

Air Force Journalistic Style Guide for Public Releases

This supplement to the *Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law* is a guide to help Air Force news editors with Air Force-unique words and phrases that the *AP Stylebook* does not address.

Webster's New World College Dictionary shall be used for punctuation, spelling, style and usage not covered in the *AP Stylebook*.

This supplement shall be used only after the above sources have been referenced.

September 2012

A

A-10 Thunderbolt II Do not use informal “warthog.” A-10 and Thunderbolt are both acceptable on second reference

AC-130H Spectre, AC-130U *AC-130 Gunship* is incorrect: *gunship* is a generic term used like *fighter* and *bomber*.

Academy Upper-case 2nd reference when referring to U.S. Air Force Academy

AFSO21 Air Force Smart Operations for the 21st Century – AFSO21 acceptable on second reference (no space in AFSO21).

acronyms Limit use of acronyms based on ease of communication, readability and common sense as well as those uses approved for first or subsequent reference by the AP Stylebook and this style guide.

Generally introduce the acronym no more than two sentences from the first spelling out.

Do not automatically use an acronym on second reference when a usage such as “the unit”, “the command” or “the office” can be used.

If the author includes an acronym in parentheses after it’s spelled out on first reference, leave the parenthetical in the text, but don’t add parenthetical acronyms. Don’t use parenthetical acronyms after major command or unit names; delete them if they’re included. (Ex. "He graduated from the School of Water Immersion Mechanics (SWIM)" is OK. "She is commander of Air Force Space Command (AFSPC)" is not OK; delete (AFSPC).

active duty (n.), **active-duty** (adj.) *He has sworn to serve three years on active duty. Active-duty servicemembers will receive a 3 percent raise.*

active-duty service commitment *ADSC* is acceptable on second reference.

AGM air-to-ground missile

AIM air intercept (or air-to-air) missile

Air and Space Basic Course The first level of officer professional military education, held for second lieutenants and civilians at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala. *ASBC* is acceptable on second reference.

air and space expeditionary force *AEF* is the correct abbreviation and is acceptable on second reference.

air and space force Preferred term vs. *aerospace force*.

air base Capitalize when used in conjunction with a base: *Misawa Air Base*. *AB* is acceptable in conjunction with a second reference to a base: *Misawa AB*. Do not abbreviate in biographies.

airborne laser

Air Combat Command *ACC* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Command and Staff College *ACSC* is acceptable on second reference.

aircraft battle damage repair *ABDR* is acceptable on second reference.

aircrew

airdrop

Air Education and Training Command *AETC* is acceptable on second reference.

airfield

Air Force May be abbreviated to *AF* in headlines. Do not abbreviate to *AF* within a story unless it is part of an approved

acronym: *They are all Air Force members.*
Not: *They are all AF members.*
See the *air force* entry in the Associated Press Stylebook for capitalization practices.

Air Force Aid Society *AFAS* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force Association *AFA* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force base Capitalize when used in conjunction with a base: *Randolph Air Force Base*. *AFB* is acceptable in conjunction with a second reference to a base: *Randolph AFB*.

Air Force capabilities Made possible by the **Air Force core competencies**. The Air Force capabilities are:

- air and space superiority.
- information superiority.
- global attack.
- precision engagement.
- rapid global mobility.
- agile combat support.

Air Force Center for Engineering and the Environment *AFCEE* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force Communications Agency obsolete name of the new Air Force Network Integration Center.

Air Force core competencies The Air Force core competencies are:

- developing airmen.
- technology-to-warfighting.
- integrating operations.

Air Force core values The Air Force core values are:

- integrity first.
- service before self.
- excellence in all we do.

Air Force Doctrine Center Obsolete name for the LeMay Center for Doctrine Development and Education.

Air Force General Officer Matters Office The military counterpart to the Air

Force Senior Executive Management Office. *AFGOMO* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force Global Strike Command *AFGSC* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force Inspection Agency *AFIA* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force Institute of Technology A postgraduate school with headquarters at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. The school offers degrees in aeronautical, astronautical and electrical engineering, among others. *AFIT* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force instruction With a specific instruction: *Air Force Instruction 35-101, "Public Affairs Policies and Procedures."* *AFI* is acceptable on second reference. Ensure complete title is included on first reference.

Air Force Junior ROTC Acceptable in all references for *Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps*. *Junior ROTC* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force Link The obsolete name for the official Air Force Web site (<http://www.af.mil>). It is now referred to as *AF (dot) mil* or *AF.mil*

Air Force Materiel Command *AFMC* is acceptable on second reference. Always reverify spelling of "materiel" to avoid common error "material"

Air Force Museum Former (and obsolete) name of the **National Museum of the U.S. Air Force**.

Air Force Network Integration Center *AFNIC* is acceptable on second reference. It is the former Air Force Communications Agency.

Air Force News Agency Obsolete name for the Defense Media Activity-San Antonio. *AFNEWS* was merged with other service's news agencies in the 2005 BRAC.

The agency is slated to move to Fort Meade, Md., in 2011.

Air Force Office of Special Investigations *AFOSI* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force One An Air Force aircraft carrying the president of the United States. See the **VC-25A Air Force One** entry.

Air Force Organizational Excellence Award *AFOEA* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award *AFOUA* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force Personnel Center *AFPC* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force Priorities

- Reininvigorate the Air Force nuclear enterprise
- Partner with the joint and coalition team to win today's fight
- Develop and care for Airmen and their families
- Modernize air, space inventories, organizations and training
- Recapture acquisition excellence

Air Force Recruiting Service *AFRS* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force Reserve There is no *s* after Reserve. Use *reservist* when referring to a member of the Air Force Reserve: *She is an Air Force reservist. He is in the Reserve.* Note: If the discussion includes the Air National Guard, then *reserve* is lower case, as in *air reserve components...*

Air Force Reserve Command *AFRC* is acceptable on second reference. When identifying a Reserve unit in a story or caption, use “*Air Force Reserve Command’s 302nd Airlift Wing.*”

Air Force ROTC Acceptable in all references for *Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps. Senior ROTC* is not

acceptable. See also **Air Force Junior ROTC**.

