

# USAF Doctrine Primer

Principles and Lessons that Guide the Fight



*"At the very heart of warfare lies doctrine. It represents the central beliefs for waging war in order to*

*- General Curtis Emerson LeMay, 1968*

Doctrine gives the force a common frame of reference for thinking, organizing, planning, commanding, and employing airpower.

## D Doctrine Is...

**Agreed-upon. Operationally relevant.**

Best practices and principles for Airmen under pressure.

### SUPPORTED BY

History; debate and analysis; exercises, wargames, and contingency operations.

### AUTHORITATIVE ADVICE

Official guidance that informs judgment without becoming directive compliance.

### BEST WAY TO PROCEED

A disciplined baseline; deviations require clear and compelling operational reasons.

## 3 Doctrine, Policy & Strategy



*Doctrine is distinct from, supports, and is supported by policy and strategy.*

**POLICY** Governs the use of force and is translated through laws, directives, instruction, and regulations.

**STRATEGY** Aligns ends, ways, means, and risk to achieve objectives.

**DOCTRINE** Provides the informed starting point for developing strategy and applying airpower.

Doctrine is a bridge between enduring warfighting principles and operational judgment.

## AF USAF Operational Doctrine

### Airpower

The ability to project military power through control and exploitation in, from, and through the air.

Air Force operational doctrine guides how the U.S. Air Force organizes, presents, and employs forces that apply airpower. The doctrine library captures distinct USAF capabilities across five core functions.

AS

#### AIR SUPERIORITY

Control of the air for freedom of action.

GPA

#### GLOBAL PRECISION ATTACK

Precise effects across multiple domains.

RGM

#### RAPID GLOBAL MOBILITY

Rapid movement and sustainment by air.

ISR

#### GLOBAL ISR

Integrated sensors, assets, processes, and data.

C2

#### COMMAND & CONTROL

Authority and direction over assigned forces.

## AP The Airman's Perspective

Airmen apply a unique perspective of airpower distilled through foundational statements that guide planning, command, and employment.

- Control of the air is a necessary precondition for control of the surface.
- Airpower creates effects at the strategic level of warfare.
- Airpower exploits the principles of mass and maneuver simultaneously.
- Airpower applies force against many facets of enemy power.
- Throughput is theater.
- Airpower's attributes combine to make it one of the most versatile effects of military power.

- The choice of appropriate capabilities is central to the realization of airpower.
- Airpower is a critical component of operations in the information environment.
- Airpower provides lethal and nonlethal effects.
- Airpower requires protection and sustainment through integrated capabilities, people, weapons, bases, logistics, and supporting infrastructure.
- Airpower's unique attributes necessitate central command by an Airman.

Doctrine is a bridge between enduring warfighting principles and operational judgment.

[www.dctrine.af.mil](http://www.dctrine.af.mil)

Source: Air Force Doctrine Publications | [www.dctrine.af.mil](http://www.dctrine.af.mil)