

412TH TEST WING STRATEGIC PLAN





COL DOUG WICKERT COMMANDER 412th TEST WING



The United States has entered a decisive decade as described by the National Defense Strategy, one characterized by dramatic changes in geopolitics that threaten the world order, as well as emerging technologies that will prove critical and decisive in military affairs. Air Force Materiel Command exists to deliver integrated capabilities to the warfighter and the 412th Test Wing plays a critical role in developing and evaluating future capabilities that will deter conflict and, if deterrence fails, prove decisive in war.

History may someday refer to our current era as an interregnum – an interwar period before a transition to a new international world order. When President Xi Jinping took control of the Chinese Communist Party a decade ago, he ordered the People's Liberation Army to develop a force by 2027 capable of defeating the United States in the Pacific. In the near future, the People's Republic of China under the authoritarian rule of the CCP may actively confront the international rules-based order that has existed since the end of World War II. War between the United States and the PRC is not necessarily inevitable, but if we do go to war, the Air Force our nation will fly in 2027 is the Air Force being developed and tested at Edwards AFB today.

After two decades of low-intensity conflict, the Department of the Air Force is re-optimizing its force structure and mission generation for great power competition. Future capabilities and requirements are informed by the Air Force's seven Operational Imperatives, driving significant investment and modernization. The near-simultaneous modernization and new development of almost every Air Force and Space Force weapons system to posture our nation for success in an era of great power competition means that demand for test and evaluation will spike during the next several years.

The 412th Test Wing has an integral role in Air Force weapons system modernization as the focal point of test and evaluation efforts for existing and new weapons systems including the B-21 family of systems; the Next Generation Air Dominance system of systems; combat collaborative aircraft; modernization and integration of 4th, 5th and 6th generation weapons systems in long-range kill webs; advanced weapons such as hypersonic missiles and next-generation air-to-air missiles; electronic warfare capabilities; the Survivable Airborne Operations Center; and many more including trusted AI and autonomous systems.

These are no small tasks – the 412th TW will be stressed and tested to a degree that it has not been stressed or tested before. Our extant capacity is not sufficient for the demand. In addition to growing our T&E capacity, we must optimize and improve our processes to be as efficient as possible with the available resources. Our priorities are designed to ensure that the test wing can meet the current and future demand that our Air Force, Space Force and nation are depending on.

Test and evaluation of new warfighting capabilities is essential for maintaining our nation's military advantage in the increasingly competitive global environment. Given the pacing challenges in a new era of great power competition and the significant, ongoing modernization of Air Force and Space Force weapons systems, the 412th TW must boost the overall efficiency of its people, resources, processes and infrastructure to effectively handle the increased workload. The need to deliver capability to the warfighter and data to decision makers is urgent and we must move forward at the speed of relevance. Successful execution of the strategy conveyed in this document will enhance our country's competitive military advantage, a critical NDS objective.

We live in the midst of a "Time of Consequence." This strategy lays out the lines of effort, priorities and objectives required to accomplish our mission and realize our vision. I am thankful to join you on this worthwhile journey. We are a team and EVERY Airman's efforts and ideas are necessary for us to successfully meet the challenge. Together, we are the center of the aerospace testing universe, testing and evaluating tomorrow's war-winning capabilities today!

With Great Respect,

DOUGLAS P. WICKERT, Colonel, USAF
Commander, 412th Test Wing

MISSION

We test and evaluate advanced aerospace systems with world-class installation and mission support to accelerate war-winning capabilities to the warfighter.

Air Force Materiel Command's foundational materiel development function is critically dependent on high-quality information that informs both programmatic decisions and combatant command operational planning and employment. The testing of advanced aerospace systems provides raw data, and the evaluation of test results turns data into information. The test and evaluation of immature weapons systems is key to accelerating their development through fast learning. The key functions of T&E are accomplished by a highly trained, specialized, technical workforce enabled by a robust support infrastructure. The world-class installation and mission support that makes the 412th TW core T&E mission possible is critically important to our mission of accelerating war-winning capabilities to the warfighter.

VISION

The Center of the Aerospace Testing Universe ... Testing Tomorrow's War-Winning Capabilities Today!

Since World War II, Edwards AFB has been at the center of efforts to test, develop and mature almost every major aerospace weapons system. Over the decades, these systems have bolstered our defense and ensured our nation's peace and prosperity. Taking advantage of remoteness, security and a favorable climate, the skies over Edwards have long echoed with the sonic booms and sounds of the future of airpower. After more than eight decades, the future Air Force – the Air Force of 2027 and beyond – is still flying over Edwards today!