Air Force Safety Center Do not use *AFSC* as an acronym for *Air Force Safety Center*. Preferred use is *Air Force Safety Center* or *the safety center* on second reference.

Air Force Senior Executive Management Office The civilian counterpart to the Air Force General Officer Matters Office.

Air Force Senior NCO Academy Do not abbreviate. Preferred use is *the academy* on second reference. Use *Air Force Senior NCO Academy* when distinguishing among other academies in a story.

Air Force Sergeants Association *AFSA* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force Space Command *AFSPC* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force Special Operations Command *AFSOC* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force specialty code With a specific code: *Air Force Specialty Code 3NOX1, public affairs. AFSC* or *AFSC 3NOX1* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force Weather Agency *AFWA* is acceptable on second reference.

Air Force-wide

Airman, Airmen Capitalized in all uses except when used as part of a generic reference to a rank or person or when U.S. forces are mixed in with airmen of other countries: *high year of tenure for senior airmen* or *An airman 1st class was arrested. U.S. Air Force and South Korean airmen...*

airman battle uniform *ABU* is acceptable on second reference.

airman leadership school Lowercase unless preceded by the name of the installation: *Lackland Air Force Base Airman Leadership School* or *Lackland Airman Leadership School*. *ALS* is acceptable on second reference.

Airman magazine The correct name is *Airman*, not *Airman Magazine*. It is *Airman* magazine.

Air Mobility Command *AMC* is acceptable on second reference.

Air National Guard A reserve component of the Air Force. *ANG* or *Air Guard* is acceptable on second reference. Lower-case *guardsmen*

air show

airpower

airspace

air strike

air station Capitalize when used in conjunction with a base: *Izmir Air Station, Turkey*. *AS* is acceptable on second reference in conjunction with a base: *Izmir AS*.

Air University *AU* is acceptable on second reference.

Air War College *AWC* is acceptable on second reference.

American Battle Monuments

Commission Established in 1923 in Washington, D.C., the commission maintains all U.S. military cemeteries, including those on foreign soil. Do not use *ABMC*.

American Forces Radio and Television Service

Provides radio and television news, sports, information and entertainment programming to Department of Defense personnel and their family members overseas or at sea where English-language broadcast service is unavailable or

inadequate. *AFRTS* is acceptable on second reference.

anti-ballistic missile *ABM* is acceptable on second reference.

apostrophe (') Do not use an apostrophe when referring to Air Force aircraft in a plural context: *There are seven F-15Es on base*. See the *apostrophe (')* entry in the punctuation portion of the Associated Press Stylebook for other usage practices.

apprehension Military legal term for taking someone into custody and placing him under observation until proper authorities arrive.

area defense counsel *ADC* is acceptable on second reference.

armed forces, armed services

armed forces and *armed services* are synonymous and refer to *the military services and the U.S. Coast Guard*.

Army and Air Force Exchange

Service *AAFES* is acceptable on second reference.

arrest Military legal term that does not mean the actual taking of a person into custody. Arrest directs the person to remain within certain specified limits and is enforced by virtue of the person's moral and legal obligation to obey the order.

Article 15, Articles 15

AWACS Acceptable in all references for *airborne warning and control system*. See **E-3 Sentry** for aircraft description.

Note: For all aircraft, upon first reference, always use the letter-number designation AND the official name of the aircraft, e.g. B-52 Stratofortress. You will need to add it parenthetically in quotes if not included by the speaker.

B

B-1B Lancer B-1B or Lancer is acceptable on second reference.

B-2 Spirit B-2 or Spirit is acceptable on second reference.

B-52 Stratofortress B-52 or Stratofortress is acceptable on second reference. BUFF or other nicknames will not be used.

barracks An outdated term used only in a historical sense. Use *dormitory*.

base exchange The Exchange is the new official title of an Army and Air Force Exchange Service outlet. *the exchange* is acceptable on second reference. Use *The Exchange at Lackland Air Force Base*.

basic allowance for housing BAH is acceptable on second reference.

basic allowance for subsistence BAS is acceptable on second reference.

battle dress uniform BDU is acceptable in all references.

battlelab, battlelabs Do not capitalize unless the formal name is used.

battle staff

beddown - noun

bed down - verb

below-the-zone promotion BTZ is acceptable on second reference.

billeting An outdated term for temporary accommodations. Use *lodging*.

bluesuiters May be used to describe Air Force people.

BRAC Acceptable on second reference for Defense Base Closure and Realignment

Commission, sometimes mistakenly referred to as the Base Realignment and Closure Commission

building Abbreviate and capitalize when used with numbers to designate a particular structure, such as *Bldg. 610*. See **gate**, **hangar** and **room** entries.

byline Tells the reader that the person credited with the story has gathered most of the information, heard the quotes unless they are credited to a third listener and been largely responsible for the form the story has taken. A byline on a datelined story also tells the reader that the author gathered the information at the location indicated. Note, only ONE person is listed in the byline box. Additional reporters "contributed to this story." Also, an entire office CANNOT be the author. If an office or organization is listed in the byline, move it to the end of the story as (*Courtesy of the 60 Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office*)

Note: For all aircraft, upon first reference, always use the letter-number designation AND the official name of the aircraft, e.g. B-52 Stratofortress. You will need to add it parenthetically in quotes if not included by the speaker.

