weapon system identification for both space-based and terrestrial systems. [Chapter 5](#) has been updated to include concurrence for weapon system designation requests by PEO, SAF/SQ, and FLDCOMs. A margin bar (|) indicates newly revised material.

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## Chapter 1

### OVERVIEW

**1.1. Overview.** This instruction establishes guidance and procedures for requesting a weapon system designator and/or a popular name for USSF weapon systems. It defines the roles and responsibilities of required organizations, the processes for requesting new or retiring old designators and popular names, and the relationship between weapon system designators and names. This instruction offers guidance on the following: generating, collecting, evaluating, and processing weapon system designator and popular name requests, specifying required and essential coordinating organizations; outlining weapon system designator and popular name approval authorities; determining “next-in-series” designators; publishing updates to this instruction; and a single USSF-wide list of approved designators and popular names for USSF weapon systems, to include spacecraft and terrestrial weapon systems. Additionally, this instruction provides the required evaluation criteria and designator request package templates, and standardized weapon system designator symbols.

**1.2. Purpose.** The intended purpose of this structure is to provide the Joint Force with a common and easily understood vocabulary for all space weapon systems. This publication applies to all uniformed members of the United States Space Force, DAF civilian employees, United States Air Force assigned or attached to Space Force units and those with a contractual obligation to abide by the terms of DAF issuances.

**1.3. Scope.** This instruction applies to all USSF spacecraft, and self-contained ground systems. Weapon Systems are defined by Joint Publication (JP) 3-0 as “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.”

**1.4. Implementation.** This instruction is effective upon the signature of the certifying official. Full compliance with this instruction is mandatory one year after signature. However, this instruction does not require an update for all current weapon systems.

1.4.1. All new weapon systems developed after the effective date of this instruction will require a designator. The designator will be applied when the weapon system has reached a relevant point of development as determined by the Program Executive Officer (PEO) or no later than Preliminary Design Review (PDR) or equivalent.

1.4.2. Organizations may request to apply this instruction to current weapon systems. Inclusion of these weapon systems requires the approval of the Deputy Chief of Space Operations for Strategy and Resources, commonly called the Chief Strategy and Resourcing Officer (CSRO), prior to submitting the weapon system designator or popular name request.

1.4.3. All weapon systems currently in development, and prior to System Fielding Decision or equivalent, will require a new weapon system designator and popular name.

**1.5. Weapon System Designator Definition.** The weapon system designator is an official alpha-numeric designation of USSF weapon systems. A standardized set of symbols are used to characterize the weapon system by its intended mission. The designator describes the weapon system using two components where the components are separated by a dash. The first component, comprised only of alpha characters, describes the mission of the weapon system. The second component, comprised of alpha-numeric characters, describes the design number and the design series of the weapon system.

## Chapter 2

### ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### **2.1. United States Space Force, Chief of Space Operations (SF/CSO):**

- 2.1.1. Oversees all delegated aspects of the USSF weapon system designation and naming program.
- 2.1.2. Provides CSRO guidance and intent on popular names.

#### **2.2. Headquarters United States Space Force, Deputy Chief of Space Operations for Operations, Cyber, and Nuclear (SF/COO):**

- 2.2.1. Coordinates on assignment of popular names.
- 2.2.2. Conducts trademark search and all other necessary intellectual property rights clearances of proposed USSF popular names.

#### **2.3. Assistant Secretary of the Air Force Space Acquisitions and Integration (SAF/SQ):**

- 2.3.1. Coordinates on assignment of weapon system designator and USSF popular name.

#### **2.4. Headquarters United States Space Force, Deputy Chief of Space Operations for Strategy, Plans, Programs, and Requirements (SF/CSRO):**

- 2.4.1. Coordinates on assignment of popular names.
- 2.4.2. Oversees the assignment and publishing of designators and popular names.
- 2.4.3. Upon publication of approved designators and popular names, notifies the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Space Policy (OASD/SP) of assignment of new USSF weapon system designation and popular names.

