This document is intended to provide context to FA300225SC002- FY26 AoI 0001

Mission Requirements & Total Force Integration

The mission of the Department of the Air Force Marketing Enterprise is to connect military brands of choice to the next generation of Airmen and Guardians across the Total Force. This approach explicitly integrates the needs of the Regular Air Force (RegAF), Air National Guard (ANG), Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC), and the United States Space Force (USSF). Each component plays a unique role in national defense, and each faces distinctive recruiting challenges. A "one-size-fits-all" marketing model cannot meet the needs of such a diverse enterprise.

Each component—Regular Air Force, Air Force Reserve, Air National Guard, and U.S. Space Force—will adopt SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) that ladder up to enterprise priorities.

- Enterprise SMART Goals: Accession numbers, awareness and trust benchmarks, digital presence growth.
- Component SMART Goals: Tailored to unique missions, demographics, and force needs.

Regular Air Force (RegAF)

The mission of the United States Air Force is to "Fly, Fight and Win – Airpower Anytime, Anywhere". The RegAF requires the largest accession pipeline of all components. Thousands of new recruits must be inspired and accessed annually across a broad range of career fields — from pilots and maintainers to cyber professionals and medics.

Marketing for the RegAF must therefore emphasize scale, awareness, and breadth of opportunity, while also moving beyond polished "brand commercials" that fail to connect with our target audience. The focus is on creating immersive experiences and peer-driven content that highlight the diversity of career options, coupled with direct recruiting CTAs that convert awareness into leads.

Target Audience:

- Enlisted Accessions (EA):
  - Non-prior service (NPS): Propensed, competitor, STEM-minded, community-driven, and trade school aged 16-39
  - Prior service (PS): Prior-service DAF with positive reenlistment eligibility code and non-DAF prior service with positive reenlistment eligibility code
  - SPECWARFARE (sub program): Extremely physically fit motivated by a higher calling age 18-24
- Officer Accessions (OA):
  - USAFA: Highly qualified candidates aged 13-22, especially STEM and aviation focused as well as key congressional districts identified by USAFA
  - ROTC: High school seniors are top priority, however complete target audience is high school and college students age 16-24
  - OTS: College students focused in tech careers and other officer careers as identified by AFAC/A3 age 18-48
  - HP: College students and health professionals focusing on nursing, allied health, and the Health Professional Scholarship Program (HPSP) and other HP careers as identified by AFAC/A3 age 18-48
  - Chaplain: Religious Ministry Professionals, aged 30-38
  - JAG: Law students and attorneys up to age 42

United States Air Force Academy (USAFA)

The mission of the Unites States Air Force Academy is "To Forge Leaders of Character, Motivated to a Lifetime of Service, and Developed to Lead Our Air Force and Space Force as We Fight and Win Our Nation's Wars". USAFA represents the DAF's premier leadership pipeline, producing officers who will lead across the Total Force. Its recruiting challenge is highly competitive, targeting some of the nation's most academically and athletically gifted students.

Marketing for USAFA must emphasize:

- Prestige – highlighting the Academy's reputation as a world-class institution.
- Leadership Development – opportunities for cadets to lead and innovate at a young age.
- Alumni Impact – showcasing distinguished graduates in aviation, space, cyber, and public leadership.
- Balance of Academics, Athletics, and Service – the unique "whole person" approach.

Campaigns will focus on building USAFA's brand among high school counselors, coaches, parents, and educators — the influencers who often guide elite students' decisions.

United States Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC)

The mission of the United States Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps is to "Develop Air and Space Force Leaders of Character Whom We Expect to Fight and Win Our Nation's Wars". U.S. Air Force ROTC is the largest provider for line commissioned officers and is the leading source for Commission for Officers in Technical Air Force Specialties (AFS). Marketing for U.S. Air Force ROTC:

- Challenges
  - Approximately 45% of ROTC Scholarship Cadets must be in a technical degree program to meet AF requirement
  - We have 145 ROTC Detachments with more than 1,100 cross-town university partners
- Opportunities
  - Electrical Engineers, Nurses, Meteorologists, Linguists (especially Chinese and Russian)

Air National Guard (ANG)

The mission of the Air National Guard is to "Provide Mission-Ready Airmen to Safeguard the Homeland, Serve Our Communities, and to Execute Global Operations". The ANG is unique in its dual mission: serving both community and nation. Its marketing challenge is to convey the value of being a "Citizen Airman" — someone who can stay rooted in their community while contributing to national defense.