C

C-130 Hercules The latest model is the C-130J Super Hercules; E and H models remain in the inventory. C-130 or Hercules is acceptable on second reference. See also **AC-130**, **EC-130**, **HC-130**, **MC-130** and **WC-130**.

C-17 Globemaster III C-17 or Globemaster is acceptable on second reference.

C-20 No official name, it is the military version of the Gulfstream III.

C-21 No official name, it is the military version of the Lear Jet 35A.

C-32 No official name, it is a specially configured version of the Boeing 757-200 airliner.

C-37A No official name, it is the military version of the Gulfstream V.

C-40B/C No official name, it is the military version of the Boeing 737-700.

C-5 Galaxy C-5 or Galaxy is acceptable on second reference. The new C-5M is the Super Galaxy.

cadet See **courtesy and military titles** entry.

change of command ceremony - don't hyphenate compound adjective

chaplain See **courtesy and military titles** entry.

chief master sgt. of the Air Force

child care (n.), **child-care** (adj.) *I know a parent who is seeking child care. She is a child-care provider.*

child-care giver, child-care provider A person trained and certified to take care of children.

chow hall Outdated term; use only in historical sense. Correct term is *dining facility*. See **mess hall** entry.

Civil Air Patrol By federal law, the Civil Air Patrol is an official Air Force auxiliary. *CAP* is acceptable on second reference.

civilian personnel office *CPO* is acceptable on second reference. Lowercase unless preceded by the name of the installation: *Barksdale Civilian Personnel Office*.

Class A accident A military accident that causes loss of life or at least \$1 million of damage.

CLEP test Acceptable in all references for *College Level Examination Program*.

close of business Do not abbreviate. A specific time of closure is preferred.

coalition (it's not a proper noun)

Colombia - the country

Columbia - the university, the former space shuttle, several cities and private-sector organizations

Combined Federal Campaign *CFC* is acceptable on second reference.

combined task force *CTF* is acceptable on second reference.

combined joint task force *CJTF* is acceptable on second reference

commander in chief Do not hyphenate. There is only one commander in chief of the armed forces, the president. Do not use the term when referring to commanders of unified commands.

commissary Lowercase unless preceded by the name of the installation: *base commissary, Langley Commissary*.

Community College of the Air Force CCAF is acceptable on second reference.

Common Access Card Capitalize as a proper noun. CAC is acceptable on second reference. Do not use CAC card.

company grade officer An officer below the rank of major. CGO is acceptable on second reference.

company grade officers association Term is plural, not possessive — no apostrophe. Lowercase unless preceded by the name of the installation: *Offutt Company Grade Officers Association*. CGOA acceptable on 2nd reference.

Congressional (erroneous) Medal of Honor See Medal of Honor Do NOT use Congressional!!!!

consecutive overseas tour COT is acceptable on second reference.

CONUS Acceptable on second reference for *continental United States*. Note: This term in most military uses actually refers to the 48 *contiguous* states; the term's origin predates the admission of Alaska as a state.

core competencies See **Air Force core competencies**.

core values See **Air Force core values**.

cost-of-living allowance COLA is acceptable on second reference.

counternarcotics

courtesy and military titles On first reference, use the appropriate courtesy or military title before the full name (see

notes). On second and subsequent reference, no courtesy or military title is required.

cadets Academy or ROTC cadets are identified as *Cadet Thomas Gaines* on first reference.

children First names are acceptable for children ages 17 and younger.

civilians Refer to men and women by first and last name on first reference: *Mark Haston, Elizabeth Gaines*. Do not use Mr., Ms., etc., in front of a civilian name. Do not use *Honorable* in front of a civilian's title.

doctors and chaplains Air Force physicians are identified as *Capt. (Dr.) John Jones* on first reference. Chaplains are *Chaplain (Maj.) Sam Smith*.

headlines Military titles are not required in headlines.

judges Refer to a judge as judge, not as Mr., Mrs, or Ms.

pilot nicknames Pilot call signs or nicknames will not be used in news stories. Some may be deemed unsuitable for AF.Mil so use none. If a full name cannot be used because of security reasons, the rank and first name can be used instead.

retirees *retired Brig. Gen. John Doe, retired Master Sgt. Richard Roe*. Not *Brig. Gen (Ret)*. Also, in accordance with AFI 36-3106, *Air Force Retiree Activities*, retirees will be addressed by their retired grade (not Mr., Miss, or Ms.) except for those retirees who are currently employed by Civil Service while on duty.

“**Select**” is not a rank – do not use *Col (Sel) John Smith*. The correct title is *Lt. Col. John Smith*.

court-martial, courts-martial

CPR Acceptable in all references for *cardiopulmonary resuscitation*.

crew chief

crewmember

CV-22 Osprey *CV-22* or *Osprey* is acceptable on second reference.

Note: For all aircraft, upon first reference, always use the letter-number designation AND the official name of the aircraft, e.g. B-52 Stratofortress. You will need to add it

parenthetically in quotes if not included by the speaker.

cyber-, cyberspace Mostly, Cyber is a prefix so use general rule for prefixes; do not use a hyphen before a word starting with a consonant: cybersecurity, cybercafé; cyberworld. The word, Cyber, is becoming used more and more as a noun, as in *cyber strategies* or *cyber capabilities*. The command is U.S. Cyber Command.

D

Dedicated crew chief ”dedicated” can be misunderstood by civilians (of course they’re dedicated) so drop it and just go with crew chief.

Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission – BRAC *acceptable on second reference.*

Defense Commissary Agency *DeCA* is acceptable on second reference.

Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System *DEERS* is acceptable on second reference.

Defense Finance and Accounting Service *DFAS* is acceptable on second reference.

Defense Intelligence Agency *DIA* is acceptable on second reference.

Defense Language Institute *DLI* is acceptable on second reference.

Defense Logistics Agency *DLA* is acceptable on second reference.

Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office *DRMO* is acceptable on second reference.

Department of Defense *DOD* is acceptable on second reference. Note upper case O (not DoD)

Department of Defense Dependents Schools *DODDS* is acceptable on second reference.

dependent *Family member(s)* is preferred unless writing about compensation or legal issues that require the use of *dependent* in the narrow or legal sense. When referring to a specific person or people, use *husband*, *wife*, *son*, *daughter* or *children*.

DEROS Acceptable on second reference for *date of estimated return from overseas*.

Desert combat uniform – DCU acceptable on second reference.

dining-in, dinings-in A formal dinner for military members of a wing, unit or organization held to promote unit cohesion and morale. Capitalize when used with the name of the base: *The Randolph AFB Dining-In is today.*

dining-out, dinings-out The difference between a dining-in and a dining-out is that nonmilitary spouses, friends, and civilians may attend a dining-out. Capitalize when used with the name of the base: *The Randolph AFB Dining-Out is today.*

doctor See **courtesy and military titles**.

DSN Acceptable in all references for *Defense Switched Network* when used with a telephone number: *For more information, call DSN 487-7213.* In stories about the system, spell out on first reference: *Defense Switched Network connections are being repaired.*

E

E-3 Sentry A modified Boeing 707-320 used as an airborne warning and control system (AWACS) See **airborne warning and control system**.

E-4B A military version of the Boeing 747-200, the aircraft serves as the National Airborne Operations Center for national leaders in case of a national emergency or the destruction of ground command centers.

E-8C Joint STARS A modified Boeing 707 with an air-to-ground surveillance system designed to track ground targets in all weather conditions. *E-8C Joint STARS* is acceptable on first reference, but explain later that STARS stands for *Surveillance Target Attack Radar System*.

EA-6B Prowler A Navy electronic-attack aircraft that jams enemy radar, electronic data links and communications. It is flown by Navy and AF pilots in Navy squadrons.

EC-130H Compass Call A modified C-130 used to jam enemy command-and-control networks and suppress enemy air defenses.

EC-130J Commando Solo A modified C-130 that conducts information operations, psychological operations and civil affairs broadcasts in AM, FM, HF, TV and military communications bands.

electronic countermeasures *ECM* is acceptable on second reference.

enlisted club Also known as the *NCO club*. Note: The designated titles of clubs differ across the Air Force. Use the appropriate title at the base being featured.

Capitalize when prefaced with the name of the base: *Tyndall Enlisted Club*

See **NCO club** entry.

enlisted performance report *EPR* is acceptable on second reference.

enlisted spouses club Formerly known as the *NCO wives club*. Note: The designated titles of clubs differ across the Air Force. Use the appropriate title at the base being featured.

Do not abbreviate. Capitalize when prefaced with the name of the base: *Tyndall Enlisted Spouses Club*. Preferred use is without the apostrophe.

See **NCO wives club** entry.

EQUAL Acceptable on second reference for *Enlisted Quarterly Assignment Listing*; a system that advertises upcoming assignment requirements and gives people a chance to volunteer for vacancies.

EQUAL-Plus *Enlisted Quarterly Assignment Listing-Plus*. A system that advertises upcoming special-duty-assignment requirements. If referring to *EQUAL-Plus* after *EQUAL* has already been referred to, *EQUAL-Plus* is acceptable on all references. If not, spell out on first ref.

-ever first-ever, second-ever, best-ever is redundant (like completely destroyed). Avoid using unless in a quote

executive officer Commander's key staff member. Avoid using *XO* or *exec*.

exercises Capitalize the names of exercises: *Red Flag*; *Cope Thunder 04-02*. Capitalize "Exercise" only if it is part of the official title.

Note: For all aircraft, upon first reference, always use the letter-number designation AND the official name of the aircraft, e.g. B-52 Stratofortress. You will need to add it parenthetically in quotes if not included by the speaker.

F

F-15 Eagle F-15 or Eagle is acceptable on second reference.

F-15E Strike Eagle Not the same as the F-15. F-15E or Strike Eagle is acceptable on second ref.

F-16 Fighting Falcon Do not use informal “Viper.” F-16 or Fighting Falcon is acceptable on second reference.

F-16CJ Fighting Falcon A version of the F-16 dedicated to the suppression of enemy air defenses. F-16 or Fighting Falcon is acceptable on second reference.

F-117A Nighthawk F-117 or Nighthawk is acceptable on second reference. No longer in the inventory.

F-22 Raptor Don’t include “A” as in F-22A. F-22 or Raptor is acceptable on second reference.

F-35 Lightning II joint strike fighter. F-35, Lightning II, JSF acceptable on second reference. Don’t upper case joint strike fighter

family member referring generically to a service member’s spouse or child. When referring to a specific person or people, use *husband, wife, son, daughter* or *children*. Avoid using *dependent* unless writing about compensation or legal issues that require the use of *dependent*.

field grade officer A major, lieutenant colonel or colonel.

firefighter

fiscal year The military fiscal year is from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30. Do not abbreviate as FY. *The program’s budget is going up in the next fiscal year.* Drop *year* when used in conjunction with the numerical year: *Congress cut the budget for fiscal 2005.*

flightcrew

flightline

flight Capitalize when used to designate a particular unit: *He works in the 47th Mission Support Group Military Personnel Flight* (or ... *Group’s Military Personnel Flight*). *He works in the military personnel flight.*

See **group**, **squadron** and **wing** entries.

fly-by-wire

force protection condition Capitalize when referring to a specific threat condition: *The base is in Force Protection Condition Charlie. The base increased the force protection condition.*

foreign-object damage FOD is acceptable on second reference, and is often used as a shorthand for the debris itself.

frock Allowing a servicemember who has been selected for promotion to wear the grade insignia before the promotion is official. Frocking is usually restricted to senior officers.

funeral See 21-Gun Salute

Note: For all aircraft, upon first reference, always use the letter-number designation AND official name of the aircraft, e.g. B-52 Stratofortress. Add it parenthetically in quotes if not included by the speaker.