#### **2.5. Headquarters United States Space Force, Director of Plans and Programs (SF/S8P):**

- 2.5.1. Executes weapon system naming and designation functions.
- 2.5.2. Serves as the approval authority for all USSF weapon system popular names and designators.
- 2.5.3. Has the authority to delegate any aspect of the USSF weapon system naming and designation program, as appropriate, that would best serve in the capacity of fulfilling program execution.
- 2.5.4. Upon issuance of this instruction, or any successor publication, coordinate with AF/A8P to ensure incorporation into the next revision of Department of Air Force Instruction (DAFI) 16-401, *Designating and Naming Defense Military Aerospace Vehicles*, or any successor publication.

#### **2.6. Headquarters United States Space Force, Chief of Planning and Analysis Division (SF/S8PX):**

- 2.6.1. Serves as the central point of contact (POC) for administrating the USSF weapon system naming and designation program.
- 2.6.2. Serves as the central collection point for USSF designator and popular name requests.

2.6.3. Reviews, processes, tracks, and staffs USSF designator and popular name requests.

2.6.4. Assigns the next-in-series USSF designator (as applicable).

2.6.5. Publishes and maintains a USSF-wide single source list of approved designators and popular names.

2.6.6. Notifies POC of final request status.

2.6.7. Upon approval of designators and popular names, coordinate with AF/A8PE for inclusion into the formal DoD-wide list of approved MDS designators and popular names.

## **2.7. Director of Public Affairs, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force (SAF/PA):**

2.7.1. Coordinates on assignment of USSF popular names.

2.7.2. Coordinates with the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (OASD/PA) on assignment of USSF popular names.

2.7.3. Reviews, processes, tracks, and staffs USSF designator and popular name requests.

2.7.4. Assigns the next-in-series USSF designator (as applicable).

2.7.5. Publishes and maintains a USSF-wide single source list of approved designators and popular names.

2.7.6. Upon approval of designators and popular names, coordinate with AF/A8PE for inclusion into the formal DoD-wide list of approved MDS designators and popular names.

2.7.7. Notifies POC of final request status.

## **2.8. General Counsel, Department of the Air Force (SAF/GC):**

2.8.1. Coordinates on assignment of USSF popular names.

2.8.2. Conducts trademark search and all other necessary intellectual property rights clearances of proposed USSF popular names.

## **2.9. Office of The Judge Advocate General (AF/JA):**

2.9.1. Coordinates on assignment of USSF popular names.

2.9.2. Provides legal advice, assistance, and litigation support on operations, organizational, trademark, and copyright laws.

## **2.10. United States Space Force Field Command Commander (FLDCOM/CC):**

2.10.1. Coordinates on requests for fielded and/or operational systems, as well as assignment of popular names submitted by subordinate Delta Commander.

2.10.2. Submits USSF designator request on behalf of operations squadron IAW [paragraph 1.4.2](#).

## **2.11. United States Space Force Delta Commander:**

2.11.1. Submits USSF popular names on behalf of operations squadron.

2.11.2. Submits USSF designator request for fielded systems on behalf of operations squadron IAW [paragraph 1.4.2](#).

**2.12. Program Executive Officer (PEO):**

2.12.1. Submits USSF weapon system designator request for systems in development IAW [paragraph 1.4.1](#) and [paragraph 1.4.3](#).

2.12.2. Coordinates on requests for popular name for weapon system under the PEO's purview.



## Chapter 3

### SPACECRAFT DESIGNATOR

#### 3.1. Weapon System Designator Definition:

3.1.1. Standard space-based and terrestrial weapon system designators are comprised of the following: modified mission (optional), basic mission (required), environment (required).

3.1.2. Only one designator symbol can be selected from each optional and required symbol category. For example, each system, platform, or vehicle may only have one symbol selected (as applicable) as a modified mission, basic mission, and environment designator.

