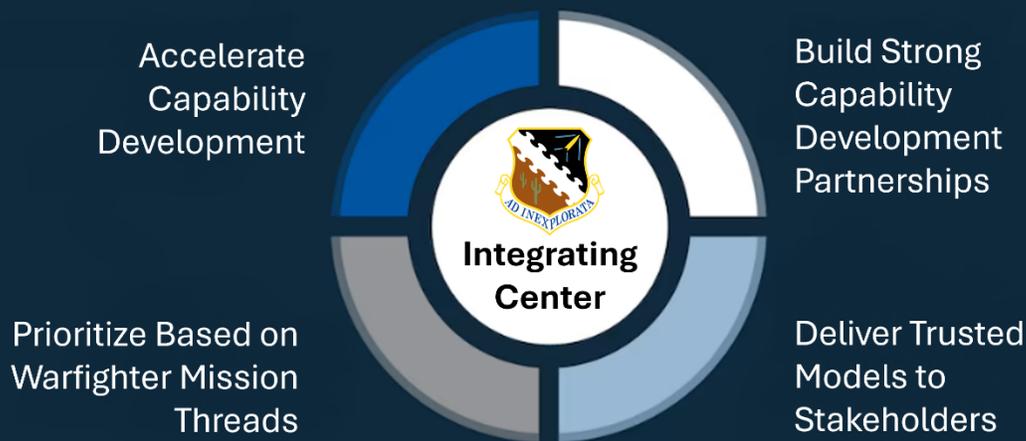


# 2025 Air Force Test Center Strategic Plan

## STRATEGIC AREAS



*Integrating Center for Developing  
Capabilities that Win the Fight*

*"PUSHING FORWARD AFTC AS THE  
HEART OF A DEVELOPMENT-  
ORIENTED AIR FORCE."  
- MAJ GEN SCOTT CAIN*



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# Commander's Intent

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The Air Force Test Center (AFTC) will transform to accelerate development of capabilities that generate advantages in the fight. AFTC will also posture for strategic competition, leveraging our unique role across the spectrum of capability development, which spans from our connection with science and technology to fielding combat capabilities. *No other entity in the Department of the Air Force is postured at the intersection of development and warfighting like AFTC, and we must take advantage of our unique position in this time of consequence.*

AFTC has developed and delivered capabilities from its inception, leveraging *world class risk management, adaptive test solutions, and relentless focus on the warfighter.* These enduring principles remain the cornerstone of our enterprise, and they will carry AFTC and our nation forward. However, this is not a time to rest on our laurels – it is a time to push on to the next era of Test.

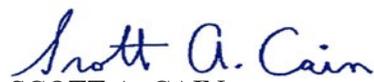
The first thing we must do is to ***expand our role as an Integrating Center.*** As the Department of the Air Force rebuilds the force, AFTC must engage capability development at its sources. We must both draw from and inform the DAF's force design and be integral to capability development plans. AFTC must also be the ***stewards of the digital thread,*** both drawing insights from and informing the models at the heart of digital materiel management. The digital thread can drive integration across organizations and system lifecycles, underpinned by confidence from validation in test. Importantly, as we re-define AFTC's role in capability development, we must deliver this vision to our partners and stakeholders to lay the foundation for this next era of Test.

As we evolve as an Integrating Center, AFTC must ***lead in Test and in capability development.*** AFTC has deep expertise in development, as well as strong operational relevance. The first stems from a strong, highly educated workforce that delivers depth and continuity to our craft. The latter stems from our operators and their relevant, combat-ready experience. These characteristics of our people and our processes posture AFTC to lead. AFTC must embrace this role and inject our expertise into the DAF's priorities to generate advantages. This will include injecting our talented workforce into partnerships with key capability development organizations, to include those newly forming in the DAF's re-optimization.

Finally, within AFTC, we need to ***prioritize our efforts and work as one Center,*** executing our mission more synchronized than ever. The capabilities that will win the next fight are by their nature multi-domain and systems-of-systems. AFTC must mobilize the competencies we hold across the Center and bring them to bear onto the DAF's priorities. Furthermore, since we need to ready the DAF to *fight tonight,* we will ***scale existing efforts that best accelerate capability development,*** to include the *Test Flag Enterprise.*

Perhaps more than any time in our existence, the nation is calling for AFTC to deliver. *We will push AFTC forward as the heart of a development-oriented Air Force.* To do this we must amplify our strengths – those that have made us the world leader in Test. We must keep an eye for the future and act boldly, because the future unfolds for the Air Force in AFTC's hands.