 1 SPACE ORDER OF BATTLE	 2 OPERATIONALLY FOCUSED ABMS	 3 MOVING TARGET ENGAGEMENT	 4 TACTICAL AIR DOMINANCE	 5 RESILIENT BASING	 6 GLOBAL STRIKE	 7 READINESS TO DEPLOY AND FIGHT
						

412th TW STRATEGY MAP

The elements of the 412th Test Wing's strategy framework – including our mission, vision, priorities and lines of effort – nest to form a strategy aligned with AFMC and Department of the Air Force priorities.



412th TW PRIORITIES

Our priorities are focused on meeting the demands of the current strategic landscape to develop and deliver capability to the warfighter. The lines of effort detailed below are designed to enhance our overall capability, to test effectively, while also improving our test efficiency and maximizing our capacity to meet the heavy demands for advanced aerospace systems T&E. Our priorities support our overall, longitudinal objectives and focus our initial efforts on these strategic catalysts.



Quality of Life

Ensuring and enhancing quality of life for our people is paramount to the success of the 412th TW. As we develop our people and strengthen our teams, we must navigate the challenges of recruiting, developing and retaining skilled individuals. It is essential that we create an environment conducive to the well-being of our members and their families. Recognizing some of the unique challenges of Edwards, we will prioritize addressing them to create a vibrant community where everyone can grow and thrive. By prioritizing initiatives aimed at improving quality of life – including housing, childcare, schools, healthcare, facilities and family support – we will not only attract top talent but also ensure their long-term commitment to our mission.



Data and Digital Transformation

The ubiquity of data is a defining characteristic of the 21st Century. Given that the acquisition enterprise needs more from the 412th TW in the coming years, we need to be as efficient in how we operate as possible. The smart use of data and the greater digital transformation will make the 412th TW and Air Force Test Center key partners in AFMC's Digital Materiel Management initiative. Modern data and analytic tools will prove paramount in optimizing our test planning, execution and reporting processes. This priority will focus investments on advanced data infrastructure, digital tools and comprehensive training programs to empower our people to adapt and thrive in the digital landscape, driving innovation and excellence in our T&E capabilities.



Telling Our Story

In telling our story, we not only showcase the critically important work being done by the 412th TW, but also inform and inspire our team about their contributions to national security. This priority aligns with Air Force objectives for strategic communication and plays an important role in deterrence. We seek to reinforce and enhance our culture by cultivating meaningful pride in the work and contributions of our members and families. We also aim to inspire the next generation of professionals to one day take up the mantle of responsibility for the test endeavor.

412th TW LINES OF EFFORT

Joint doctrine defines a line of effort as the unity of purpose for multiple tasks and missions behind a desired effect. Our four LOEs – 1) Develop Our People and Strengthen Our Team; 2) Enhance Our Infrastructure and Installation; 3) Optimize Our Processes and Build Agile Capacity; and 4) Amplify Our Culture and Connect Our Mission – provide a unity of purpose to meeting the demand for more T&E as the nation adapts to the new era of great power competition. The 412th TW LOEs are aligned with the National Defense Strategy, the Secretary of the Air Force's Operational Imperatives, and AFMC's and AFTC's strategic plans. Our T&E resources must support weapons system acquisition with speed, agility and innovation, delivering capability at a velocity commensurate with the urgency of need.

LOE 1

WHO

DEVELOP Our People and Strengthen Our Teams

At the heart of our mission success lies our commitment to developing our people and fostering strong, cohesive teams. To achieve this, we will pursue initiatives aimed at empowering our people and enhancing the overall effectiveness of our workforce:

- We recognize the importance of recruiting, developing and retaining top talent. By implementing targeted recruitment strategies, comprehensive training programs and robust career development pathways, we will attract skilled individuals and provide them with the tools and opportunities they need to thrive within the wing.
- We will follow AFMC's lead in analyzing and mitigating recruiting and retention threats.
- We will target vital skillsets for recruiting and workforce development; we will redouble efforts to engage with regional colleges and universities, particularly for critical skillsets in emerging disciplines (e.g., big data analytics, artificial intelligence, machine learning, autonomous systems, etc.)
- We will establish a Recruiting Advisory Board.
- We seek to build a strong and thriving Edwards community to ensure the well-being and satisfaction of our people. Initiatives focused on improving childcare options, enhancing housing facilities, supporting local schools, providing access to quality healthcare and offering comprehensive family support services will contribute to creating a supportive, safe and inclusive environment where our people can thrive both personally and professionally.
- We will empower our people by embracing the full spirit of mission command. Mission command is a philosophy of leadership that empowers Airmen to operate in uncertain, complex and rapidly changing environments through trust, shared awareness and understanding of commander's intent (Air Force Doctrine Publication 1-1). Mission command is grounded in clear communication of intent, shared understanding, trust and empowerment. Mission command will enable our Airman – we use "Airman" to collectively refer to every man and woman in the 412th TW be they military, civilian or contractor – to seize opportunities with initiative and confidence.
- We will invest in leadership development and training to cultivate our next generation of leaders. We will equip our Airman with the skills, knowledge and mindset needed to lead effectively in today's dynamic and complex operational environment.