Key messaging themes for the ANG include:

- Community Identity – "Stay in your hometown. Serve your state. Defend your nation."
- Education Benefits – including state tuition assistance programs.
- Flexibility – the ability to serve part-time while pursuing civilian careers.

The ANG also faces a significant barrier: the complexity of transition for RegAF members considering joining the Guard. Questions about duty status, retirement points, and benefits often deter transitions. To address this, the ANG will deploy AI-powered Virtual Counselor tools that simplify these choices by showing side-by-side comparisons of retirement impacts, duty commitments, and benefits.

On social media, the ANG recruiting audience consistently interacts most with content highlighting BMT and other initial Air Force experiences and processes. The team will capitalize on this interest to illuminate the Air Force experience through Ambassadors, influencers and internally created content that answers question and provides helpful information on expectations.

Challenges:

- Understanding of distinctions between:
    - Guard and Active Duty
    - Air Guard and Army Guard
- Target audience does not see similarities between themselves and those in ANG.
- Lack of awareness of career opportunities in ANG.
- 54 states and territories
- 90 wings

Target Audience:

- Enlisted Accessions:
    - NPS: Age 18-41 with archetypes as determined by the ANG
    - 20-26
    - PS: Age 21-49 Palace Chase or Palace Front eligible Airmen and sister service members, Inactive Ready Reserve (IRR) members, and fully discharged prior service members

Air Force Reserve Command (AFRC)

The Mission of the United States Air Force Reserve is “To Provide Combat Ready Forces to Fly, Fight and Win”. The AFRC provides strategic depth and flexibility to the force. Its recruiting challenge is similar to the ANG: convincing transitioning or separating Airmen to continue their service rather than leaving the military entirely.

Key messaging themes for the AFRC include:

- Continuation of Service – the ability to keep wearing the uniform, maintain benefits, and preserve retirement credit.
- Civilian Career Integration – highlighting how reservists can advance their civilian careers while serving part-time.

- Flexibility – duty arrangements that can be tailored to individual needs.

Like the ANG, AFRC transitions are often hampered by confusing rules. The Virtual Counselor tool will also be deployed here, giving service members a simplified way to evaluate the benefits of joining the Reserve.

Value proposition: Continue serving. Advance your civilian career. Preserve your benefits.

On AFR recruiting social media, owned content that leaned into a traditional interpretation of "warrior ethos," including aircraft, shooting guns, memorials and patriotic messaging resonated the most with this audience, garnering more engagement than other themes.

Target Audience:

- Enlisted Accessions:
    - NPS: Age 17-39 with archetypes as determined by AFR
    - PS: Age 18-49 Palace Chase or Palace Front eligible Airmen and sister service members, Inactive Ready Reserve (IRR) members, and fully discharged prior service members

United States Space Force (USSF)

The mission of the United States Space Force is to "Secure Our Nation's Interests In, From, and To Space". As the newest branch of the Armed Forces, the USSF faces a fundamentally different challenge: legitimacy. Many Americans still question whether the Space Force is "real," and awareness of its mission sets remains low.

The marketing requirement for USSF is therefore less about volume and more about quality and credibility. USSF must:

- Strengthen the American public's understanding of its role in national security.
- Elevate awareness of elite career fields in STEM, cyber, and space operations.
- Attract highly specialized recruits, many of whom already hold advanced degrees.

The USSF strategy will not focus on sheer accession numbers but on generating high-quality leads from elite technical communities. Partnerships with STEM universities, collaborations with ROTC/USAFA cadets, and integration of Guardians as authentic storytellers will be central to this approach.

Social media content that highlights Guardians outperforms others, emphasizing the audience's desire to see Guardian faces and learn real details about careers and growth opportunities.

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- Enlisted Accessions:

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Integration Across the Total Force

The Total Force approach ensures that the priorities of each component are represented in every campaign from inception, not bolted on afterward.

The Total Force framework ensures:

- Equity of voice – each component represented in governance, brand and strategy.
- Shared infrastructure – common tools, data, tech, attribution dashboards, and content libraries.
- Brand consistency – one Department of the Air Force identity, adapted to unique component needs.