



# Centerline

Quarterly Newsletter

April - May - June

VOLUME 38, ISSUE 2, 2024

## AFA Websites

*National*

[www.AFA.org](http://www.AFA.org)



*Thunderbird Chapter*

[www.AFALasVegas.org](http://www.AFALasVegas.org)

**AIR & SPACE FORCES** MAGAZINE  
[www.AirandSpaceForces.com](http://www.AirandSpaceForces.com)

## Upcoming Events

Sept 21st - Air Force Ball

October 4th - Silver State  
Warfighter Symposium (Secret)

December - Operation Warm Heart  
Adopt a Family

Apr 5-6, 2025 - Nellis Aviation  
Nation

Apr 14, 2025 - Annual AFA Golf  
Tournament

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### *Newsletter*

Mike Morgan

## **President's Remarks**

As the President of the AFA Thunderbird Chapter, I am honored to share my vision for our chapter and its pivotal role in inspiring the youth of Nevada to explore careers in the Air Force and Space Force through STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education.

As an engineer and a staunch advocate for STEM, one of my primary goals is to foster a strong interest in these fields among K-12 students.

The potential of our youth is boundless, and by introducing them to the exciting and dynamic careers available in the Air and Space Forces, we can ignite their passion for science and technology. I firmly believe that if more students were aware of the diverse career opportunities within our military—from cybersecurity and aeronautical engineering to space operations, robotics, and avionics—they would be inspired to join and serve our country both in uniform and as engineers and scientists. These innovators and inventors will create the advanced jets, spacecraft, weapons, robots, and other cutting-edge technologies that will give our warfighters the tools they need to fight and win.

To achieve this, we will be leveraging the AFA's premier STEM programs—CyberPatriot and StellarXplorers. These initiatives are designed to captivate young minds and provide them with hands-on experience in cybersecurity and space science. Through these programs, we aim to cultivate a technically proficient and innovative workforce that will uphold and advance our national security interests. Our nation's future depends on maintaining our status as the supreme force in air and space, and these young minds will be the vanguard of that mission.

Our chapter recently supported a tour for over 200 middle school students at Nellis Air Force Base on 10 May 2024. This event was a resounding success, providing students with a firsthand look at the life and careers of Airmen and Guardians. Building on this momentum, I am excited to announce a forthcoming tour of Creech Air Force Base scheduled for 27 June. This tour is specifically coordinated for leaders of the Clark County School District (CCSD)—the fifth largest school district in the United States. By familiarizing these educational leaders with the career opportunities available in RPAs and UAS, we hope to integrate more military career pathways into the school district's curriculum and counseling services.

In 2024, we awarded educator grants to one middle school and one high school within CCSD. My goal for the next school year is to have at least 10 teachers from CCSD and 20 teachers from across Nevada awarded these grants. By expanding our grant program, we can ensure more educators have the tools they need to foster a love of STEM in their classrooms.

We also recognize the vital role of the Civil Air Patrol (CAP) and the Air Force Junior ROTC (AFJROTC) in fostering aerospace education and leadership skills. Our chapter is committed to increasing engagement and support for CAP squadrons and AFJROTC programs across Nevada. On 21 May 2024, we supported the Henderson CAP Composite Squadron's 1st Annual Awards Night, where we presented the AFA Unit Cadet of the Year Award and provided financial support for the event. We plan to collaborate closely with CAP and AFJROTC to provide resources, organize joint events, and promote their outstanding cadet programs. Through these efforts, we can support their missions and encourage more youth to pursue careers in aerospace and defense. The race to maintain our nation's supremacy in air and space is ongoing, and we must cultivate the next generation of leaders who will ensure our national security.

Our efforts don't stop there. We are committed to organizing regular tours and engagements at both Nellis and Creech Air Force Bases. These tours will provide students with an immersive experience, allowing them to envision a future in the Air and Space Forces. Additionally, we will continue to support and expand our educational outreach programs, ensuring that every student in Nevada's 17 school districts, from the largest in Clark and Washoe Counties to the smallest rural districts, has the opportunity to explore the fascinating world of aerospace and defense.

In conclusion, my vision for the Thunderbird Chapter is to be a catalyst for change—a beacon that guides our youth toward fulfilling and impactful careers, whether in the Air Force and Space Force or in civilian STEM fields.

By promoting STEM education, providing unique, hands-on experiences, supporting our educators through grants, and enhancing our engagement with the Civil Air Patrol and AFJROTC, we will inspire the next generation of leaders and innovators.

Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our mission.

Sincerely, *Reza Karamooz*

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# 2024 AFA Thunderbird Chapter Annual Golf Tournament

*View our pics at: <https://afalasvegas.org/2024-afa-golf-tournament>*

**128 golfers, 13 volunteers, and all you can eat BBQ!!** Sound like a good time? It was! Our 2024 Thunderbird Golf Tournament came and went on 15 April and was enjoyed by all. A special thanks to our own Jimmy Clark, who executed flawless mission planning for the event, and the 7 Chapter Members and 6 UNLV ROTC cadets who made it all possible.

Not only was the weather excellent but the camaraderie on and off the links was on full display. For those of us without the prowess to win the longest drive or putt - being able to bid on amazing one-of-a-kind items provided the dopamine rush to keep coming back! There was truly something for everyone at the Tournament.

