

18th Air Force

Letter to Airmen

October 1, 2013



On Oct. 1, 2003, after an absence of more than four decades, our command was reborn. While the Air Force of the 21st century is far different from that of 1958, when the command was inactivated after only seven years of existence, our emblem, with three parachutes representing speed, safety, and success, remains a link to that distinguished past.



Men and women of the 18th Air Force ... thank you!

A decade after our rebirth, our 18th Air Force is not merely the largest Numbered Air Force ... but also the most experienced, battle-tested Airmen our country has ever known! The past decade plus of war has developed Airmen leaders worthy to be the true successors of the bold pioneers who a mere 66 years ago forged what would become the world's finest Air and Space force.

There are simply none better.

From humanitarian response in the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy and the Haiti and Japan earthquakes, to support of Coalition and Allied efforts in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, and Mali, 18th Air Force Airmen are always ready to answer the call as America's First Responders. Your efforts have saved the lives of innocents, defended friends and allies, and safeguarded the freedom and security of our own Nation.

As Mobility Airmen, you don't carry out your challenging missions for praise or acclaim ... you do it because it is WHO you are. You understand that oftentimes the gratitude for your effort is simply displayed on the faces of those halfway around the world whom you will never meet.

Today, I encourage you to reflect on our command and what we mean to our Air Force, to our military, and ultimately to our Nation. Be proud to call yourself an 18th Air Force Airman ... just as I am proud of you and the amazing work you do for our country each and every day!

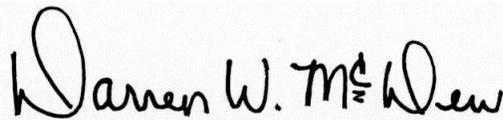
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Finally, I ask you to take the time to view a brief video (the link is below) and to share it with your family and friends. The music you'll hear, "Expedite" (named after our 18th Air Force motto) is an original composition performed by our own AMC Band of Mid-America. While our efforts often go without thanks, I think it is important you understand just how much you are appreciated and admired throughout our Air Force.

Happy Anniversary, 18th Air Force, and thank you for being the best!

Link to Video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gUleQzYcEWS>

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Darren W. McDeW". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and 'W'.

DARREN W. McDEW, Lieutenant General, USAF
Commander