

Air Force Strategic Plan

Volume 2

Performance Plan



FEBRUARY 1999

AIR FORCE MISSION:

To defend the United States through control and exploitation of air and space.

AIR FORCE VISION STATEMENT:

Air Force people building the world's most respected Air and Space Force global power and reach for America

AIR FORCE CORE COMPETENCIES:

Our Nation's Air Force develops, trains, sustains and integrates the elements of air and space power to produce:

- **Air and Space Superiority**
- **Global Attack**
- **Rapid Global Mobility**
- **Precision Engagement**
- **Information Superiority**
- **Agile Combat Support**

Speed, flexibility, and the global nature of its reach and perspective distinguish the Air Force's execution of its Core Competencies.

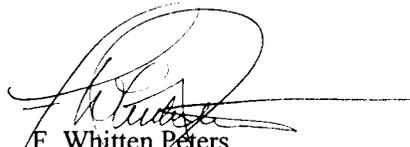
Department of the Air Force Washington, DC

The mission of the United States Air Force is to defend our nation through control and exploitation of air and space. Global Engagement: A Vision for the 21st Century Air Force provides a common direction for the total force as it supports the full spectrum of military operations through the next century. Global Engagement also acknowledges that “the real challenge is to make the vision actionable and implementable.” The Air Force Strategic Plan is designed to incorporate all Air Force planning within a common framework. At the same time, it is designed to provide flexibility in planning at the MAJCOM and unit levels. It contains two major planning frameworks: Performance Planning and Future Capabilities Planning. This volume, the Air Force Strategic Plan Volume 2 - Performance Plan provides a common framework for day-to-day performance, operational inspections, compliance inspections, and self assessments. **It does this by aligning commander’s priorities to mission accomplishment at three levels: HQ USAF, MAJCOM and Wing. Each Air Force Mission Essential Task is coupled with a way to measure success through a performance measure and a standard for successful performance.** The Performance Plan thus contains Air Force goals, Air Force mission essential tasks, performance measures (metrics) and performance standards that support DoD goals and meet the legislative requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993.

This first edition of the Air Force Performance Plan establishes a framework which we will build upon in the future as we develop new goals, clarify our Mission Essential Tasks and refine our performance measures. Areas where we’ll focus during the first review cycle include development of additional measures of efficiency and cost reduction, including Defense Reform Initiatives, and addition of stretch goals to all our performance measures.

The Performance Plan is the cornerstone for managing, tracking, and enhancing performance in the Air Force. Enhancing performance begins with finding better, faster, and cheaper ways of executing the Air Force mission. This will be realized through a commitment to continuous improvement that will require a revitalized approach to quality. We accomplish this by empowering our people, streamlining our processes and organizations, and pursuing all opportunities to improve our capabilities to serve the nation. **“If we perform our assigned mission tasks with excellence and improve that performance in a measurable way, we are *operationalizing quality*.”**


General Michael Ryan
General, USAF
Chief of Staff


F. Whitten Peters
Acting Secretary of the Air Force

AIR FORCE STRATEGIC PLANNING

Global Engagement: A Vision for the 21st Century Air Force provides a coherent, shared vision of the United States Air Force. It describes our core competencies and core values. It is what we are all about and where we are headed. In charting the course for the future, the vision is the first step in Air Force planning. Air Force planning, from a broad perspective, encompasses two major elements: performance planning and future capabilities planning.

Performance planning is aimed at enhancing the performance of near-term Mission Essential Tasks (METs). Performance planning “operationalizes” quality by establishing Air Force goals, aligning tasks to mission, and establishing performance priorities. Performance measures at the headquarters level assess how well we are accomplishing Headquarters Air Force METs in support of Air Force goals. MAJCOMs develop their own Performance Plans, which support the Air Force-level strategic plan, by identifying their own measurable tasks to focus on.