#### 3.2. Weapon System Designator Nomenclature System.

3.2.1. Basic Mission. The basic mission is the first required designator. This designator describes the primary mission of the systems, platforms, or vehicles. Authorized designators are:

3.2.1.1. **A – Attack** : Systems, platforms, or vehicles designed to attack enemy forces or equipment.

3.2.1.2. **B – Battle Management**: Systems, platforms, or vehicles designed to direct and control friendly forces tactically engaged with an adversary.

3.2.1.3. **C – Communications**: Systems, platforms, or vehicles designed to support communication or data transport activities.

3.2.1.4. **D – Defend**: Systems, platforms, or vehicles that can protect friendly forces.

3.2.1.5. **E – Electromagnetic Warfare**: Systems, platforms, or vehicles designed to attack, protect, or exploit signals in the electromagnetic spectrum.

3.2.1.6. **K – Support**: Systems, platforms, or vehicles designed to ensure maintainability of space of space missions or payloads. Includes activities such as hosting, deploying, maintaining, sustaining, or servicing space vehicles or payloads while in orbit.

3.2.1.7. **M – Meteorological**: Systems, platforms, or vehicles designed to observe, record, or relay meteorological and oceanographic data.

3.2.1.8. **N – Navigation Warfare**: Systems, platforms, or vehicles that conduct navigation, positioning, and timing or navigation warfare activities (i.e., Resilient Global Positioning Systems and/or Position, Navigation, and Timing (PNT))

3.2.1.9. **P – Pursuit**: Systems, platforms, or vehicles designed to intercept space targets in support of offensive and defensive operations.

3.2.1.10. **R – Reconnaissance**: Systems, platforms, or vehicles designed to perform targeted collection of intelligence and/or threat indications and warning to answer specific military questions.

3.2.1.11. **S – Surveillance**: Systems, platforms, or vehicles designed for persistent collection of intelligence and/or threat indications and warning on a target within a terrestrial, orbital, or cyber battlespace.

3.2.1.12. **W – Warning & Tracking:** Systems, platforms, designed for the systematic observation of aerospace for the purpose of detecting, tracking, and characterizing terrestrial, air, and missile threats.

3.2.2. Environment. This is the second required designator. It describes the orbital regime in which the spacecraft operates. This designator will differentiate space vehicles and terrestrial weapon systems with the same basic mission but a different environmental regime. The environmental designator is comprised of the following eight different designators:

3.2.2.1. **C – Cyberspace Domain:** A domain within the information environment consisting of the interdependent network of information technology infrastructures, including the Internet, telecommunications networks, computer systems, and embedded processors and controllers.

3.2.2.2. **D – Deep Space:** Deep space is any orbit beyond the cislunar regime.

3.2.2.3. **G – Geosynchronous/stationary Orbit (GEO):** An orbit synchronized to the Earth's rotation, orbiting at the same rate at which the Earth rotates upon its axis. Satellites in this orbit have an altitude of approximately 36,000 km above the Earth's surface and create a figure eight ground trace over the ground. This designator includes Geosynchronous or Geostationary as the key point of reference to describe their main mission orbital regime.

3.2.2.4. **H – Highly Elliptical Orbit (HEO):** A non-circular orbit with eccentricity greater than .2 that extend into other orbital regimes. Two common examples of this regime are the Tundra and Molniya orbits. Both of which have low perigee (LEO altitude) and a high apogee (GEO altitude).

3.2.2.5. **L – Low Earth Orbit (LEO):** Orbits that are at a height of approximately 2,000 km or less above the surface of the earth and average time to orbit the earth of approximately 90-100 minutes.

3.2.2.6. **M – Medium Earth Orbit (MEO):** A roughly circular orbit between low earth orbit and geosynchronous orbit (approximately between 2,000 and 36,000 km).

3.2.2.7. **T – Terrestrial:** Systems, platforms, vehicles systems with this designator are designed to enable effects within the space domain, but conduct operations within the land, air, and maritime domain.

3.2.2.8. **V – Various:** Systems, platforms, vehicles with this designator are designed to operate across multiple orbital regimes or domains. Space vehicles with this nomenclature can either move between multiple orbits or can be the identical platform located at various orbits.