G

gate Capitalize when used with a number in reference to a specific entrance to the base: *They are at Gate 7. I will meet you at the Post Road gate.*

See **building**, **hangar** and **room** entries.

GBU guided bomb unit

Global Hawk (The RQ-4) Can be referred to as an unmanned aircraft (UA) or a remotely piloted aircraft (RPA).

Global Positioning System GPS is acceptable on second reference.

Global Strike Command -- see Air Force Global Strike Command

Gore-Tex A registered trademark of W.L. Gore & Associates, who make water-resistant jackets for wear with the BDU.

government-owned vehicle

Preferred use is *Air Force vehicle* or *government vehicle* in all references. The acronym *GOV* should not be used.

graphic credit lines Graphic credits should be treated the same as photo credits. Style and placement may vary, but proper credit must be given: (*U.S. Air Force graphic/Joe Jones*). Artists can put their personal signatures on their work, but standard credits should still be used.

ground breaking (n.),
ground-breaking (adj.)

Ground Zero – refers to the site of the World Trade Center as opposed to “ground zero” which is where an ICBM lands.

group Capitalize when used with numbers to designate a particular unit: *He works at the 47th Operations Group. He works at the operations group.*

See **flight**, **squadron** and **wing** entries.

Gulf War *Persian Gulf War* is preferred when referring to coalition military activities for Operation Desert Storm.

gunship A generic term for a type of combat aircraft, like *fighter* or *bomber*. See **AC-130** entry.

GWOT Do not use Global War on Terror or GWOT unless in a quote. The correct phrase is *war on terrorism*

See **war on terrorism**

H I J K

hail and farewell A social event that welcomes new members of a military unit and honors departing ones.

hangar (not hanger!) Capitalize when used with numbers to designate a particular structure, such as *Hangar 509*.

See **building**, **gate** and **room** entries.

hazardous materials HAZMAT is acceptable on second reference.

HC-130P/N King A combat search and rescue version of the C-130 Hercules.

headquarters Do not abbreviate except when referring to a mailing address in the body of a story. Do not turn into a verb as in *headquartered at*.

here Do not use as a reference to a location when the datelined location is Southwest Asia or another region rather than a specific location. See the entry in the AP Stylebook for more on minimizing the use of *here*.

HH-60G Pave Hawk A highly modified version of the Army Black Hawk helicopter. HH-60G or Pave Hawk is acceptable on second reference. Also, it's two words

Humvee Acceptable in all references for *high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle*.

ID card Acceptable in all references for *identification card*.

identification Use articles (*a*, *the*) in identifying people to improve readability: *Staff Sgt. John Smith, a loadmaster with the 99th Airlift Squadron; Col. Marvin Meeks, commander of the 99th Bomb Wing; Senior Airman Dan Dare of the 99th Maintenance Squadron*. Do not use a style similar to signature blocks: *Staff Sgt. John Smith, loadmaster, 99th Airlift Squadron*.

IED Acceptable on second reference for *improvised explosive device*, but preferred to this jargon when applicable is *roadside bomb*.

inprocessing, outprocessing

inspector general Lowercase unless used as a proper military title: *Air Force Materiel Command Inspector General Brig. Gen. Jane Jones* or *Brig. Gen. Jane Jones, Air Force Materiel Command inspector general*.

instruction Capitalize and include the full title on first reference: *Air Force Instruction 36-2903, "Dress and Personal Appearance of Air Force Personnel," AFI* is acceptable on second reference when used with the number: *AFI 36-2903*. Preferred use is *instruction* in all other cases.

See **manual** and **pamphlet** entries.

ISR Intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance. ISR is acceptable on second reference.

jail The Air Force does not have jails. There are local and regional Air Force confinement facilities; Department of Defense regional confinement facilities, and the U.S. Disciplinary Barracks at the DOD level located at Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

JDAM Acceptable on second reference for *joint direct attack munition*.

joint bases Spell out on first reference (Joint Base Langley-Eustis). On second reference only use the Air Force base's name alone. (Ex. Dr. Jack Sheppard visited Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va. He was at Langley to promote good health.) Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, on second reference, will be Fort Worth. AFRC's 10th AF and 301st Fighter Wing are stationed there as well as the Texas Air National Guard's 136th Airlift Wing.

Joint Commands Even though they're not acronyms, upper-case joint commands (PACOM, EUCOM, STRATCOM, CENTCOM, etc.)

joint strike fighter -- use when identifying the F-35 Lightning II. It is always lower case.

joint task force *JTF* is acceptable on second reference. Lower case unless used with specific group, e.g. Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa.

joint terminal attack controller
JTAC is permissible on second reference. This title is frequently incorrect. A JTAC is a Tactical Air Control Party, but not all TAC-Ps are JTACs. See TAC-P

junior officer A lieutenant or captain.

Junior ROTC Acceptable in all references for *Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps*, which offers character and citizenship education to high school students. See **Air Force Junior ROTC**.

KC-10 Extender KC-10 or Extender is acceptable on second reference.

KC-135 Stratotanker KC-135 or Stratotanker is acceptable on second reference.

Korea -- use South Korea

L M N

LANTIRN Acceptable on first use for *low-altitude navigation and targeting infrared for night*, but it should be spelled out somewhere in the story.