Long-Range planning is aimed at developing the future capabilities the Air Force needs to achieve its vision. At the heart of future capabilities planning is the Air Force Modernization Planning Process (MPP), which takes the strategic direction and planning priorities from the Air Force senior leadership regarding capabilities development and prepares implementation plans to achieve that direction.

AIR FORCE STRATEGIC PLAN

The *Air Force Strategic Plan* is comprised of three distinct, but closely integrated volumes:

Volume 1 – Future Security Environment

Volume 2 – Air Force Performance Plan

Volume 3 – Air Force Long-Range Planning Guidance

Each volume uniquely contributes to the implementation of the Air Force vision and supports the Air Force mission through its emphasis on critical issues that affect the total force. Volumes 1, 2, and 3 are published separately. Air Force Policy Directive (AFPD) 90-X, to be published in spring 1999, will provide policy guidance on strategic planning. Current information on the Air Force Strategic Plan is located at http://www.xp.hq.af.mil/xpx/afsp_c.htm .

Volume 1: Future Security Environment

In what environment must we fight and win?

Volume 1 provides the security environment framework and common planning assumptions that should serve as a basis for all Air Force planning. This volume defines the future security environment in which US forces will have to operate. The volume also describes various areas that will challenge the efficiency and effectiveness of the future Air Force and prescribes general task-oriented capabilities that the future force will need in order to successfully meet those emerging challenges. The volume concludes with identification of specific regional threats within the future security environment (classified annex).

Volume 2: Air Force Performance Plan

What are we going to do in the near term to improve our current performance and capability to perform in the future?

Volume 2 establishes Air Force-wide goals, HQ Air Force Mission Essential Tasks (HQ AFMETs), Performance Measures (PMs), and standards to improve organizational performance and “operationalize quality.” The goals contained in the Performance Plan will serve as a beacon to the MAJCOMs as they develop their Performance Plans. This volume employs a *plan, do,* and *assess* approach to operationalizing quality and addresses the requirements for goals and performance measures.

Volume 3: Long Range Planning Guidance

**What do we need to be able to do to be ready?
Near, Mid, and Long Term?**

Once published, Volume 3 will provide authoritative direction to develop future Air Force capabilities. It captures “strategic direction” decisions from senior leadership and identifies the capabilities necessary to prepare the Air Force to meet future demands and to implement the Air Force vision.

