



Center realigns to Directorate-based structure

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5/12/2010 - **WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio** -- A decision received this week clears the way for an Aeronautical Systems Center reorganization that takes a major step to bolstering clear lines of authority and accountability called for in the Air Force Acquisition Improvement Plan.

Air Force headquarters notified center commanders May 11 that the organizational change away from the wing, group, squadron to a directorate, division, branch construct was approved. The targeted implementation date for these changes is June 30.

"These changes will significantly improve communication and oversight of programs," said Lt. Gen. Tom Owen, ASC Commander. "Also, external organizations will better understand our organization and be able to easily find the organization with whom they need to work."

The center will be broken down into directorates along major mission area lines with General Owen serving as Program Executive Officer for Aircraft responsible for overseeing the large, high-visibility programs.

Under ASC, the five directorates will be:

- Tanker Directorate led by Brig. Gen. Christopher Bogdan
- Fighters/Bombers Directorate led by Col. Arnold Bunch
- Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (ISR) and Special Operations Forces (SOF) Directorate led by Col. Daryl Hauck
- Mobility Directorate led by Col. Kevin Buckley
- Agile Combat Support Directorate led by Col. Mark Murphy

Underlying organizations will be renamed under the directorates as divisions or branches based on unit size and scope of responsibility. For instance the 478th Aeronautical Systems Group responsible for the F-22A will be renamed the F-22 Division and aligned under the Fighter/Bomber Directorate.

"This same nomenclature will be changing across all of ASC," General Owen said. "All of our organizations will have recognizable names that will make it easier, for the warfighter, headquarters, contractors and others to know who to work with at the center."

While the naming convention change will be welcome, especially to those unfamiliar with Air Force Materiel Commands' unique structures, the change goes far deeper than updating mailboxes.

In their September 2009 memorandum on the realignment, Secretary Michael Donley and Chief of Staff General Norton Schwartz addressed the issue of approving new PEO positions.

"This will provide a greater number of experienced, senior leaders to oversee the execution of our major

acquisition programs," they wrote, "and will address span of control concerns associated with all of our weapon system programs being aligned under our product center commanders."

Responsibility for managing engineering, program management, financial management, contracting, personnel and acquisition logistics positions will likewise move from Wing Commanders to the top functional leaders, the Center Senior Functionals (CSFs). CSFs will be responsible for staffing and hiring in addition to training and professional development within the respective functional disciplines.

Again, the point is to allow the PEO the ability to zero in on program management and allow other professionals to focus on functional workforce management, General Owen explained. The Air Force expects this change to improve the professional development process as a principal enabler for the AIP goal to revitalize the acquisition workforce.

Planning for such a dramatic structural change has been on ASC's radar since last fall when the General Owen held his first Strategic Planning Offsite. The aggressive 30 June 2010 timeline established by Air Force necessitated the center lean forward with a plan that recognized and managed risks within the AFMC Enterprise Change Management methodology.

The four Strategic Priorities set in the offsite -- 1) Successfully Restructure our Organization (implement AIP-related changes); 2) Implement Integrated Life Cycle Management (ILCM) into our Program Planning and Execution; 3) Develop and Care for Our People, and; 4) Improve Our Business Processes - were all designed with the Acquisition Improvement Plan in mind.

While divesting the responsibility down from a single PEO allowed for a tighter focus on programs, center leaders didn't want to lose overall unit cohesion.

The solution is a tool first championed by former ASC Executive Director Diane Wright and now by her successor, Gerry Freisthler. The ASC Process Guide Book that is being assembled will document 90+ standard processes that define how ASC executes its mission.

"This Process Guide Book is important to train and equip new hires in the coming years, and will serve as a central focus for future Air Force Smart Operations for the 21st Century continuous process improvements," General Owen said.

Ultimately, everyone recognizes that the proof of "recapturing acquisition excellence" will be born of the successful acquisition process improvement efforts.

"I have been closely monitoring the progress since my arrival as ASC Commander and I believe we are solidly on the right track," General Owen said. "I can't say enough positive things about the people at Aeronautical Systems Center. Our people are very talented, experienced and professional, and they continue to step up to the challenges required to put war winning capability into the hands of our armed forces. It is my privilege to serve this great nation and lead this amazingly complex, diverse, and successful team at the Aeronautical Systems Center."