



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON DC

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

25 March 2020

MEMORANDUM FOR DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

FROM: SAF/AQ

SUBJECT: Department of the Air Force Acquisition Task Force on COVID-19

With COVID-19 reshaping every aspect of our lives, we are indeed in unprecedented times. While working remotely and socially distancing, your creativity sparked by this current crisis continues getting the job of national defense done. I could not be prouder of our people, their families, and our industry partners.

But the job of national defense, though necessary and critical, is quickly becoming insufficient. External government health and disaster response organizations face the daunting challenge of moving billions, perhaps trillions, of dollars to grow supply chains and industrial capacity for medical equipment, all while surging operations to historic scale. With acquisition workforces much smaller than ours, requests for assistance are expected soon.

Additionally, our own Defense Industrial Base, though strong, will struggle without exceptional measures to address vulnerable suppliers and smaller research and development organizations. Though we have authorized all feasible measures to increase cashflow for max liquidity, Congress must continue to enact—and we must execute—additional resources to ensure military readiness remains unquestioned, now and in the future.

Finally, as uses of the Defense Production Act (DPA) are discussed at the highest levels of government, we must ready our acquisition team to serve as the Executive Agent for mission needs as broad as the crisis itself. Our entire workforce must be prepared to learn and act quickly—and at scale—to grow industrial capacity to defeat COVID-19.

In summary, we must prepare to spend wartime levels of funding at wartime speeds, should our Department or Nation require it. Consequently, I hereby establish the Department of the Air Force Acquisition COVID-19 Task Force (DAF ACT) across our acquisition enterprise (i) to excute all requirements from the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment Joint Acquisition Task Force, and (ii) to collect and consolidate funding requests needed to recover programs from COVID-19 impacts.

DAF ACT will by led by Maj Gen Cameron Holt and contain four lines of effort:

- **Relief** for external assistance requirements, led by Mr. Tom Robinson;
- **Resilience** for Defense Industrial Base efforts, led by Brig Gen Evan Dertien;
- **Recovery** for consolidating funding requests that mimimize program impacts, led by Mr. Mark Murphy; and

- **Rapid** for large-scale rapid small business contracts across all lines of efforts, led by Capt Jason Rathje and our AFVentures team.

Working distributedly, everyone must be ready to surge support for DAF ACT requests. Program managers, financial managers, contracting officers, and engineers with bandwidth for additional duties should inform their supervisors as well as local DAF ACT points of contact. When requests come in, we will assign them to virtual program teams and award contracts faster than ever before and do it at scale.

We are ready for this. We have focused on increasing the speed and agility of our acquisition system for over two years to compete against peer adversaries in an uncertain world. Sustained innovation *everywhere* is the only way to do that. Now nonpareil speed, agility, and innovation is needed to defeat the immediate adversary COVID-19 has rapidly become. We are unleashing them in a wartime acquisition mindset—the kind that erects air bases in the desert and drop bombs in weeks—exercising all authorities within our power to get the mission done *fast*.

I have the utmost confidence in our acquisition enterprise and am proud to call them teammates during this challenging time.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'W. B. Roper, Jr.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

William B. Roper, Jr.
Assistant Secretary of the Air Force
(Acquisition, Technology & Logistics)