VOLUME 2: AIR FORCE PERFORMANCE PLAN

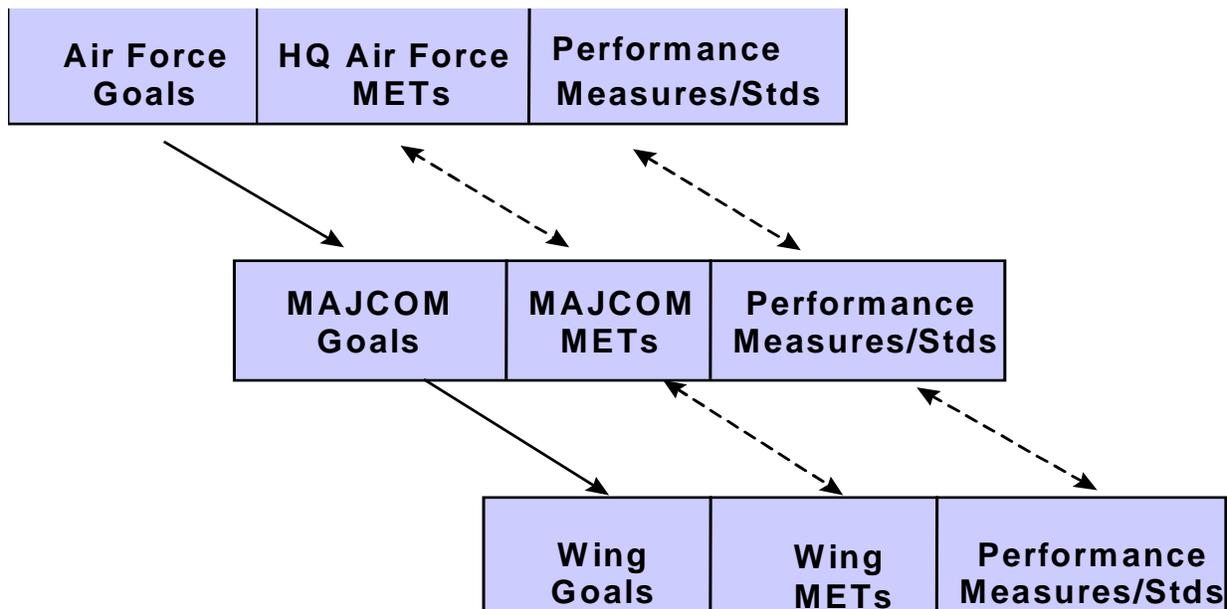
PERFORMANCE PLANNING CONSTRUCT

Enhanced mission performance begins with effective planning. The national security planning hierarchy of the United States is designed to ensure the actions of the US Armed Forces are focused in support of the common goals, objectives, and priorities of the nation's leadership. The *National Security Strategy* (NSS) provides overarching national goals and objectives for the *Defense Planning Guidance* (DPG) and the *National Military Strategy* (NMS). The NMS describes how the military capabilities of the United States Armed Forces are used to support the objectives of the NSS.

At the HQ Air Force-level, the Air Force Strategic Plan defines the priorities of Air Force senior leadership and the specific areas to which they want particular attention paid. Volume 2 of the Air Force Strategic Plan (AFSP) establishes Air Force-wide goals, Headquarters Air Force METs, performance measures, and performance standards. AFSP Volume 2, Performance Plan represents Air Force senior leadership's focus on improving near-term performance of tasks. We will track these improvements through the Air Force Performance Measures Reporting System. Our performance measures will provide feedback on the effectiveness of our processes.

As the Acting Secretary and Chief of Staff have stated, "If we perform our assigned mission tasks with excellence and improve that performance in a measurable way, we are operationalizing quality."

The performance planning process does not begin and end at HQ USAF, but encompasses the entire Air Force. The process includes three components, each essential to operationalizing quality: *Goals, METs, and Performance Measures*. "Operationalized" performance is characterized by measuring performance levels rather than by "checking off" accomplishment of activities.



One component of the performance planning process is establishing the goals for the unit. At the Air Force-level, the goals define priorities of Air Force senior leadership as they execute the Air Force's Title 10 responsibilities--organize, train, and equip. The MAJCOMs review Air Force goals and combine them as appropriate with the issues and concerns of MAJCOM senior leadership to develop priorities for their command. This process continues down to the Wing-level until each level has its priorities based on the preceding level's priorities, its own, and its supported CINCs' unique requirements.

Another component of the process is the development of Mission Essential Tasks (METs). The METs are those particular tasks that define the most important mission requirements. Not all tasks performed by a unit are mission essential. Most tasks performed on a daily basis are enabling or supporting tasks. METs may be defined before, after, or in parallel with the establishment of goals for the unit. The Headquarters Air Force METs (HQAFMETs) are the Air Force tasks that the Secretary of the Air Force and Chief of Staff will monitor to determine how well the Air Force performs its Title 10 requirements -- organize, train, and equip. The MAJCOMs will each develop a Mission Essential Task List (METL) that is appropriate for the operational nature of their mission. They should consider specific CINC requirements when identifying their METs. This process continues down to the Wing level.

Setting priorities and identifying tasks is not enough. The final component essential to the overall process is the Performance Measure. **A performance measure is defined as a quantitative indicator of mission effectiveness against a specific standard or target. Performance measures are evaluated over time for trends and are also compared to like units.** Productivity indicators include quantity produced, response time, or cost of goods and services. For example, Mission Capable (MC) rates and cost per flying hour are indicators of productivity. At the Air Force level, the performance measures provide broad indicators of how well the Air Force is doing in accomplishing its goals. MAJCOMs will describe the measures and desired performance levels for the assigned mission to ensure standards or targets are achieved. Wings have the responsibility to use Performance Measures that support MAJCOM performance standards and any unique mission taskings.

