



# A-Staff Transition FAQs

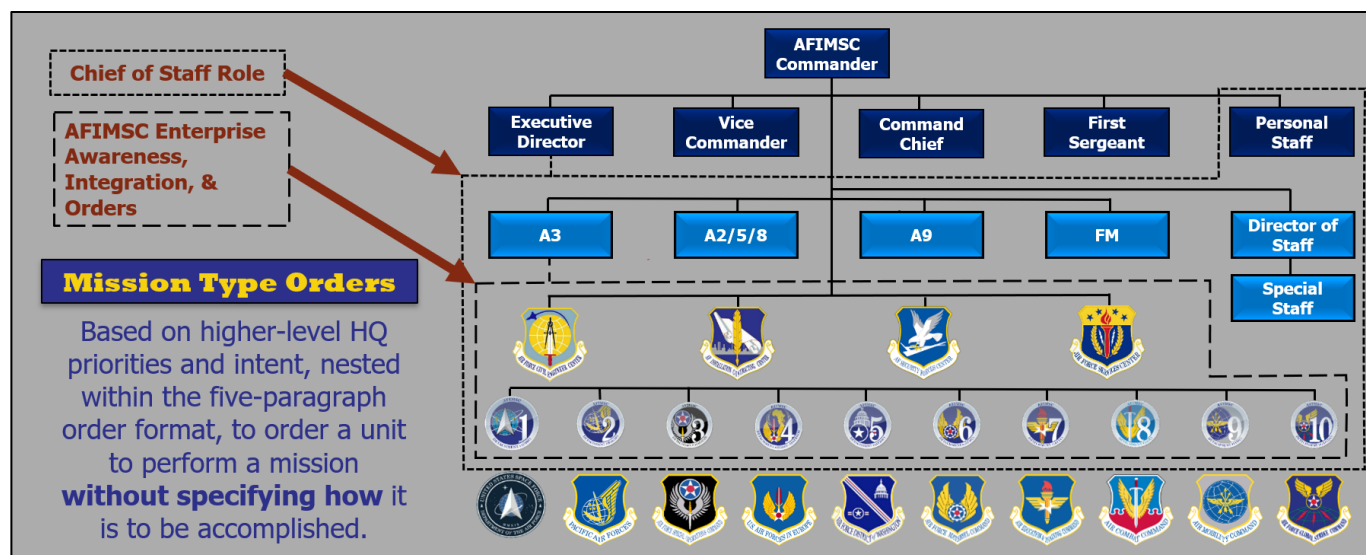
**This is an updated version of Q&As, current as of 14 Aug 2023, about the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center's transition to an Air Force Forces staff structure, commonly referred to as an A-Staff. We'll continue updating this document with more Q&As as we progress through the transition period from now until Full Operational Capability, expected by 1 Oct 2024.**

## What's the timeline?

An AFIMSC headquarters team began planning the Air Force Forces (AFFOR) staff, or A-staff, structure in September 2022. That planning will continue until we achieve initial operational capability, expected by 1 Oct 2023. The A-Staff structure will be tested and adjusted over the course of the year after that with the goal to declare full operational capability by 1 Oct 2024.

## What is the A-Staff structure?

The A-Staff structure is used in place of the more traditional or legacy Air Force staff designations, such as directorates and divisions, to more easily identify the Air Force component staff equivalents. The structure includes a designator, the letter A, followed by a number. An A-Staff should normally be held to the smallest number of divisions necessary to handle the demands of the operation in line with our mission. At AFIMSC, our A-Staff will be organized as shown in the chart below.



- **AFIMSC/A2: Intelligence**

AFIMSC/A2 is our organic intelligence gathering capability that assesses and informs the I&MS need, risks, capabilities, and operational requirements, and provides that information for sound strategic decision making.

- **AFIMSC/A3: Operations**

AFIMSC/A3 and the four AFIMSC primary subordinate units will create tactical-level requirements and plans, such as implementation or execution plans, based on the operational-level strategies, requirements, and plans provided by AFIMSC/A5/8. The A3 provides oversight, awareness,

synchronization, and alignment of current operations and future plans. The staff also executes activities that don't have an associated PSU, as well as execution of cross-functional activities (i.e., activities that involve multiple or all PSUs).