3.2.3. Modified Mission. The modified mission prefix is an optional prefix, and if used, indicates modification of a system, platform, or vehicle's basic mission. It is the first letter in the weapon system designator.

3.2.3.1. **T – Test/Training/Range:** Systems, platforms, or vehicles designed or permanently modified for test, training, and/or range purposes.

3.2.3.2. **X – Experimental:** Systems, platforms, vehicles with a primary mission of experimentation.

3.2.3.3. **Y – Prototype:** Vehicle for evaluation of design, performance, and production potential.

3.2.3.4. **Z – Scientific/Calibration:** Vehicles designed for the collection, evaluation, analysis, and interpretation of scientific and technical information.

3.2.4. Vehicle Type Designator. The vehicle type designator consists of a number assigned to the vehicle type and a letter indicating the block. The vehicle type designator will be separated by a hyphen from the environment designator. The numerical portion of the vehicle type designator will be assigned sequentially for vehicle types sharing the same basic mission designator. The block designation will be “A” for the first spacecraft of the type, and incremented alphabetically for subsequent builds that differ substantially from the first.

3.2.4.1. DELETED

3.2.4.2. DELETED

3.2.4.3. DELETED

3.2.4.4. DELETED

**Figure 3.1. Weapon System Designators Table.**

Modified Mission (optional)	Basic Mission (required)	Environment (required)
T – Test/Training/Range	A – Attack	C – Cyberspace Domain
Y – Prototype	B – Battle Management	D – Deep Space
X – Experimental	C – Communications	G – Geosynchronous Orbit
Z – Scientific/Calibration	D – Defend	M – Medium Earth Orbit
	E – Electromagnetic Warfare	H – Highly Elliptical Orbit
	K – Support	L – Low Earth Orbit
	M – Meteorological	T – Terrestrial
	N – Navigation Warfare	V – Various
	P – Pursuit	
	R – Reconnaissance	
	S – Surveillance	
	W – Warning & Tracking	

**Figure 3.2. Notional Examples of Weapon System Designators.**

Weapon System Designator	Mission Description
WH-12	Notional SBIRS HEO based warning platform
NM-10F	Notional MEO PNT Constellation
ET-16	Notional Bounty Hunter platform

**Chapter 4 (DELETED)**

## Chapter 5

### WEAPON SYSTEM DESIGNATOR REQUEST PROCESS

#### 5.1. Procedures for Requesting a Designator:

##### 5.1.1. Preparing the Request.

5.1.1.1. Fully complete the Weapon System Designator Request Letter (reference [Attachment 2](#)).

5.1.1.2. Request letter paragraph two will remain blank or completed notionally until the Program Executive Officer (PEO) and/or SAF/SQ and FLDCOMs concurs with requested weapon system designator.

5.1.1.3. Request letters for fielded and/or operational systems will include concurrence by FLDCOMs.

5.1.1.4. SF/S8PX assigns the next-in-series weapon system designator for the specified weapon system mission and type.

5.1.1.5. Coordinate letter with requesting organization's respective chain of command point of contact.

5.1.1.6. Update request letter paragraph two and required attachments to reflect PEO and/or SAF/SQ and FLDCOMs concurs with requested weapon system designator concurrence with requested weapon system designator.

##### 5.1.2. Submitting the Request.

5.1.2.1. Review the request letter for the following information:

5.1.2.2. Complete weapon system designator requested.

5.1.2.3. Ensure the weapon system description is short, unclassified, and distinctive such that it is suitable for publication.

5.1.2.4. Ensure the name, office symbol, email address, and telephone number of the requesting official and agency is listed.