Ad Inexplorata!

  
SCOTT A. CAIN  
Major General, USAF  
Commander, Air Force Test Center

# Purpose

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The AFTC Strategic Plan is purposefully aligned with the Department of the Air Force (DAF) and Air Force Materiel Command (AFMC) plans. This plan describes how building AFTC into an Integrating Center will provide capabilities to win the fight. It is established to ensure Center priorities are developed within the context of Higher Headquarters (HHQ) priorities and provides the “North Star” for AFTC strategic decision-making. AFTC’s progress toward strategic areas will be reported monthly to the AFTC Council, AFTC Strategy Hub, and AFMC forums.

# Mission

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The AFTC mission is: “Develop, Test, and Evaluate Air, Space, and Cyberspace Systems to Deliver War-Winning Capabilities.” It is important to note the mission includes “develop” as the first word. Our mission is to not only test but to help the United States Air Force (USAF) develop concepts, systems, capabilities, tactics, techniques, and procedures. In the modern environment where “war-winning capabilities” are only achieved through a high degree of integration, our mission also requires us to be an Integrating Center, leading in the digital domain. To be successful, we will partner with the newly established Integrated Capabilities Command (ICC) and the Integrated Development Office (IDO) on warfighter needs and solutions. We engage early with the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) on experiments involving cutting-edge technology that can be exploited to our advantage. We work with the acquisition community to evaluate materiel solutions to warfighter requirements. We follow through with the Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center (AFOTEC) and the Air Force Warfare Center (AFWC) on integrated test, scaled integrated evaluations and simulations to develop and evaluate capabilities. We do all of this in all domain environments – air, space and cyberspace. Our mission is vital to the success of the USAF.

# Enduring Principles

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The AFTC enterprise consists of a variety of units with common characteristics and cultures united under our Test and Evaluation (T&E) mission. The **enduring principles** of the AFTC are:

- **World-Class Risk Management**
- **Adaptive Test Solutions**
- **Relentless Focus on the Warfighter**

**World-Class Risk Management.** Our test organizations are known for their ability to rapidly and professionally accomplish T&E to meet the needs of our Nation. We successfully accelerate and innovate by leveraging the world-class risk management which is foundational to our test safety, operational, technical, programmatic, and financial processes. Throughout the development of new technologies, executing experiments, and evaluating materiel solutions, we shepherd new capabilities to the Warfighter.

**Adaptive Test Solutions.** AFTC routinely adapts our test approaches, business practices, and team compositions to provide creative solutions for our acquisition partners. We leverage our expertise to deliver customized products and services in everything from basic research and experimentation to systems development and integration for major defense acquisition programs. AFTC subject matter

experts, modeling and simulation capabilities, and historical project information can be combined to support any type of acquisition program.

**Relentless Focus on the Warfighter.** The test community exists to deliver the best possible combat systems for national defense. We focus developmental test (DT) efforts on finding safety and operational effectiveness deficiencies early so they can be corrected in a timely manner at the lowest practical cost. We accomplish military utility evaluations and team with operational test (OT) units to conduct integrated DT/OT. Our expertise, scientific approaches, and impartial reports ensure the best possible Air, Space, and Cyberspace systems are delivered to the warfighter.

## Strategic Vectors

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For this plan, two Strategic Vectors have been defined as follows:

- 1. Define and Deliver AFTC’s role as an “Integrating Center”**
- 2. Operate as a test enterprise to generate advantages for the fight**

The first vector focuses on our role as “Integrating Center”. Using the Digital Thread and Joint Simulation Environment (JSE) as anchors for this vector, we will lead Integrated T&E with our deep capability developmental expertise and operational experience.

The second vector focuses on generating advantages for the fight while operating as a test enterprise. We will prioritize to create the optimal mix of expertise and infrastructure, scale future-fight oriented efforts such as the Test Flag Enterprise (TFE) and implement an incentive structure to accelerate development of war-winning capabilities.

By working together as one integrating center and operating to generate advantages for the fight, we fully meet the needs of our Nation.

## Strategic Areas

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The AFTC as Integrating Center for DAF capability development is shown on the cover of this plan and in Figure 1. In pursuit of AFTC’s Strategic Vectors, AFTC must work in the four Strategic Areas shown in Figure 1: 1) Accelerate capability development, 2) Build strong capability development partnerships, 3) Deliver trusted digital models to stakeholders, and 4) Prioritize AFTC operations based on demand signals from the DAF warfighter mission threads.