LGM-30 Minuteman III An intercontinental ballistic missile. *Minuteman III missile* is acceptable in all references.

load, unload Use instead of *upload* and *offload* when referring to aircraft cargo ops.

loadmaster

lodging Use in place of *billeting*.

low-crawl Usually redundant; use *crawl* alone unless a distinction with another kind of crawling is needed.

major command Preferred use on second reference is *the command*, or use a specific reference: *ACC, AMC, AFMC*, etc.

manual Capitalize and spell out the proper name on first reference: *Air Force Manual 10-100 "Airman's Manual"* contains *step-by-step instructions on tent construction*.

AFM is acceptable on second reference when used with the number: *AFM 10-100*. Preferred use is *manual* in all other cases.

See **instruction** and **pamphlet** entries.

MC-130E Combat Talon I, MC-130H Combat Talon II Versions of the C-130 Hercules. The difference between the two types is computers and avionics.

MC-130P Combat Shadow A version of the C-130 Hercules.

Meals, Ready to Eat Freeze-dried foods packaged for field troops. *MRE* is acceptable on second reference. *Meal, Ready to Eat* is the singular form.

medals Do not capitalize unless used as part of a proper noun. For example *Air Force Commendation Medal, Purple Heart, Air Force Cross, Distinguished Service Medal*.

Medal of Honor Because the citation includes the phrase "in the name of Congress," it is often erroneously called the Congressional Medal of Honor. Don't use "Congressional." The official title is Medal of Honor. The MOH is **never** "won."

medical evacuation Avoid *medevac* except in direct quotes.

mess dress uniform Military uniform for formal occasions.

mess hall Outdated term; preferred term is *dining facility*. See **chow hall** entry.

MH-53J Pave Low III, MH-53M Pave Low IV A twin-turbine, heavy-lift helicopter used for special operations and combat rescue. The MH-53M Pave Low IV has advanced communications and avionics.

MIA Acceptable on second reference for *missing in action*. Do not use as slang for *absent*.

See *prisoner(s) of war* entry in the Associated Press Stylebook.

MILES Acceptable on second reference for *Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System*, but preferred use is *laser system* or *engagement system*.

mine-resistant ambush-protected vehicle an armored vehicle designed to survive IED attacks, ambushes. MRAP is acceptable on second reference.

mine-resistant ambush-protected all-terrain vehicle a smaller version of

the MRAP ideal for off-road work and narrow trails or paths. M-ATV can be used on second reference.

Minuteman III missile Acceptable in all references to the *LGM-30 Minuteman III*.

MQ-1 Predator *Predator* alone is acceptable in all uses. It is part of a RPAS (remotely piloted aircraft system) which technically means a system including the aircraft, the ground-control system, the satellite link and personnel. For a quick reference to avoid confusion, MQ-1 horizontal stabilizers point down.

MQ-9 Reaper *Reaper* alone is acceptable in all uses. It is part of a RPAS (remotely piloted aircraft system) which technically means a system including the aircraft, the ground-control system, the satellite link and personnel. For a quick reference to avoid confusion, MQ-9 horizontal stabilizers point upward.

MWR *morale, welfare and recreation*. Outdated term; *services* is the preferred term.

9/11 don't use a dash as in 9-11

National Museum of the U.S. Air Force Do not use *Air Force Museum*.

National Security Agency *NSA* is acceptable on second reference.

Navy rating Not a rank. Do not include in a rank before a name; instead, convert to the actual rank. For example, *PH1 John Smith* (Photographer's Mate 1st Class John Smith) is *Petty Officer 1st Class John Smith* in Air Force publications.

NCO Acceptable in all references to *noncommissioned officer*.

NCO academy Lowercase unless preceded by the name of the installation: *Barksdale Air Force Base NCO Academy* or *Barksdale NCO Academy*. *NCOA* is acceptable on second reference.

NCO club May be called the *enlisted club* at some installations. The designated title of clubs differ across the Air Force. Use the appropriate title at the base being featured. Capitalize when used with the name of the base: *Tyndall NCO Club*.

See **enlisted club** entry.

NCO in charge *NCOIC* is acceptable on second reference.

NCO wives club Most clubs use the name *enlisted spouses club*. Use the appropriate title for the base being featured. See **enlisted spouses club** entry.

no-fly zone

Non Commissioned Officers Association Nonprofit organization concerned with issues that affect NCOs of the military services. *NCOA* is acceptable on second reference.

Numbered Air Forces Spell out *Air Force*; not 12th AF, but 12th Air Force

O

OC-135B Open Skies An observation aircraft that supports the Open Skies Treaty. The aircraft flies unarmed observation flights over participating parties of the treaty.

office Lowercase except when used in the proper name: *public affairs office*; *TSgt. Dick Smith, NCO in charge of the public affairs office*; *37th Training Wing Public Affairs Office*.

officer in charge OIC is acceptable on second reference.

officer performance report OPR is acceptable on second reference.

officers club Should be capitalized when a specific club is named: *Lackland Air Force Base Officers Club*. Preferred use is without the apostrophe.

officers spouses club Formerly known as the *officers wives club* and also known as the *officers and civilians spouses club*. The title of this organization differs across the Air Force. Use the appropriate title for the base being featured.

Capitalize when prefaced with the name of the base: *Tyndall AFB Officers Spouses Club*. Preferred use is without the apostrophe.

See **officers wives club** entry.

officers wives club Most clubs have been renamed *officers spouses club* or *officers and civilians spouses club*. The title of this organization differs across the Air Force. Use the appropriate title for the base being featured.

Capitalize when prefaced with the name of the base: *Lackland Air Force Base Officers Wives Club*. Preferred use is without the apostrophe.

See **officers spouses club** entry.

Office of Special Investigations (OSI) personnel Use *special agent* on first reference. *Agent* is acceptable on second reference.

Operation Enduring Freedom The combat operation in Afghanistan. OEF is acceptable on second reference.