Ideally, measures that can be used at every command level are preferred. However, selected measures may only be applicable at one level. In these cases it is the responsibility of the subordinate level to select a measure or measures best suited to the environment and that significantly and directly impact on the higher level measure.

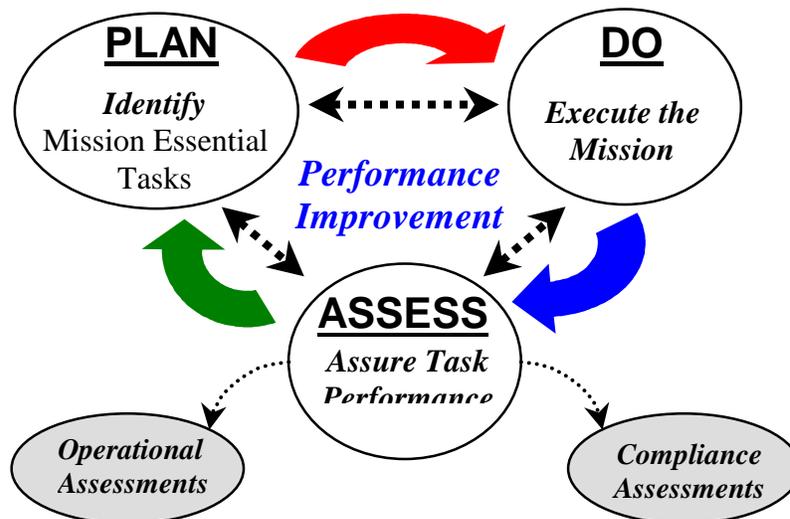
Tracking and assessing performance is a continuous and deliberate process that takes place at all levels as the mission is performed. The AFSP Volume 2, Air Force Performance Plan will be reviewed according to the planning cycle contained in AFRD 90-X. Performance Measures, standards or targets will be redefined, as required, between official updates of the plan. This will ensure continuous improvement of our mission performance and required capabilities to fight and win in any future environment.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Operationalizing quality is embodied in Performance Management - Plan, Do, and Assess:

- **Plan** – Identify METs
- **Do** – Execute the Mission
- **Assess** – Assure Task Performance

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCESS



Air Force Performance Management- *Plan*

Air Force leadership has established three primary goals. These goals are the driving force which focus Air Force people on near-term mission priorities. The goals are focus areas that cut across the Air Force Core Competencies. The goals and their associated performance measures also drive the environment for mission performance improvement throughout the Air Force--***quality is not just something else we have to do, but how we do our jobs.***

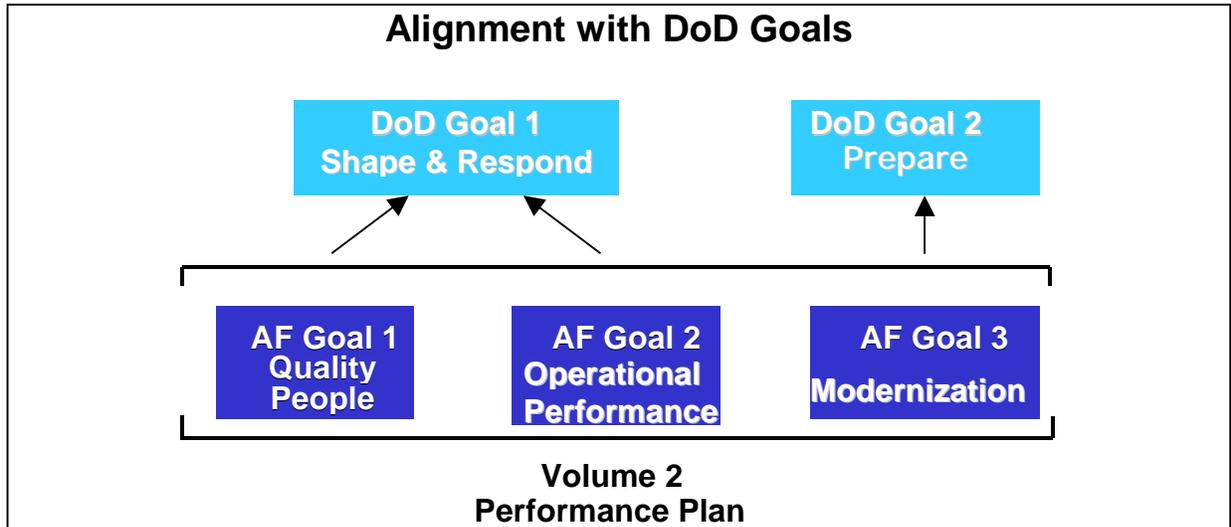
Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)