5.1.2.5. If designation request is classified, include declassification instructions. Classified designation requests must adhere to the process outlined herein and in accordance with Deputy Secretary of Defense's *Space Security Guidance Classification Policy*, 28 Dec 2023. Classified designation requests will be routed to the appropriate organization and/or workflow account on a classified environment or communications system. **(T-0)**

5.1.2.6. Send completed, fully coordinated weapon system designator request letter to SF/S8PX.

#### 5.2. Designator Request Letter Status and Closure:

5.2.1. Upon receipt of a weapon system designator request letter package, SF/S8PX acknowledges the requesting department or agency as either "Accepted" or "Rejected." SF/S8PX makes "Accepted" or "Rejected" determinations within five working days.

5.2.2. If the weapon system designator request letter is accepted, the requested designator will be processed by SF/S8PX within 45 calendar days after acceptance. Processing includes designator review and assignment, staffing the designator through proper USSF levels, and final approval determination by S8. The organization or agency requesting the designator will only be notified upon approval/disapproval of the designator or if processing exceeds 45 calendar days, whichever occurs first.

5.2.3. If the weapon system designator request letter is rejected, the requesting department or agency will be immediately notified with concise rationale for rejection. Request letter packages requiring revision or modification in order to re-apply for requested designator are fully re-submitted by the requesting department or agency.

5.2.4. Request letter acceptance does not constitute approval of the weapon system designator. Referencing an unapproved or pending weapon system designator in public announcements or other documentation is strictly prohibited.

5.2.5. Upon approval of the weapon system designator, SF/S8PX notifies the POC, SF/S8P, SF/CSRO, the SF/CSO, and other offices and agencies as appropriate, and provides a copy of the signed weapon system designator approval letter.

5.2.6. SF/S8PX adds/updates the weapon system designator on the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) DoDTechipedia webpage (monthly update if changes occur) or other appropriate venue for public release.

## Chapter 6

### WEAPON SYSTEM POPULAR NAME

#### 6.1. Weapon System Popular Name Definition.

6.1.1. The popular name is a matter of less specific construction but is aimed at providing an official common name that eases identification and communication regarding the weapon system.

6.1.2. The weapon system popular names characterize military spacecraft missions and aid communications and media references. Names must consist of no more than two distinct words.

6.1.3. Names assigned or used by the spacecraft's manufacturer are prohibited from use or reference as a USSF weapon system popular name without the manufacturer's permission and CSO approval. Manufacturer assigned names may be requested after a trademark review and the manufacturer's permission is granted – all transactions must be routed through local PA offices and documented.

#### 6.2. Popular Name Guidelines.

6.2.1. Names must be brief. Use no more than two short words. Choose a name that characterizes the mission and operational capabilities of the weapon system.

6.2.2. Do not request a name that sounds phonetically the same as another.

6.2.3. The popular name does not infringe upon any known brand names, trademarks, copyrights, or otherwise infringe upon or violate the intellectual property rights of others.

6.2.4. The popular name is within scope of DoD values and morals such that the name would not reflect negatively upon the DoD and is suitable for public release.

#### 6.3. Popular Name Request Eligibility. Prior to submitting any weapon system popular name request package, the following basic criteria must be met:

6.3.1. The weapon system designator of a military weapon system must be approved prior to or with the approval of the popular name. Requests for both a weapon system designator and popular name relating to the same weapon system may be submitted simultaneously. When submitting requests in separate packages, the weapon system designator request must be submitted and accepted prior to submitting the popular name request. Stand-alone requests for a weapon system popular name will be rejected if it relates to the following: an unapproved weapon system designator, a weapon system without a weapon system designator, or any anticipated weapon system designator request that has not yet been submitted and accepted for processing.

6.3.2. The weapon system has reached PDR or equivalent.

#### 6.4. Procedures for Requesting a Popular Name.

6.4.1. Preparing the Request.

6.4.1.1. Complete the Weapon System Popular Name Request Letter (reference [Attachment 3](#)).

6.4.1.2. Request letter **paragraph 2** will be completed notionally until PEO and using Field Command concur with requested weapon system popular name.

6.4.1.3. Research trademarked names and approved weapon system popular names and determine any unused popular names to be requested (reference published list or contact SF/S8PX).