Operation Iraqi Freedom The combat operation in Iraq. OIF is acceptable on second reference.

operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom When citing both together in one sentence, *operations* is lowercase and *Freedom* must appear for both.

on-the-job training

operation Use on first reference only and capitalize when used with a specific operation: *Operation Desert Storm*, *Operation Southern Watch*. Lowercase when naming more than one. *The aircraft was used in operations Allied Force and Desert Storm*.

See **war** entry.

operational readiness inspection ORI is acceptable on second reference.

operations tempo *optempo* is acceptable on second reference.

outprocessing, inprocessing

overwatch What close-air-support aircraft provide ground troops.

P

Pacific Air Forces *PACAF* is acceptable on second reference.

pamphlet Capitalize and spell out the proper name on first reference: *Air Force Pamphlet 166-27 "Air Force Dietary Guidelines" was designed to improve a person's eating habits.*

AFP is acceptable on second reference when used with the number: *AFP 166-27*. Preferred use is *pamphlet* in all other cases.

See **instruction** and **manual** entries.

people Preferred when referring to members of a unit or base residents. *Personnel* should be avoided. See **personnel** entry.

permanent change of station *PCS* is acceptable on second reference.

Persian Gulf War Preferred when referring to coalition military activities conducted as part of Operation Desert Storm.

personnel Avoid using when referring to members of a unit or base residents. Preferred use is *people*. See **people** entry.

Personnel Support for Contingency Operations *PERSCO* is acceptable on second reference.

personnel tempo *perstempo* is acceptable on second reference.

photo credit lines All photos must carry credit lines or the disclaimer must state that all photos are U.S. Air Force photos unless otherwise noted. Placement may vary, but proper credit must be given. Use a forward slash instead of the word "by" between the agency and photographer's name. Ex. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Flash Gordon) All photos should have one of the following types of credits: *U.S. Air Force photo*; *Courtesy photo*; *U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Jane Jones*; or *Photo*

courtesy of Lockheed Aircraft Corp. Do not include "*Released.*" A single credit line may be used for a feature layout: *Photos/Tech. Sgt. Sam Smith*. The credit should be listed on the dominant photo or set in display type.

pilot nicknames Do not use any pilot nicknames (e.g. Capt. Richard "Booger" Pickens). Many are of questionable taste -- one can't run some and not others so none are used.

Predator Acceptable in all references to **MQ-1 Predator**.

primary care manager Do not abbreviate.

Prime BEEF Acceptable in all references to *Prime Base Engineer Emergency Forces*. Prime BEEF are civil engineer forces organized for direct combat support or emergency recovery from natural disasters. If possible, explain the acronym in the story as a secondary fact: *Prime BEEF stands for Prime Base...*

privately owned vehicle Preferred use is *private* or *personal car* in all references. The acronym *POV* should not be used.

professional military education *PME* is acceptable on second reference.

provincial reconstruction team Do not capitalize unless used as part of a proper noun. *Members of the Paktya Provincial Reconstruction Team met with village leaders*. *PRT* is acceptable on second reference.

Q R S

QDR Acceptable on second reference for *Quadrennial Defense Review*.

rank “Select” is **not** a rank. Use Brig. Gen. Joe Jones, not Maj. Gen (Sel) Joe Jones.

RC-135U Combat Sent Provides strategic electronic reconnaissance information to the president, secretary of defense, Department of Defense leaders and theater commanders.

RC-135V/W Rivet Joint Provides on-scene intelligence collection, analysis and dissemination capabilities.

Reaper Acceptable in all references to MQ-9 Reaper.

RED HORSE Acceptable in all references for *Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operations Repair Squadron Engineers*. If possible, explain the acronym in the story as a secondary fact: *RED HORSE stands for Rapid...*

re-enlist, re-enlistment

Reserve It is singular and uppercased when referring to someone in that component. A person is not in the Reserves. It is lowercased when you're talking about reserve forces that include the ANG and Reserve together.

reservist (lower case)

room Capitalize when used with numbers to designate a particular room in a structure, such as Bldg. 52, Room 1201.

See **building**, **gate** and **hangar** entries.

Royal Air Force Name of the British air force and used to denote air bases in England: *Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England*. *RAF* is acceptable on second reference. Do not add the word *base* after *Air Force*.

RPA Remotely Piloted Aircraft. Generally refers to the MQ-1 Predator, MQ-9 Reaper and RQ-4 Global Hawk. UAS also is acceptable term when referring to the unmanned aircraft AND associated systems. Do not use UAV. Don't use "operator;" the aircraft is flown by an RPA pilot, but avoid "remotely piloted aircraft pilot" -- that's redundant.

RQ-4 Global Hawk Can be referred to as an unmanned aircraft (UA) or a remotely piloted aircraft (RPA).

secretary of the Air Force Capitalize when used before a name. SecAF is acceptable on second reference.

secretary of Defense Capitalize when used before a name. Refrain from using SecDEF or SECDEF in headlines or on second reference. Instead, use defense secretary or the secretary's last name.

self-aid and buddy care Note that this phrase describes two types of care: that applied to yourself and that given to another.

self-help (n., adj.) *Self-help is open 8 to 10 a.m. Fridays. The self-help project ended Tuesday.*

Senior NCO Academy See the **Air Force Senior NCO Academy** entry.

SERE Acceptable on second reference for *survival, evasion, resistance and escape*.

Service member, serviceman, servicewoman Use *service member* when either a man or woman could be affected or included. Note: per update to AP Style Guide, service member is now two words, the other two are single words.

shoppette Capitalize when prefaced with the name of the base: *The Vance AFB Shoppette is open until midnight. The shoppette closes at midnight.*

South Korea -- not Republic of Korea

space-available *Space-A* is acceptable on second reference.

special agent Office of Special Investigations (OSI) personnel. *Agent* is acceptable on second reference

spouse Use *husband* or *wife* if referring to a specific person; otherwise use *spouse*.

the States Capitalize "States" when it means the U.S. as a whole. Lower case when referring to individual states collectively (e.g. "Each of the states elects two senators" vs "I'm going back to the States.")

squadron Capitalized when used with a number to designate a particular squadron: *He works at the 37th Mission Support Squadron. He works at the mission support squadron.*

See **flight**, **group** and **wing** entries.