In 1993, Congress passed the GPRA, which is an initiative by Congress and the President to focus attention on the performance of Federal agencies, to measure results, and to look at the outcomes they have achieved.

GPRA envisions goals and objectives that measure quality and effectiveness of program performance. Congressional satisfaction with planned and actual performance can be used as a factor in approving or cutting budget requests.

AIR FORCE GOALS

The Air Force goals were chosen to provide direct support to DoD's goals, which in turn support the GPRA.



Goal 1 - Quality People: Ensure a high quality force of dedicated professionals and provide an enhanced quality of life and strong sense of community.

Goal 2 - Operational Performance: Enable the joint force commanders to respond to a full spectrum of crises by providing appropriately sized and ready forces to execute Air Force mission tasks.

Goal 3 - Modernization: Prepare for an uncertain future by pursuing a modernization program that implements the Revolution in Military Affairs by developing qualitatively superior warfighting capabilities. (Modernization will be addressed in more detail in Volume 3 of the Strategic Plan, *AF Capabilities Investment Plan*.)

Bottom line: *These goals establish a common organizational direction for subordinate units as they develop their strategic goals, perform essential tasks, and measure their performance.*

Air Force Performance Management- *Do*

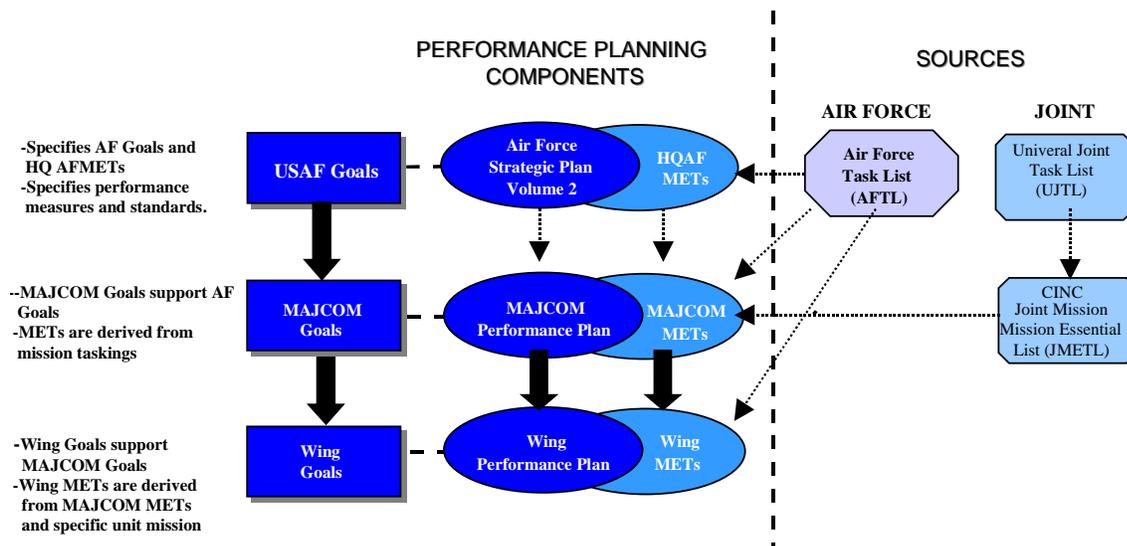
Execute the mission. Air Force performance is focused on accomplishing tasks to meet mission requirements. The Air Force Doctrine Center has developed the Air Force Task List (AFTL), a framework of the tasks performed by the Air Force. The AFTL is categorized by our core competencies and is the Air Force component of the Universal Joint Task List (UJTL), which is used by the CINCs to support training and readiness. The AFTL is a valuable reference,