6.4.1.4. Include at least three to five popular names, in order of preference, to increase the likelihood that one will clear the review process. No more than one popular name request package can be submitted for the same weapon system designator.

6.4.1.5. Update request letter paragraph two and attachment one to reflect PEO/SQ and Field Command concurrence with requested weapon system popular name.

6.4.1.6. Coordinate letter with local organization/agency's local legal office or Public Affairs office.

#### 6.4.2. Submitting the Request.

6.4.2.1. Review the request letter for the following information:

6.4.2.1.1. Verify each requested name is no more than two short words.

6.4.2.1.2. At least three requested names are submitted.

6.4.2.1.3. Verify the requested names are not already listed on the published list.

6.4.2.1.4. Ensure the name, office symbol, email address, and telephone number of the requesting official and agency is listed.

6.4.2.2. Send completed, fully coordinated weapon system popular name request letter to SF/S8PX.

### 6.5. Popular Name Request Letter Status and Closure.

6.5.1. Upon receipt of a weapon system popular name request letter package, SF/S8PX acknowledges the requesting department or agency as either "Accepted" or "Rejected." SF/S8PX makes "Accepted" or "Rejected" determinations within five working days.

6.5.1.1. If the weapon system popular name request letter is accepted, the requested popular name will be processed within 45 calendar days after acceptance. Processing includes popular name(s) review, staffing the name through OCSO, and final approval determination by SF/S8P. The organization or agency requesting the popular names will only be notified upon approval/disapproval of the selected popular name or if processing exceeds 45 calendar days, whichever occurs first.

6.5.1.1.1. Due to the potential impact that DoD sanctioned popular names can have on public and political views and perceptions of DoD agencies, SF/S8PX coordinates all popular names with SAF/PA and OASD/PA to ensure public and DoD suitability (reference DoDD 4120.15E, *Designating and Naming Military Aerospace Vehicles*).  
**(T-0)**



6.5.1.1.2. Additionally, due to the potential infringement of popular names on trademarks and copyright laws, all popular names are coordinated with SAF/GCQ. SAF/GCQ coordination and findings during a trademark search on requested popular names is provided to SF/S8PX and AF/JACQ. If litigation based on a potential or current weapon system popular name could occur, SF/S8PX or SAF/GCQ shall notify AF/JACQ. **(T-0)**

6.5.1.2. If the weapon system popular name request letter is rejected, the requesting department or agency will be immediately notified with concise rationale for rejection. Request letter packages requiring revision or modification in order to re-apply for requested popular names must be fully re-submitted by the requesting department or agency. SF/S8PX does not retain partial or rejected request packages.

6.5.2. Request letter acceptance does not constitute approval of a weapon system popular name. Referencing an unapproved or pending weapon system popular name in public announcements or other documentation is strictly prohibited.

6.5.3. Upon approval of a selected weapon system popular name, SF/S8PX notifies the requesting department or agency other offices and agencies as appropriate and provide a copy of the signed weapon system popular name approval letter.

6.5.3.1. SF/S8PX adds/updates the weapon system popular name on the Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC) DoDTechipedia webpage (monthly update if changes occur) or other appropriate venue for public release.

6.5.3.2. SF/S8PX notifies the USSF historian on the approval of a new popular name. A copy of the approval letter is forwarded to the historian as a matter of record.

## Chapter 7

### RETIREMENT AND REACTIVATION

**7.1. Weapon System Designator or Popular Name Retirement Request Eligibility.** A weapon system designator and/or popular name can be requested to be retired by using Delta Command if all the following conditions are met:

7.1.1. The weapon system designator and/or popular name is currently active/approved.

7.1.2. All weapon system components (i.e., spacecraft) within the specific weapon system designator and/or popular name will be retired from the service's (or services') inventory(ies) within 90 calendar days.

7.1.3. The PEO, SAF/SQ, FLDCOM/CC and the Delta command have concurred with the request to retire the weapon system designator and/or popular name.