- **AFIMSC/A5/8: Strategy, Requirements, Planning, Programming, and Integration**  
AFIMSC/A5/8 identifies I&MS equities in DAF strategies and plans, and translates them into executable I&MS enterprise strategies, requirements, and plans at the operational level.
- **AFIMSC/A9: Analysis, Assessments, and Lessons Learned**  
AFIMSC/A9 enables AFIMSC and the I&MS portfolio for continuous improvement of processes and programs from internal day-to-day workings of an organization to supporting those who provide warfighter capabilities. Facilitating data driven decisions and driving transformational ways to do business better are the foundational core competencies of the A9.
- **AFIMSC/FM: Financial Management**

### **Why is AFIMSC changing?**

Adopting an A-Staff at AFIMSC will help the center better integrate across the Department of the Air Force to support broader policy and strategy implementation, as well as rebalance internally to focus more on strategy and planning. It will also improve communication with stakeholders and help customers accustomed to an A-Staff find and access the support they need. Staff functions at Headquarters Air Force, major commands and warfighting headquarters all share the same A-Staff structure. The structure closely mirrors the Army's G-Staff, Navy's N-Staff and the joint J-Staff, which helps the Air Force optimize internal communication and communicate more efficiently with the other services and the joint world.

### **What problems are we trying to solve with this reorganization?**

Our problem set is four-fold:

- a. The current AFIMSC organizational construct is foreign to USAF/USSF organizations, resulting in chronic lack of understanding of key entry points and mission alignments.
- b. AFIMSC is not structurally optimized to provide well-reasoned strategy, planning and programming expertise in support of DAF I&MS policy and strategy.
- c. The current organizational construct does not encourage effective cross-Primary Subordinate Unit (PSU) integration.
- d. AFIMSC detachment, PSU and HQ staff roles are unclear to AFIMSC personnel, resulting in inefficiency and rework.

### **How is AFIMSC changing?**

In essence, we're installing a layer of support expertise that pulls together the capability of the AFIMSC enterprise and focuses it on installation and DAF I&MS mission needs. We will shift some people and some organizational capabilities to staff and operationalize five A-Staff functions. They will be the prime interface with stakeholders both within and outside the DAF. With this simple reorganization, we will provide our customers with a clear pathway to our expertise and capabilities and will dramatically improve our ability to integrate and support the warfighter at all levels.

### **What current HQ AFIMSC organizations will form A2, A3, A5/8 and A/9?**

Members of the Installation Support Directorate (IZ), Expeditionary Support and Innovation Directorate (XZ) and a few sections of the Resources Directorate (RM) will form the A-staff directorates.

### **What does AFIMSC propose to do via this reorganization?**

- a. The HQ AFIMSC staff will transform from organizing around a DoD-unique nomenclature consisting of three unique directorates (IZ, XZ and RM) to a Napoleonic A-staff construct consisting initially of A3 (or A3/4), A5/8, A9, and FM – this will eliminate long-standing confusion, both external and internal to AFIMSC.
- b. The HQ AFIMSC staff will move to cross-functional teams within branches and divisions which will provide cross-cutting integration between and among I&MS portfolios.
- c. We will assess and address effects of 2014 AFIMSC stand-up and subsequent reorganizations to clean up remaining broken glass.
- d. The reorganization will result in AFIMSC growing capacity to lead and inform I&MS strategy, planning and programming efforts DAF-wide.

### **How long will it take to implement the A-Staff?**

Planning is underway to achieve Initial Operational Capability by 1 Oct 2023, with the goal of achieving Full Operational Capability by October 2024. During that time, AFIMSC will execute a host of milestones necessary to implement the reorganization. Those milestones include realigning some positions to the A-Staff construct, developing operational guidance and facility footprints, communicating the change with our stakeholders, updating the unit manning document, and much more.

### **Are the AFIMSC Dets or PSUs changing?**

The reorganization is primarily happening at the headquarters level. AFIMSC detachments and primary subordinate units will remain largely unchanged. AFIMSC detachments will remain aligned to the major commands, direct reporting unit and Space Force headquarters.

### **Where does the AFIMSC Special Staff fit into the A-Staff?**

The special staff is not part of the A-Staff reorganization. The AFIMSC Special Staff will continue providing executive service, orderly room support, and other key tasks as assigned by the commander. The AFIMSC Special Staff will include the Inspector General (IG), Public Affairs (PA), Personnel (DP), Historian (HO), Information Protection (IP), Judge Advocate (JA), Safety (SE) and Small Business (SB).

