
**ADVANTAGES OF A NEW APPROACH TO
BASIC DOCTRINE**

The leadership of the Air Force has issued a clear and compelling challenge to strive to realize a vision of a future in which U.S. leaders will be able to achieve national objectives quickly and decisively, without risking heavy U.S. casualties or major unwanted collateral damage. Properly supported and equipped, modern air and space forces are well endowed to play the dominant role in such an approach to major theater conflicts. The technological and operational components of this revolutionary new way of war appear to be largely in place. But if the nation is to reap the advantages of this new approach to warfare, airpower must continue to advance toward fulfilling its full potential. One important step in achieving this will be a clear statement by the U.S. Air Force about the roles of air and space forces in future conflicts. This statement must free the minds of airmen to think expansively about the inherent qualities of air and space forces and their potential capabilities.

The “joint mission” approach advocated here meets these requirements. It

- Builds upon the most fundamental aspects of air and space forces—their ability to transit the seamless mediums of air and space
- Has immediate saliency in the joint community and with the users of forces provided by the services—the combatant commanders
- Is neutral with regard to the role that each service plays in any stated mission

- Positions the Air Force favorably to advance concepts under which air and space forces play greater roles in key missions
- Provides a basis for assessing the capabilities and limitations of various force elements, such that the capabilities of forces can be compared at the operational level and results can be readily explained to audiences outside of the Air Force.

Accordingly, we believe that the leadership of the Air Force should consider adopting this new approach as the conceptual basis of a revised statement of basic doctrine. Doing so would contribute greatly to the realization of the vision in which airpower plays an increasingly dominant role in the American way of war.