**7.2. Weapon System Designator or Popular Name Reactivation Request Eligibility.** A weapon system designator and/or popular name can be requested to be reactivated if all the following conditions are met:

7.2.1. The weapon system designator and/or popular name is currently retired.

7.2.2. One or more weapon system components within the specific designator and/or popular name have been returned to their previous status and will be reactivated within the service's inventory within 90 calendar days.

7.2.3. The PEO, FLDCOM/CC and the using Delta command have concurred with the request to reactivate the designator and/or name.

**7.3. Procedures for Retiring or Reactivating a Weapon System Designator or Popular Name.**

7.3.1. Complete the Weapon System Retirement Request Letter (reference [Attachment 4](#)) if requesting to retire a weapon system designator and/or popular name.

7.3.2. Complete the Weapon System Designator Request Letter (reference [Attachment 2](#)) and/or the Weapon System Popular Name Request Letter (reference [Attachment 3](#)) if requesting to reactivate a weapon system designator and/or popular name.

7.3.3. Send request letter package to SF/S8PX.

**7.4. Retirement or Reactivation Request Letter Status and Closure.**

7.4.1. Upon receipt of a weapon system retirement or reactivation request letter package, SF/S8PX acknowledges the requesting department or agency normally within five working days as either "Weapon System Retirement Request Received" or "Weapon System Reactivation Request Received."

7.4.2. For weapon system retirement requests, SF/S8PX transfers the designator and/or popular name from an active to a retired status and removes the designator and/or popular name from published list (monthly update, if changes occur).

7.4.3. For weapon system reactivation requests, SF/S8PX transfers the designator and/or popular name from a retired status to an active status and adds the designator and/or popular name to the published list (monthly update, if changes occur).

SHAWN N BRATTON  
Lieutenant General, USSF  
Chief Strategy and Resourcing Officer

## Attachment 1

### \*GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

#### *References*

Department of Defense Directive 4120.15E, *Designating and Naming Military Aerospace Vehicles*, 29 November 2004

Department of the Air Force Instruction 16-401, *Designating and Naming Defense Military Aerospace Vehicles*, 3 November 2020

Air Force Policy Directive 16-4, *Accounting for Aerospace Vehicles at Units and Installations*, 20 November 2018

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

Deputy Secretary of Defense, *Space Security Guidance Classification Policy*, 28 Dec 2023

Department of the Air Force Manual 90-161, *Publishing Processes and Procedures*, 18 October 2023

DTIC DoDTechipedia

#### *Office Symbols*

**AF/A8PE**—Air Force Directorate of Programs, Program Integration Division

**AF/JA**—Headquarters, United States Air Force, Office of the Judge Advocate General

**AF/JACQ**—Air Force Acquisition, Fiscal Law and Litigation

**OASD/PA**—Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Public Affairs

**OASD/SP**—Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Space Policy

**SAF/GC**—General Counsel, Department of the Air Force

**SAF/PA**—Director of Public Affairs, Office of the Secretary of the Air Force

**SECAF**—Secretary of the Air Force

**SF/CSO**—Chief of Space Operations

**SF/COO**—Space Force Chief Operations Office

**SF/CSRO**—Space Force Chief Strategy and Resourcing Office

**SF/S8P**—Space Force Director of Plans and Programs

**SF/S8PX**—Space Force Planning and Analysis Division

#### *Terms*

**Preliminary Design Review**—Technical assessment that establishes the Allocated Baseline of a system to ensure a system is operationally effective.

**Orbital Regime**—Space beyond Earth’s atmosphere that consists of LEO, MEO, HEO, GEO, Cislunar, and deep space orbits.

**DTIC DoDTechipedia**—Repository system developed by DoD to facilitate increased communication and collaboration among DoD scientists, engineers, program managers, acquisition professionals and operational warfighters.

## Attachment 2

## WEAPON SYSTEM DESIGNATOR REQUEST LETTER TEMPLATE

Figure A2.1. Weapon System Designator Request Letter Template.