**Figure 1: AFC Strategic Areas**

**Accelerate.** The AFC must accelerate our operations to ensure capabilities are developed at the speed of need. To accelerate operations, we will scale and integrate the TFE, focusing the TFE on closing priority mission threads. We will also promote infrastructure and workforce development in critical technical areas including data science, data curation, systems engineering, modeling tools, modeling standards, digital tools, artificial intelligence, and functional engineering areas. We will establish and fill a Senior Leader technical position for AI and data science. We will promote a war-fighting mindset and ensure the workforce builds an enterprise perspective. Through these efforts, we will ensure our operations are accelerated to support relevant capability delivery timelines.

**Partner.** The AFC must build strong partnerships with organizations involved in capability development. Partnerships will be strengthened with new, existing, and reorganized units devoted to integrated capability development, including: the ICC as a new Major Command (MAJCOM); the IDO within AFMC; AFRL; AFOTEC; and AFWC. We will inform the capability development process based on our engineering expertise, operational experience, data, and models. We will engage with partners through all phases of the capability development continuum from conception through sustainment.

**Deliver.** AFC must be the trusted clearinghouse for validated high-fidelity models for use in integrated capability development and throughout the digital thread. To support this, AFC will work with the program offices to champion digital material management (DMM) and ensure acquisition plans prioritize AF ownership of system data and models in standard formats. Additionally, we will leverage the JSE and its unique capabilities to enhance our modeling efforts. We will be at the forefront in establishing and sustaining a digital ecosystem that undergirds the full lifecycle of DMM.

**Prioritize.** AFC must prioritize our work and execute it as one Center. We will establish priorities weighted by signals from the DAF and the ICC. The priorities will drive budget, investment, test capability, and test project decisions. We will ensure integrated capability development efforts such as the TFE are supported with improved data collection and analysis methods. Where necessary, AFC will create maneuver space and focus personnel on priority efforts. We will feed results into operational

assessments and tactics development in partnership with AFOTEC and AFWC as well as into emerging capabilities development in partnership with AFRL and the acquisition community. In this manner, AFTC will support the entire development continuum to ensure the USAF has the capabilities to deter our adversaries and prevail in conflict if necessary.

## 2025 Strategic Thrusts

The strategic vectors and strategic areas provide an overview of the long-term efforts needed for the AFTC. Within each strategic area, there are a few strategic thrusts where work will begin for these long-term efforts. The strategic thrusts include:

<b>Strategic Area</b>	<b>AFTC 2025 Strategic Thrusts</b>
<b>Accelerate</b>	<p><b>1. Scale Future Fight-oriented Capabilities – Experimentation and TFE (Owner: AFTC Multi Domain Test Force)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Intent: Ensure the AFTC expands on experimentation and test approaches like the TFE that provide opportunities to fully evaluate integrated warfighter capabilities. Ensure experiments and flag events are improved in terms of data (instrumentation in situ and on the range) and analysis tools (models, simulations, and advanced algorithms and techniques). Synchronize flag exercises across the test enterprise to include sharing tools, models, and data to accelerate flow of results.</li> </ul>
<b>Accelerate</b>	<p><b>2. Advance Science of Test for Integrated Capabilities (Owner: AFTC/CZ)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Intent: Develop the workforce, tools, and test capabilities required to analyze systems of systems and get relevant answers.</li> </ul>
<b>Partner</b>	<p><b>3. Establish Partnership and Process With ICC/IDO (Owner: AFTC/CD)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Intent: Establish processes and personnel integration between the AFTC, the ICC, and the IDO. The AFTC will stand up necessary test and analysis capabilities early to synchronize with mission threads and associated integrated capability needs. The AFTC will foster partnerships across the capability development enterprise to enhance lethality while reducing timelines for providing warfighters with proven solutions.</li> </ul>
<b>Partner</b>	<p><b>4. Pursue Seamless Partner Experience (Owner: AFTC/CA)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Intent: Advance the goal of being an Integrating Center by providing comprehensive T&amp;E solutions for our partners that reduce programmatic and technical risks by taking advantage of the right test capabilities across the test enterprise through a single simple interface. The services and knowledge products delivered should reflect uncertainty-based risk analysis and mitigation that balances efficiency with effectiveness and provides verified and validated digital products – data sets, models, simulations, and analyses.</li> </ul>