### **Who will be in charge of each A-Staff?**

Staffing decisions are being considered, but we're not there yet. We are looking across the enterprise for the right leaders and staff to stand up this important evolution in AFIMSC's development.

### **What will change with respect to I&MS Program Elements (PE), funding alignments and mission sets?**

- a. We do not expect PEs or funding alignment for I&MS requirements to change.
- b. Some internal roles and responsibilities are expected to change as a result of the reorganization. For example, a division chief currently working in a *functionally-aligned* workspace may move to a *cross-functional* strategy/planning/programming role.
- c. Some misalignments in current staff roles/responsibilities will be remedied. For example, the antiterrorism program has been bifurcated since AFIMSC inception, with MAJCOM A4S (A3S for Air Force Global Strike Command) owning program management and oversight on behalf of the MAJCOM commander, yet program administration (including manpower authorizations) reside within the AFIMSC Detachment.
- d. We anticipate the reorganization may drive realignment of a small number of non-HQ AFIMSC positions to/from existing PSUs from/to the HQ AFIMSC staff.

**Are positions going to move?**

During IOC, we will be looking at staffing needs and assessing if positions elsewhere in the organization will be a better fit in the A-Staff structure. No decisions have been made yet.

**Will anyone find themselves on new teams, working for new supervisors?**

It is possible AFIMSC will need to move positions to fully operationalize the A-Staff structure. During IOC, we will look at what roles the A-Staff needs to be successful and determine if positions need to move. We will work with employees who may be affected by changes in the organization and make sure you have the information you need to make informed career decisions.

**Are positions going to be eliminated?**

This is a reorganization of roles and some responsibilities. We don't anticipate reducing staffing as a result of this effort.

**Are we going to gain positions?**

We expect to complete the A-Staff reorganization within current staffing limits.

**Does an AFIMSC reorganization significantly affect any individual functional communities or other USAF/USSF headquarters connectivity?**

- a. Absolutely, and in a positive way. Reorganization should result in substantively streamlined and improved connectivity with mission partners, including installations, MAJCOMs, SAF/HAF staff, and DoD entities. For example, if working security issues at a joint base, HAF/A4S must currently connect (at minimum) with both AFIMSC/IZP (Protective Services) and AFIMSC/IZS (Mission Assurance) staff. Under the proposed construct, they would need to engage only with AFIMSC/A5S. Also, common nomenclature will logically result in AFIMSC being drawn into SAF/HAF strategy, planning and programming efforts rather than being brought in haphazardly, if at all.
- b. We need to work through some potential minor nomenclature nuances to ensure common enterprise-wide understanding; for example, the use of AFIMSC/A3 as *current operations* versus the common presumption of A3 as the *operator of a weapon system*. We're working through risk mitigation options (e.g., A3/4).
- c. The reorganization *may* drive a reduction in functional-specific leadership opportunities/positions e.g., CE specific O-6 or GS-15s under the new construct—impact is TBD and a necessary element of IOC/FOC.

**Will any workflow or business processes change?**

During IOC, we will evaluate workflows and process to streamline and strengthen our ability to deliver I&MS support. There may be some changes as we find better ways to do business.

**Are there any major limiting factors and how will they be overcome?**

- a. Talent management is an important issue that must be comprehensively addressed. AFIMSC has a talented, seasoned workforce. However, a new organizational construct likely demands different skillsets. Our HQ AFIMSC staff will benefit from a greater emphasis on hiring/retaining personnel possessing higher order process-related skills (e.g., strategy development, military planning). We must build a development plan to prepare current and future staff members to operate effectively within different expectations consistent with the purpose of this effort.
- b. As part of IOC/FOC, AFIMSC will reassess military/civilian recruiting/retention/training requirements in conjunction with the Air Force Personnel Center and functional communities.

**Does an AFIMSC reorganization affect any other organizations within AFMC, other MAJCOMS, HAF, or DoD?**

- a. This reorganization should *positively* impact external stakeholders' business processes by streamlining and simplifying entry while bringing more discipline and consistency in outputs.
- b. We do not anticipate any *negative* impacts to units external to AFIMSC, save for potential effects of initial reframing associated with any major change effort.
- c. Although the reorganization primarily focuses on realigning/synchronizing capabilities within the HQ AFIMSC staff, a small number of positions may migrate to/from AFIMSC PSUs to more properly align enterprise capabilities. That determination will be part of IOC/FOC.