Squadron Officer School *SOS* is acceptable on second reference.

SSN Acceptable on second reference for *Social Security number*.

Stripes for Exceptional Performers *STEP* is acceptable on second reference.

surgeon general, surgeons general

T

T-1 Jayhawk T-1 or Jayhawk is acceptable on second reference.

T-6 Texan II T-6 or Texan II is acceptable on second reference.

T-37 Tweet T-37 or Tweet is acceptable on second reference. No longer in the Air Force inventory as 7/31/2009.

T-38 Talon T-38 or Talon is acceptable on second reference.

T-43A A military version of the Boeing 737 twin-engine jet used to train navigators. No longer in the AF inventory.

tactical air control party Abbreviated TAC-P. See JTAC

TDY Acceptable in all references for *temporary duty*.

Threatcon Outmoded term replaced by **force protection condition**.

Thunderbirds The Air Force precision-flying demonstration team that flies red, white and blue F-16s. Members of the Thunderbirds make up the U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron.

time-in-grade, time-in-service

Tops in Blue The all-Air Force entertainment group that annually tours Air Force bases worldwide.

total force Integration of Guard, Reserve and active-duty components.

touch-and-go (n., adj.) *The pilot performed a touch and go. Student pilots practice touch-and-go landings.*

traffic management office Office that helps people who are being reassigned to ship household goods and vehicles. *TMO* is acceptable on second reference.

triad The three legs of the nuclear deterrent force: manned bombers, ICBMs and submarine-launched ballistic missiles. *Triad* is not an acronym.

TRICARE A military health care program with three options: TRICARE Prime, TRICARE Extra and TRICARE Standard. For retirees on Medicare, there is TRICARE for Life. Despite the fact that it is not an acronym, officials filed the word with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office which has allowed them to require the word be used in the upper-case format (“without variation”). It will always appear as TRICARE.

Twenty-one-gun salute 21-gun salutes are reserved for heads of state and almost always involve artillery. What is seen at a traditional military funeral is a 3-volley rifle salute. The rifle party, often seven people, typically fire three volleys in unison (this may be where the confusion with 21 comes from)

U V

U-2 A single-seat, single-engine, high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft. Do not use Dragon Lady. Dragon Lady refers to a specific U-2 program.

UAS Unmanned aircraft system; use *unmanned aircraft* when referring to just the aircraft. UA acceptable on second ref. Used interchangeably with RPA. (See RPA)

UAV Outdated term, no longer used

UCMJ Acceptable on second reference for *Uniform Code of Military Justice*.

UH-1N Huey A light-lift utility helicopter used to support AFSPC missile wings and groups.

undersecretary of the Air Force
Undersecretary is one word. Capitalize when used before a name. USecAF is acceptable on second reference.

unit designations Lowercase references to agencies unless the entire title is used: *public affairs office; Tech. Sgt. Dick Smith, NCO in charge of the public affairs office; 37th Training Wing Public Affairs Office*. On second reference to a unit, use the numerical designation alone if it is the only unit with that designation in the story: *the 18th Aggressor Squadron* on first reference, *the 18th* thereafter.

U.S. Air Force Academy A direct reporting unit. *Academy* is acceptable on second reference. Like Airman, upper-case Academy in all uses.

U.S. Air Forces in Europe *USAFE* is acceptable on second reference.

U.S. Africa Command *AFRICOM* is acceptable on second reference.

U.S. Central Command *CENTCOM* is acceptable on second reference.

U.S. European Command *EUCOM* is acceptable on second reference.

U.S. Joint Forces Command
JFCOM is acceptable on second reference.

U.S. Northern Command
NORTHCOM is acceptable on second reference.

U.S. Pacific Command *PACOM* is acceptable on second reference.

U.S. Southern Command
SOUTHCOM is acceptable on second reference.

U.S. Special Operations Command
SOCOM is acceptable on second reference.

U.S. Strategic Command
STRATCOM is acceptable on second reference.

U.S. Transportation Command
TRANSCOM is acceptable on second reference.

Valor Uppercase when used with a medal, as in Bronze Star with Valor

VC-25A Air Force One A modified version of the Boeing 747 that transports the president of the United States.

vMPF Acceptable on second reference for the *Virtual Military Personnel Flight*.

W X Y Z

war Capitalize when used as part of the name for a specific war: *the Civil War, the Cold War, the War of 1812, World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War*, etc.

See **operation** entry.

warfighter (n.), **warfighting** (adj.)

war game (n.), **war-game** (v.)

war on terrorism *GWOT* or Global War on Terror should not be used.

Warsaw Pact No longer exists. There were seven Warsaw Pact nations: the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland and Romania.

Washington, D.C. Datelines will just use Washington

WC-130 Hercules Flown by the Hurricane Hunters flying weather reconnaissance missions. A derivative of the C-130 Hercules, it is flown exclusively by the 53rd Weather Recon Sq from Keesler AFB, Miss. The 53rd WRS is known as the Hurricane Hunters.

Web words: World Wide Web, Web page, but webcast, webcam, webmaster and now website (per recent AP change)

wing Capitalized when used with a number to designate a particular wing: *She works at the 314th Airlift Wing. She works at the wing.*

See **flight**, **group** and **squadron** entries.

Zulu Communications code word for the letter Z. Used by aviators in reference to Greenwich Mean Time — mean solar time of the Greenwich meridian used as the basis of standard time throughout the world. Sometimes referred to as *universal time*.