<b>Deliver</b>	<p><b>5. Establish the JSE as the Hub for Digital Force Design, Research, Experimentation, and Prototyping (Owner: AFTC/CZ)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Intent: Posture JSE to be a key component in the capability development process. Integrate the JSE into the earliest stages of weapons system development, leveraging tailorable, high-fidelity digital surrogates with operator feedback to enhance integration and lethality while mitigating risks to mission assurance.</li> </ul>
<b>Deliver</b>	<p><b>6. Establish Digital Instantiation of Critical Test Capabilities (Owner: AFTC/CZ)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Intent: Build the digital architecture of our test enterprise capabilities to support current state performance assessments of capacity and throughput. The digital instantiations should support data analytics born strategies for improvement and modernization.</li> </ul>
<b>Deliver</b>	<p><b>7. Deliver Digital Thread Stewardship to the DAF (Owner: AFTC/CZ)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Intent: Establish the AFTC as the authoritative steward of the digital thread, to provide decision advantage across the weapon lifecycle. This will be pursued by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Strategically investing in the AFTC’s digital ecosystem by following an affordable and executable data infrastructure and platform investment plan</li> <li>○ Making targeted investments to establish a framework for the science and process of model verification and validation (V&amp;V) through T&amp;E</li> <li>○ Investing in our people to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to implement model V&amp;V through T&amp;E</li> <li>○ Leveraging these enhanced resources, via pathfinder efforts, to directly support capability development and force design</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Prioritize</b>	<p><b>8. Develop System and Process for Prioritization (Owner: AFTC/XR)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Intent: Develop a system and integrating process that addresses short-range and long-range priorities to ensure top priorities at the AFTC address the capabilities that matter most to the DAF. Short-range priorities involve work acceptance and test project operations. Long-range priorities involve improvement and modernization investments, military construction and other long-range plans and activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Prioritize</b>	<p><b>9. Tailor Roadmaps for Strategy and Apply to Investments (Owner: AFTC/EN)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Intent: Adjust AFTC roadmaps for the strategy expressed in this plan, focusing on becoming an Integrating Center heavily involved in digital materiel management and systems of systems test and evaluation. After adjusting the roadmaps, use them to influence the investment process appropriately.</li> </ul>

**Table 1: AFTC 2025 Strategic Thrusts**

# Conclusion

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The AFTC is poised to transform and accelerate the development of capabilities that will generate advantages in the fight. By embracing its unique role as an Integrating Center, AFTC will leverage its world-class risk management, adaptive test solutions, and relentless focus on the warfighter to deliver innovative and effective capabilities to the warfighter. Through its strategic plan, AFTC will prioritize its efforts, work as one center, and mobilize its competencies to support DAF priorities. By developing its workforce, building strong relationships, and integrating and delivering trusted digital models, AFTC will be the partner of choice for integrated capability development and the steward of the digital thread. Ultimately, AFTC's transformation will enable the DAF to win the fight, and its enduring principles will continue to guide its mission to deliver the best possible combat systems for national defense. With a clear vision and a bold plan, AFTC is ready to push forward and accelerate the development of capabilities that will ensure the Air Force's continued dominance in the skies.

For more information regarding this plan, contact Air Force Test Center Plans and Requirements Directorate (AFTC/XR) via email at [AFTC.XR.Workflowbox@us.af.mil](mailto:AFTC.XR.Workflowbox@us.af.mil).

# Appendix A: Acronyms and Abbreviations

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AFMC	Air Force Materiel Command
AFOTEC	Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center
AFRL	Air Force Research Laboratory
AFTC	Air Force Test Center
AFTC/CA	Air Force Test Center Executive Director
AFTC/CC	Air Force Test Center Commander
AFTC/CD	Air Force Test Center Deputy Commander
AFTC/CZ	Air Force Test Center Senior Technical Advisor
AFTC/EN	Air Force Test Center Engineering Directorate
AFTC/XR	Air Force Test Center Plans and Requirements Directorate
AFWC	Air Force Warfare Center
CUI	Controlled Unclassified Information
DAF	Department of the Air Force
DMM	Digital Materiel Management
DT	Developmental Test
ES	Enterprise Solutions
FSRM	Facilities Sustainment, Restoration, and Modernization
HHQ	Higher Headquarters
ICC	Integrated Capabilities Command
IDO	Integrated Development Office
JSE	Joint Simulation Environment
MAJCOM	Major Command
OPSEC	Operations Security
OT	Operational Test
T&E	Test and Evaluation
TFE	Test Flag Enterprise
USAF	United States Air Force
V&V	verification and validation