**Can AFIMSC continue to execute its mission absent a reorganization to an A-staff?**

Yes. AFIMSC can continue to execute its mission as directed by Mission Directive 4-422. However, our effectiveness would be suboptimized, as described in Para 1.

**Have there been previous AFIMSC reorganization efforts and what were the results?**

- a. In 2017/2018 (AFIMSC 2.0) there was a reassessment of processes and detachment roles/responsibilities with reduced/redistributed manpower. Primary results were that AFIMSC aggregated Public Affairs, Staff Judge Advocate, etc. on the HQ AFIMSC staff while also enhancing HQ reach back and integrated I&MS capabilities.
- b. In 2019/2020 (Atlas) AFIMSC adjusted several key functions, including RM. Also, Atlas assessed creation of an A-staff structure, but did not implement it largely due to perceived organization change weariness and onset of the COVID pandemic.

**Will the AFIMSC reorganization drive changes to Senior Executive Service (SES), Colonel, GS-15, and/or Chief Master Sergeant authorizations?**

- a. SES: No; the HQ AFIMSC staff will retain three SES authorizations (currently including: AFIMSC Executive Director; Director, Installation Support; and Director, Resource Management). It will not impact current PSU SES authorizations.
- b. We do not expect major impacts on colonel, GS-15, and CMSgt authorizations, although there may be some modest AFSC/job series adjustments.
- c. Full laydown of proposed changes will be part of IOC/FOC.

**What authorities need to be changed for an AFIMSC reorganization?**

- a. We anticipate minor alterations to Mission Directive 4-422 will be necessary in order to clarify AFIMSC roles and responsibilities.
- b. Potential changes to other MDs may be prudent, where the MD does not adequately capture the roles/responsibilities of AFIMSC as responsible for I&MS (i.e., MD 1-7 omits AFIMSC as a "relevant office").
- c. We will assess/adjudicate as part of IOC/FOC.

**How will key stakeholders react to an AFIMSC reorganization?**

- a. We have conducted initial sessions with a cross-section of SAF/HAF and MAJCOM mission partners. Feedback has been universally positive.
- b. We do anticipate a strengthening of HQ AFIMSC staff structure may result in perceived loss of DIRLAUTH (Direct Liaison Authorized) to staff/PSUs by some SAF/HAF elements, although this would likely be short-term since traditional DIRLAUTH remains even with the proposed A-staff structure.
- c. Defense Organizational Climate Survey results and anecdotal feedback suggest there may still be transformation fatigue in some parts of AFIMSC, although there is also an offsetting desire for

more clarity in roles and responsibilities expressed by others. Leadership is committed to an effective organizational change management process.

- d. A full strategic communication plan will be part of IOC/FOC as we communicate change to our broad range of mission partners.

**Please explain the perpetual state envisioned for AFIMSC and why it is important to reorganize now.**

- a. This reorganization is another important step as AFIMSC matures from an idea born out of the necessity/efficiency to reduce HQ staff DAF-wide, into an organization that capably shapes and informs strategy, planning and programming for the department's I&MS enterprise.
- b. Reshaping the HQ as an A-staff will vastly improve accessibility/comprehension both inside and outside of the formation. DIRLAUTH will remain an essential aspect of efficiency/effectiveness in our organizational relationships.
- c. Through this reorganization, AFIMSC will transform into an organization capable of handling current operations while simultaneously balancing strategy, planning and programming efforts across DAF I&MS portfolios.
- d. This is the right time, given CSAF's focus on A-staff development across the Air Force, AFMC/CC direction to better integrate across AFMC Centers and with our mission partners, and an AFIMSC command team committed to fixing structural issues *now*, particularly in light of a potential near-term fight.

**How can I learn more?**

Go to our website at [www.afimsc.af.mil/A-Staff](http://www.afimsc.af.mil/A-Staff).

**How can I get involved?**

You are the key to the success of this evolution in AFIMSC's structure. Your input is critical as we go through the reorganization process. Share your ideas with the us and if you want to join the transition team, let us know that too. You can email the team at [afimsc.a-staff.workflow@us.af.mil](mailto:afimsc.a-staff.workflow@us.af.mil).

*Current a/o 14 Aug 2023*