



PROTECT FORCES

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The Protect Forces core capability provides an integrated all-hazards approach for force protection (FP) to detect threats and hazards to the Air Force and its mission, providing integrated offensive and defensive actions to deter, detect, preempt, mitigate, or negate threats and hazards against Air Force operations and assets, based on an acceptable level of risk. FP is a commander's responsibility at all levels. The functional expertise for force protection activities crosses several areas of the [Air Force forces \(AFFOR\) staff](#). To integrate all FP activities the [air component commander](#), usually designates a member of the AFFOR staff as the FP officer and places the FP officer and associated staff in the special staff of the AFFOR.

FP is a fundamental principle of all military operations as a way to ensure the survivability of a commander's forces. The Air Force takes an integrated all hazards/all threats approach to FP to conserve the force's fighting potential that encompasses many functional areas of expertise. Specific actions required to protect forces against hostile actions include detecting, identifying, and defeating penetrative or standoff threats to personnel and resources; assessing forward operating sites for threats and available support from host civil and military agencies; disseminating information and warning personnel; and protecting infrastructure and critical information. For a thorough discussion on force protection in the Air Force, see AFDP 3-10, [Force Protection](#).

FORCE PROTECTION THREAT AND HAZARD SPECTRUM

Commanders at all levels are responsible for recognizing threats and hazards to the Air Force operations across the competition continuum and therefore consider the intentional objectives of threat actors or unintentional effects of hazards. There are a variety of threats and hazards facing the Air Force that may arise from peer or near-peer military forces, terrorists, insurgents, insiders, criminal entities, foreign intelligence and security services, activist organizations, natural or manmade disasters, major accidents, or medical incidents. Airmen should continually plan to counter potential future threats and hazards, both conventional and chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear related, that have not yet been planned for or seen, as those threats and hazards are constantly evolving. Tactics, techniques, and procedures introduced in one theater could be seen again in other regions and may result in increased force protection measures due to the threat of attack or risk of hazards that could affect

ongoing operations.

Risk Management

Commanders determine how best to manage risks. The Air Force views risk management (RM) as the process of identifying critical assets; understanding the threat; understanding Air Force vulnerabilities to the threat; determining risk to personnel, assets, and information; and assuming risk or applying countermeasures to correct or mitigate the risk. In all cases, the assessments include hazards as well as threats. This RM process consists of the following elements:

- ✦ Prioritizing assets and resources by a criticality assessment.
- ✦ Identifying potential threats through a threat assessment.
- ✦ Analyzing resource and asset vulnerabilities through a vulnerability assessment.
- ✦ Determining the risks acceptable to them for a given operation by conducting a risk assessment.
- ✦ Supervising and reviewing the effort to eliminate or mitigate the risks that are not acceptable.

A safety and RM focus ensures maximum protection of people and physical resources.

Integrated Defense

Integrated defense is conducted worldwide, from mature theaters to austere regions. Air Force leadership should adapt to a variety of operational requirements. Some Air Force resources may be geographically separated from the main base. Regardless of location, forces conducting integrated defense employ the basic tactics, techniques, and procedures as those employed at home station during day-to-day operations. As specific threats to base personnel and resources increase, integrated defense forces adjust tactics to counter the threat. Adjustments to operating procedures should be based on the specific threat to operations, the dynamics of operating in an international environment or the way integrated defense efforts collaborate with joint, combined, civilian, and host nation forces. Integrated defense forces should be prepared to operate at a variety of locations and may deploy to sites without existing Air Force or host nation facilities.

Base Boundary and Base Security Zone

Because threats and hazards to operations can come from a wide range of sources, the Airman's perspective requires integrated defense planning in broader terms than other surface-oriented organizations. For example, the threats to an active airfield may extend far beyond the surface area designated as a base boundary. To address these threats,

the Air Force uses the planning construct of the base security zone to ensure those ground threats that could impact operations are considered and planned for.

The [base boundary](#) is a line that delineates the surface area of a base for the purpose of facilitating coordination and deconfliction of operations between adjacent units, formations, or areas. The base boundary, which is not necessarily the base perimeter, is negotiated on a case-by-case basis between the base commander and the area commander or host-nation authority. The base commander should only negotiate base boundaries with the host-nation authorities after proper coordination and approval from higher headquarters. The multi-dimensional space around the base from which the enemy might impact operations by launching an attack against approaching or departing aircraft, mission critical equipment, facilities, personnel or resources located on the base is critical to air base defense planning.

Force Protection Intelligence

[Force protection intelligence](#) (FPI) is analyzed, all-source intelligence information that when integrated, or fused with other FP information, provides an assessment of the threats to Department of Defense missions, people or resources. FPI provides the best available picture of the intents and capabilities of terrorists or extremists, criminal entities and enterprises, foreign intelligence and security services, opposing military forces, and in certain instances, environmental or medical hazards, infrastructure vulnerabilities, and insider threats. FPI is proactive and drives FP decisions in support of commander's intent. FPI is usually produced for the air component commander by the AFFOR A-2 and the air component commander's Air Force Office of Special Investigations representative. A common practice is to include an intelligence officer on the FP officer's staff to help integrate the intelligence information into the overall force protection program.

Force Health Protection

[Force health protection](#) is defined in Joint Publication 4-02, *Joint Health Services*, as "measures to promote, improve, or conserve the behavioral and physical well-being of Service members to enable a healthy and fit force, prevent injury and illness, and protect the force from health hazards." The Air Force expands that definition to clarify the concept as a comprehensive threat-based program directed at preventing and managing health-related actions against Air Force uncommitted combat power.