LOE 2

WHAT

ENHANCE Our Infrastructure and Installation

Improving our installation and infrastructure is essential for enabling the 412th TW to operate efficiently and effectively. By investing in modernization efforts and ensuring the resilience of critical functions, we will enhance the overall capability and readiness of our installation to support and execute the T&E mission. Initiatives include:

- Digital Infrastructure: We will prioritize the development and enhancement of our digital infrastructure (robust data hub, upgraded IT systems, expanded cloud access capabilities and virtual desktop opportunities). These efforts will improve data management, enhance connectivity and enable more efficient collaboration across our workforce.
- Installation Infrastructure: Investments and upgrades in installation infrastructure, encompassing sustainment, restoration and modernization of both real and non-real property management.
- Leading the "Range of the Future" initiative to upgrade and connect the R-2508 complex with other major range test facility base assets to develop future capabilities and meet future test demands.
- Installation Critical Function Resiliency: We must ensure the resiliency of critical installation functions against both natural and cyber threats. Our focus will include power and water infrastructure, command and control capabilities, improving connectivity and implementing measures to mitigate risks posed by potential disruptions. By enhancing the resilience of our installation's critical functions, we will minimize vulnerabilities and ensure continuity of operations in the face of various challenges and contingencies.
- Focusing on infrastructure modularity to enhance flexibility and adaptability, mitigating historical resource shortfalls in facility sustainment, restoration and modernization. This is essential to meet short-term requirements of new test customers.

LOE 3

HOW

OPTIMIZE Our Processes and Build Agile Capacity

The success of the 412th TW in meeting the current and future demand for T&E will depend on our ability to optimize processes and build agile capacity. We must prioritize efficiency through data and harness the potential of data-driven decision-making tools across our enterprise. Additionally, as we confront the challenges posed by testing new and complex systems, we must embrace digital transformation in test as part of the Digital Materiel Management lifecycle. Initiatives include:

- Integrated, All-Domain Range of the Future: We will develop an integrated, all-domain range of the future that enables seamless coordination and collaboration across domains and platforms. Leveraging advanced technologies and innovative concepts, we will transform our range capabilities to support the full spectrum of test.
- Digital Materiel Management: Fully aligned with AFMC's Digital Materiel Management strategic initiative, we embrace initiatives aimed at test as well as installation and mission support capabilities. This includes our business enterprise to enable informed decision-making across all functional areas of the 412th TW.
- Deployment of AI/ML, Data Analytics and Gen AI: We will deploy cutting-edge emergent technologies and capabilities that use artificial intelligence, machine learning and data analytics to enhance our planning, analysis, reporting, predictive modeling and decision support.
- Test Pilot School Modernization: Modernizing the TPS curriculum is essential for equipping our T&E workforce with the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to test complex, technologically advanced, 21st century systems. Curriculum updates to reflect emerging technologies and operational concepts, enhanced modeling and simulation, digital test and new test capabilities will keep TPS graduates as the foremost experts in aerospace testing and evaluation.

LOE 4

WHY

AMPLIFY Our Culture and Connect Our Mission

It is vital for all Edwards members, including our families, to understand how critical the work we do is to the Air Force, Space Force and our nation. In telling our story we embark on a mission that extends far beyond mere narration. In addition to showcasing the importance of the 412th TW mission, our story will inspire and inform our teammates about their contributions to national security. The intent is to:

- Build pride in the 412th TW and awareness of enhancements to an improved quality of life.
- Cultivate an agile, empowered, adaptive and mission-focused culture that values innovation, collaboration and excellence.
- Articulate the value of test to the warfighter, the acquisition enterprise and the public.
- Support Air Force strategic communication objectives that emphasize the development of war-winning capabilities.

SUMMARY

The Air Force and our nation are relying on the 412th TW to test and evaluate war-winning capabilities that are integral to our nation's defense. This strategic plan guides the 412th TW to be as effective and efficient as possible. Our success is critical to ensure the readiness of the United States to face – and even better, deter – the pacing threat of great power competition. As the men and women of the 412th TW test and evaluate weapons systems to support the delivery of next-generation capability to the warfighter, the PRC will be forced to change its calculus about starting a war in the Pacific. The 412th TW is testing tomorrow's war-winning capabilities today so that the world's greatest Air Force can fly, fight and win with airpower ... anytime, anywhere!



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