providing a common vocabulary, for developing unit METs. It is the responsibility of the leadership of each unit to use good military judgment to select the tasks that best represent the unit. The AFTL serves as the guide, but must be supplemented with other information related to defining the unit's mission. The process is designed to give maximum flexibility in identifying unit METs.

Due to the breadth of services provided at the HQ USAF level, the HQ AFMETs cut across many of the tasks in the AFTL. Therefore, there is no one-to-one correlation between AFTL tasks and the HQ AFMETs. Air Force units will derive their METs from upper echelon METs, the AFTL, and CINC tasks. Similar types of units will have a common set of tasks, with some variance to accommodate the unique requirements of each unit.

As illustrated below, the Air Force Performance Plan sets the goals that will drive the MAJCOM and wing level performance plans. HQ AFMETs represent the actions that will move the Air Force towards its goals. At the MAJCOM and Wing levels, progress in moving towards the Air Force goals will ultimately be assessed by how well METs are accomplished.

PERFORMANCE PLANNING INTEGRATION



Air Force Performance Management - Assess

Performance assessment is critical to performance improvement. Assessing performance gauges progress and provides feedback to commanders on their effectiveness in performing METs and meeting their goals. Each MET has at least one corresponding measure and standard/target. Standards are the minimum acceptable proficiency required in the performance of a particular task under a specified set of conditions. Targets are the performance levels the unit is striving to achieve. These measurements provide a way to gauge progress by providing feedback to

commanders at all levels on the effectiveness of their units in supporting Air Force Goals. Commanders at all levels are accountable and, as appropriate for their level, each Air Force member has the same accountability.

The Air Force is moving towards commander-led performance measurement and standards. Commanders at all levels need assurance that Air Force units can perform the mission, remain in compliance with directives, and are performing tasks in an effective and efficient manner. In addition to the performance measures that support HQ Air Force METs, the Air Force will perform assessments at three levels:

Task Assurance: The first component of assurance is the commanders internal assessment program, which indicates a unit's progress toward meeting standards and targets reflected in established METs. Each unit will review its ability to accomplish tasks as defined in its METs. A unit will measure its performance against its METs using established measures or measures directed by headquarters. These Performance Measures will be meaningful to the members of the unit and will be an *internal* management tool for the unit's commander and senior leaders.

Measurements of each unit will be available through a performance measures reporting system for up-channel review. The system will be updated on a quarterly basis, or whatever interval is most appropriate for a given task. The review will be based on METs and associated performance measures and standards, and will include: unit strengths, areas for improvement, proposed solutions, and best practices. This is the method units will use to assess continuous improvement. The units will evaluate their performance using the same measures throughout the chain of command. The review process will be on-going to ensure continuous performance improvement. Task Assurance, done well, ensures a unit's preparedness for Operational and Compliance Assurance assessments.

Operational Assurance: The operational assessments (e.g., ORI, tac eval) are a responsibility of the MAJCOM IG, and are invaluable as an independent, third party verification of a unit's capability. They give commanders a critical and unique level of confidence that subordinate units are mission capable. In this sense, the operational assessment will continue as an integral part of the Air Force's overall assessment system.

Compliance Assurance: Compliance assurance (e.g., stan eval, nuclear surety, safety), also a responsibility of the IG, is necessary to ensure we, as an institution, comply with established standards -- a prime example being Nuclear Surety Inspections. There are other designated "critical" areas we will continue to evaluate against established standards, including those items mandated by law, Executive Order, DoD Directive, safety, or designated by individual commanders. Compliance Assurance Inspections normally consist of 300 to 500 items for review and are conducted by the MAJCOMs.