(Use Official Letterhead)

DD MMM YYYY

MEMORANDUM FOR SF/S8PX

FROM: Place your information here

SUBJECT: Weapon System Designator for (weapon system).

1. Request approval to assign <designator> to weapon system <new designator>.
2. Reference PEO and/or SAF/SQ or Field Command concurrence attached to this request. This attachment should be fairly detailed in describing the requirements of the PEO/SQ/Field Command and the description - in greater detail than in paragraph 3.g. below - of the items(s) being requested for weapon system designator approval. The attached letter should not only request the weapon system designator officially or give concurrence to but should expound on the items in detail listed in paragraph 3, below. Normally, it is not longer than one page. It should also be on the Official Letterhead, list a point-of-contact, and be signed as well. Both of these letters define the position of the service or other department concerning the weapon system designator, in case there is any litigation.
3. The following information is offered for inclusion in DoD publication:
  - a. Designator: (reference SPFI 16-403)
  - b. Manufacturer: Self-explanatory
  - c. Popular Name: List "None" if it does not have an officially approved popular name.
  - d. Using Service: Self-explanatory
  - e. Description: Keep it short/simple; this is what will go in DoD publication.
4. Any questions can be directed to point of contact name, phone number (DSN and or commercial), and email address.

Signature

NAME

Title (area of responsibility)

**1 Attachments:**

- 1. PEO and/or SAF/SQ or Field Command Request/Concurrence**

## Attachment 3

## WEAPON SYSTEM POPULAR NAME REQUEST LETTER TEMPLATE

Figure A3.1. Weapon System Popular Name Request Letter Template.

(Use Official Letterhead)

DD MMM YYYY

MEMORANDUM FOR SF/S8PX

**FROM:** Place your information here

**SUBJECT:** Popular Name Request for (USSF weapon system)

1. Request consideration of and approval to assign a Popular Name to <weapon system>.
2. Reference PEO and/or SAF/SQ and Field Command, request/concurrence attached to this request. This attachment should be fairly detailed in describing the requirements for the Popular Name(s) being requested for approval. The attached letter should not only request the Popular Name(s) officially or give concurrence to but should place them in an order of priority. Normally, it is not longer than one page. It should also be on Letterhead, list a point-of-contact, and be signed as well. Both of these letters define the position of the Space Force or other department concerning the Popular Name(s), in case there is any litigation. List any further pertinent information related to this subject that will help in the process of obtaining the Popular Name.
3. The following names are being submitted for consideration as Popular Name(s) in their order of priority.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
  - e.
4. Any questions can be directed to point of contact name, phone number (DSN and/or commercial), and email address.

Signature

NAME



**Title (area of responsibility)**

**1 Attachments:**

- 1. PEO and/or SAF/SQ and Field Command Request/Concurrence**

## Attachment 4

## WEAPON SYSTEM RETIREMENT REQUEST LETTER TEMPLATE

Figure A4.1. Weapon System Retirement Request Letter Template.

(Use Official Letterhead)

DD MMM YYYY

MEMORANDUM FOR SF/S8PX

**FROM:** Place your information here

**SUBJECT:** Weapon System Designator Retirement Request for USSF weapon system

1. Request consideration of and approval to retire <designator/popular name/designator and name> for USSF weapon system.

2. Reference PEO and/or SAF/SQ and Field Command, request/concurrence attached to this request. Normally, it is not longer than one page. It should also be on Letterhead, list a point-of-contact, and be signed as well. Both of these letters define the position of the Space Force concerning the weapon system designator retirement, in case there is any litigation. List any further pertinent information related to this subject that will help in the process of retiring the designator or popular name or both.

3. The following weapon system designator and popular name (if applicable) are being submitted for consideration as retired:

**Designator:**

**Popular Name (if applicable):**

4. Any questions can be directed to point of contact name, phone number (DSN and/or commercial), and email address.

Signature

NAME

Title (area of responsibility)

**1 Attachment:**

1. PEO and/or SAF/SQ, FLDCOM, and Delta Command Request/Concurrence