Aerospace power has become the archetypal expression of the U.S. ability to project force in the modern world. Throughout the world, U.S. aerospace power—and thus, the U.S. Air Force (USAF)—plays a critical, and often primary, role in securing U.S. interests, in promoting American values, and in protecting human rights. While the USAF has had significant success in employing aerospace power in the recent past, emerging trends in international relations, in technology, and in our own domestic society will create a wide variety of new challenges and new opportunities for U.S. aerospace power. Meeting these challenges and exploiting these opportunities will require careful planning, wise investments, and thoughtful training, as well as difficult cultural adaptations within the USAF. This book identifies many of these challenges and opportunities in a wide variety of issue areas and assesses the degree to which the USAF is prepared to meet them.

While the work was carried out under the auspices of the Strategy and Doctrine program of RAND’s Project AIR FORCE, which is sponsored by the U.S. Air Force, this volume draws on the expertise of researchers from across RAND in a variety of related disciplines. The primary audience of this work consists of Air Force leaders and planners, but it should be of interest to others concerned about national security issues.

The Strategic Appraisal series is intended to review, for a broad audience, issues bearing on national security and defense planning. Strategic Appraisal: The Changing Role of Information in Warfare analyzed the effects of new information technologies on military

The views expressed here are those of the authors. They do not necessarily reflect those of RAND or its clients. The research described here was conducted before the September 11, 2001, attacks on the United States and the subsequent U.S. campaign against Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups.

**PROJECT AIR FORCE**

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