“If you’re not keeping score -- you’re only practicing”

-- Vince Lombardi

Air Force Performance Management - *Improve*

Plan, Do, and Assess can only benefit our overall operations when supported by a fundamental commitment to continuous improvement. Our core value of “excellence in all we do” speaks to the degree our Service has internalized our need to be second to none. We cannot afford to limit our improvement efforts to just the unit level—we must share improvement strategies and innovative ideas across the entire Air Force to generate the best value for our improvement efforts. Examples of Air Force improvement strategies include Best Practices Clearinghouse and Action Workouts.

Tracking and assessing performance is a continuous and deliberate process that takes place at all levels as we execute the Performance Plan.

Performance targets will be redefined with each iteration of the plan to assure continuous improvement of our mission performance. This continuous process leads us towards our overall responsibility to fight and win in any future environment. Thus as we improve, we need to “raise the bar” in succeeding iterations of performance standards.

Best Practices Clearinghouse.

Simply put, “best practices” are superior methods or innovative practices that contribute to improved mission performance. The Air Force Best Practices Clearinghouse is an Internet-based resource of “best practice” information being developed to provide our members with innovative practices and subject matter experts to help improve mission performance. As they are collected, practices will be validated to assure we disseminate proven and reliable practices with minimal risks to the safety and security of both those who share and adapt the new practices. Organizations should not only be lauded for their creation of best practices, but also recognized for the creative application of others’ ideas or proven results.

The Air Force is committed to continuous performance improvement, but quality will be

Improving Productivity

Reporting performance measures is just a step towards improving productivity. The real value of performance measures is realized when the data is analyzed and problems are identified. In the final phase of operationalizing quality--IMPROVE--the cause of problems are identified - process, organizational, leadership, funding, etc. Once a problem is identified, the process of addressing the issues and improving productivity can begin. Identifying deficiencies in meeting performance standards will NOT be a source for retribution, but rather an opportunity to improve.

approached from a new, more consistent perspective. Proven quality tools, such as Action Workouts, Integrated Work Teams, and others, can be used to improve our processes and products and enable us to make progress towards meeting performance standards. These concepts connect quality to mission—a framework that will help turn the *Global Engagement* vision into reality.

The strong linkage between planning, performing tasks, and assessing performance for continuous improvement is the key to success. Continuous improvement will require a dynamic planning process. To meet this need, the Air Force Strategic Plan, Volume 2 must be viewed as a living document—it will be updated as needed to provide a common focus and framework as Air Force people continue to build the world’s most respected air and space force—and achieve “Excellence in all we do.”

FINAL THOUGHTS:

The Air Force of the next century must be more powerful, agile, and more effective than ever before. We have taken an important first step in our development of *Global Engagement: A Vision for the 21st Century Air Force*. Building on the success of *Global Engagement*, the Air Force Performance Plan has embraced two important new principles in order to improve mission performance. These principles are simple: “*perform our assigned mission tasks with excellence and improve that performance in a measurable way.*” The basic concepts presented in this document--Plan, Perform, Assess, and Improve--provide the building blocks to employ these principles as well as achieve mission improvement on an ongoing basis. The Performance Plan affords us a powerful and effective tool to reach our potential, achieve our objectives, and excel in the face of all challenges in both war and peace.

AIR FORCE CORE VALUES

The ideals embodied in the Air Force core values are

- **Integrity First**
- **Service Before Self**
- **Excellence In All We Do**

These core values are universally prescriptive. Despite uncertainty of the future, the Air Force can say with certainty that, today and tomorrow, it must live up to these ideals or it cannot live up to its responsibilities. Our core values are fundamental and timeless in nature, and reach across the entire force. Our core values for service are values for life, and must be reflected in everything that we do.