



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE  
HEADQUARTERS AIR COMBAT COMMAND  
JOINT BASE LANGLEY-EUSTIS VA



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MEMORANDUM FOR AIRMEN OF AIR COMBAT COMMAND

SUBJECT: Readiness

Our families, friends, and fellow Americans rely on us to defend the freedoms we all enjoy. We do not know when or where the next challenge to those freedoms will arise, but we do know new challenges will come, and we must be ready to meet them. As a result, I am establishing three ACC focus areas: Revitalizing Squadron Readiness by improving the readiness of our Airmen, their families, and our weapons systems; Developing Leaders ready to prevail in joint warfighting by tailoring education, training, and experience; and Bringing the Future Faster by accepting risk in acquisition programs and processes. These areas intertwine—it's hard to talk about them in isolation from each other—but we will focus first on Revitalizing Squadron Readiness because ready squadrons provide both the foundation and building blocks of our combat capability.

Over the last months, the ACC staff has conducted working groups specifically focused on readiness and I have been listening closely to your inputs on readiness challenges. I understand that adverse readiness trends won't be reversed overnight; achieving our goals will take time. There are, however, steps that we can take now that will help us begin to increase our readiness for joint warfighting in Contested, Degraded, and Operationally limited (CDO) environments.

Readiness begins with our Airmen and their families. Put them first. Make sure every Airmen has access to the existing tools and programs that support ACC's Comprehensive Airmen Fitness goals. I expect leaders to be aware of the specific needs of each Airman's family and help them acquire access to the programs and tools they need. Foster open communication up and down the chain and fight to establish and demonstrate the work-life balance required to build and support healthy families. I also expect Airmen to be an active part of the solution. Take pride in your unit and responsibility for your own role; do not hesitate to speak up if something warrants attention. Take advantage of every training opportunity, accomplish your individual readiness requirements, and seek innovative ways to increase effectiveness and, where prudent, efficiency within your organization. I will advocate and program for an ACC Preservation of the Force and Families (POTFF) program, modeled on AFSOC programs, to provide additional resiliency resources and tools in support of our Airmen and families.

I want leaders to pursue opportunities aggressively to improve the readiness of our operators and weapons systems. If you lead an operational unit, train to your DOC statement. Prioritize tasks that directly affect readiness. If you lead a mission assurance or customer support unit, prioritize providing the mission assurance and support that allows operational units to focus their resources on their DOC-derived missions. Align your work hours with the schedule of your wing's operations. Find innovative ways to accomplish the training your Airmen need without reducing the service you provide your customers. I expect all leaders to assess your readiness

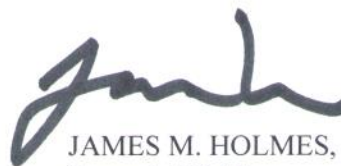
*Agile Combat Power*

accurately and propose innovative solutions to alleviate shortfalls. I expect you to evaluate the condition of your bases and act where you can to address physical and cyber security while requesting and prioritizing resources to provide long-term solutions. I expect you to accept prudent risk, mitigate risk when possible, and push decisions to the lowest acceptable level. I also expect you to highlight issues to me or the ACC staff that you are unable to tackle at your level. I have instructed the ACC staff to find a way to yes...and that only I can say no.

The ACC staff is also tackling readiness challenges. We've built a plan to provide more contract adversary air to expand realistic training opportunities and make more training sorties available for training to accomplish DOC statement tasks. We'll also increase squadron "white space", the time required to build basic blocking and tackling skills and upgrade individual skill levels, by striving to provide five months of home station operations for every month spent in training TDYs. To do this, we are prioritizing exercises that provide the most training bang for the buck. If an exercise is of limited value, we will work to take it off your plate. We are reviewing the guidance that determines the length, size, and composition of deployment UTCs to re-balance our ability to fight down range with the need to train for the readiness necessary to deter and defeat adversaries that are more capable. We will require your input and feedback as we move forward.

I am your advocate and I will work to overcome resource shortfalls and prioritization challenges. Our problems are real: I do not underestimate the impact of resource, time, and training shortfalls. Maintenance manpower and skill training levels continue to challenge our ability to fly and train while aging aircraft require more maintenance time and attention. However, the ACC staff's Sortie Production Assessments (SPAs) have consistently identified areas and processes that can drive immediate improvement within our available time. Some wings are employing the insights gained in SPAs and have achieved rapid and significant improvements. Focus all of your Airmen on scheduling your resources and time to produce the training opportunities that build our combat power. Align your work force with work requirements; get your officers and SNCOs out of offices and onto the flight lines and ops floors where Airmen need them. Assign officer and SNCO supervisors across work shifts in proportion to workload and sortie production impact. Empower leaders at all levels to employ ingenuity and manage risk to work smarter. In everything you do, ask yourself if you would do it differently if you knew you had three months, or six months, to prepare for combat in a CDO environment. Success rests on the determination of all ACC Airmen—in every kind of unit.

I am extremely humbled to be your Commander and I look forward to improving our readiness together. I love everything about this job, but I am most proud of you and all that you have accomplished over 26 years of continuous combat. We will prevail in this dangerous world because of you. I look forward to your feedback and suggestions on readiness. Over the summer, I will write to you about improving our approach to building leaders ready to prevail in joint warfighting. Until then...let's get ready!



JAMES M. HOLMES,  
General, USAF  
Commander