



AIR MOBILITY CORE FUNCTIONS

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Air mobility allows forces to reach destinations quickly, thereby opening opportunities for the joint force to seize the initiative via speed and surprise, and by providing follow-on sustainment of critical materiel. The four core functions of air mobility are:

- ✦ **Airlift**. Joint doctrine defines airlift as “the movement of personnel and materiel via air mobility forces to support strategic, operational, and tactical objectives” (Joint Publication [JP] 3-36, [Joint Air Mobility and Sealift Operations²](#)). Airlift provides rapid, flexible, and secure transportation. Because airlift is a high demand asset, it should be used carefully when satisfying warfighter requirements.
- ✦ **Air Refueling (AR)**. AR is defined in joint doctrine as “the in-flight transfer of fuel from a tanker aircraft to a receiver aircraft in support of strategic, operational, and tactical objectives” ([JP 3-36³](#)). AR extends presence, increases range, and serves as a force multiplier. AR significantly expands the options available to commanders by increasing the range, payload, persistence, and flexibility of receiver aircraft.
- ✦ **Air Mobility Support**. Joint doctrine describes air mobility support as “the [command and control](#) , aerial port, and maintenance ground support provided to air mobility forces operating around the world” ([JP 3-36⁴](#)). Air mobility support is part of the [Global Air Mobility Support System](#) (GAMSS). The GAMSS consists of a limited number of permanent en route support locations plus deployable forces that deploy according to a global- or theater-reach laydown strategy.
- ✦ **Aeromedical Evacuation (AE)**. The joint definition of AE is “the movement of patients under medical supervision to and between medical treatment facilities by air transportation” (JP 4-02, [Joint Health Services](#)). AE provides time-sensitive in-flight care of patients or casualties to and between levels of care using predominantly mobility air forces aircraft or contracted aircraft (civilian air ambulance) with medical aircrew trained specifically for this mission. AE forces can operate as far forward as aircraft are able to conduct air operations, across the full range of military operations, and in all operating environments. Specialty medical

² Common Access Card enabled site

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teams may be assigned to work with the AE aircrew to support patients requiring more intensive en route care. This clarifies that, to provide patient care in the aeromedical environment, Air Force AE crewmembers and specialty medical teams receive advanced training and education on the stresses of flight, altitude physiology, and medical equipment designed for the en route care system.