Helping insure the event was successful were our community partners, who donated money and resources to ensure it was a success. Platinum Sponsors included OneNevada Credit Union, JT4, Amentum, Raytheon, and BAE. Gold Sponsors included Lockheed-Martin, Anita Mann Productions/Fantasy, CTI, MTSI, CAE, DCS, GC2IT, and Las Vegas Cadillac. Thank you to them all! Volunteers found 54 raffle prizes worth over \$3,000 and silent auction items worth more than \$7,500! **Through it all, the Thunderbird Chapter was able to raise more than \$20,000!**

We hope to increase this amazing success even more next year - even if you don't golf - come support us with auction bids, your time, or ride along with fellow members and harass their production of divets on the course. *Pencil in 14 April 2025 for the next Tourney!*





### 2024 Silver State Warfighter Industry Day

Each year, the Air and Space Forces Association's (AFA) Thunderbird Chapter sponsors the Silver State Warfighter Industry Day (SSWID) at Nellis AFB. This year's event will be held on **4 October 2024** in the Air National Guard Conference Rm, 6155 McGough St, Bldg 877, Nellis AFB 89191.

The purpose of SSWID is to align the mutual interests and needs of the USAFWC and its industry partners to ensure critical capabilities are available to meet future requirements. SSWID provides chapter members with a great venue to receive updates on where Nellis and Creech AFBs are currently focused and where they are headed in the future. This all-day forum is designed to help Industry understand "what the warfighter is doing, and what the warfighter needs." It includes briefings and discussions up to the SECRET level from key leaders and decision-makers across Nellis and Creech, as well as interactive Q&A sessions. Attendees benefit from a single event where they can make new contacts and schedule follow-on collaboration.

### Draft Silver State Warfighter Industry Day Agenda

4 October 2024

ANG Conference Center, Nellis AFB

0700-0800	Registration/Coffee/Refreshments	AFA/Security
0800-0805	Welcome and Admin	AFA – Bear MacNeill
0805-0830	USAF Warfare Center CC Vector	USAFWC/CC
0830-0915	Worldwide Intel Update	547 IS
0915-0945	JITTC-N	31 CTS/CC
0945-1000	Break	--
1000-1045	Shadow Operations Center - Nellis	805 CTS/CC
1045-1130	432 WG Operations (Creech AFB)	432 WG/CC
1130-1300	Lunch: Box Lunch in Conference Room	--
1300-1345	57 <sup>th</sup> Operations Group Update	57 OG/CC
1345-1415	Red Flag Update	414 CTS/CC
1415-1445	Break	--
1445-1530	Black Flag, Grey Flag, OT Update	53 TEG/CC
1530-1630	Weapons School Integration Phase	USAFWS Commandant
1630-1700	57 WG Future and Wrap-Up	57 WG/CC
1700-1800	No Host Social at Robin's Roost (Nellis Club)	Attendees

*We look forward to seeing you at the next Silver State Warfighter Industry Day!*

For questions, please contact the AFA Project Officer, Barry "Bear" MacNeill, 702-595-0151 or his assistant, Jared "Jabba" Hutchinson, 702-406-0257.

**Note: This is not an AFA fundraiser, all costs are to support the event itself.**



# *Your AFA In Action*



Volunteers prepare items for distribution at the Day of Gratitude at Allegiant Stadium. 29 Veteran Organizations, including AFA, were on-hand supporting the needy and volunteers.



Allegiant Stadium had a wide variety of resources on offer for locals in need. Nellis AFB provided storage warehouses for 10 tractor-trailers worth of donated materials!

-On June 6 at the Nellis Community College of the Air Force the chapter presented the Pitsenbarger scholarship to SSgt(sel) Jordan Causey of the 526 Intel Sq. He received his Associate degree in Intelligence Studies and Technology and is working towards his Bachelor of Science in Cybersecurity and Information Assurance at Western Governors University.

-June 8th was the Day of Gratitude at Allegiant Stadium, the chapter was the connection between Nellis & Creech AF bases. AFA worked with 29 local Veteran organizations to put on the event. City Serve donated 3.1 million worth of products to distribute to 15,000 Active Duty and Veterans. About 10 tractor trailers brought product to Nellis AFB, where Col DeMotts gave up 2 warehouses to store the product. On 3 June, a team from City Serve and Spokes of Hope came in with the help of Nellis & Creech Airman to build up 4,600 IKEA bags with product worth about \$160 to give out at the event. On Wed the 5th, the team put together 2,000 bags in one day. On 10 June, 2 more trucks brought back what was not given out, again volunteers from Nellis helped organize it and for more giveaways for the rest of the week. We had 14 pallets of Luvs size 4 diapers to just name some of what was left. *A Huge Thank You to the base for supporting the Chapter with facilities and resources to help the community put on this event.*

## Coming up...

- The AFA Southwest Region Conference will be held 11-13 July in Tucson, AZ. Thursday will be a no host Ice Breaker, Friday morning a tour of Davis-Monthan AFB STARBASE and 55th Rescue Squadron. The conference opens at 1300 with remarks from the AFA President/CEO Burt Field via video. Col Mills, 355th Wing Commander will be the guest speaker for the Friday dinner and Saturday morning the conference will wrap up by 1400.

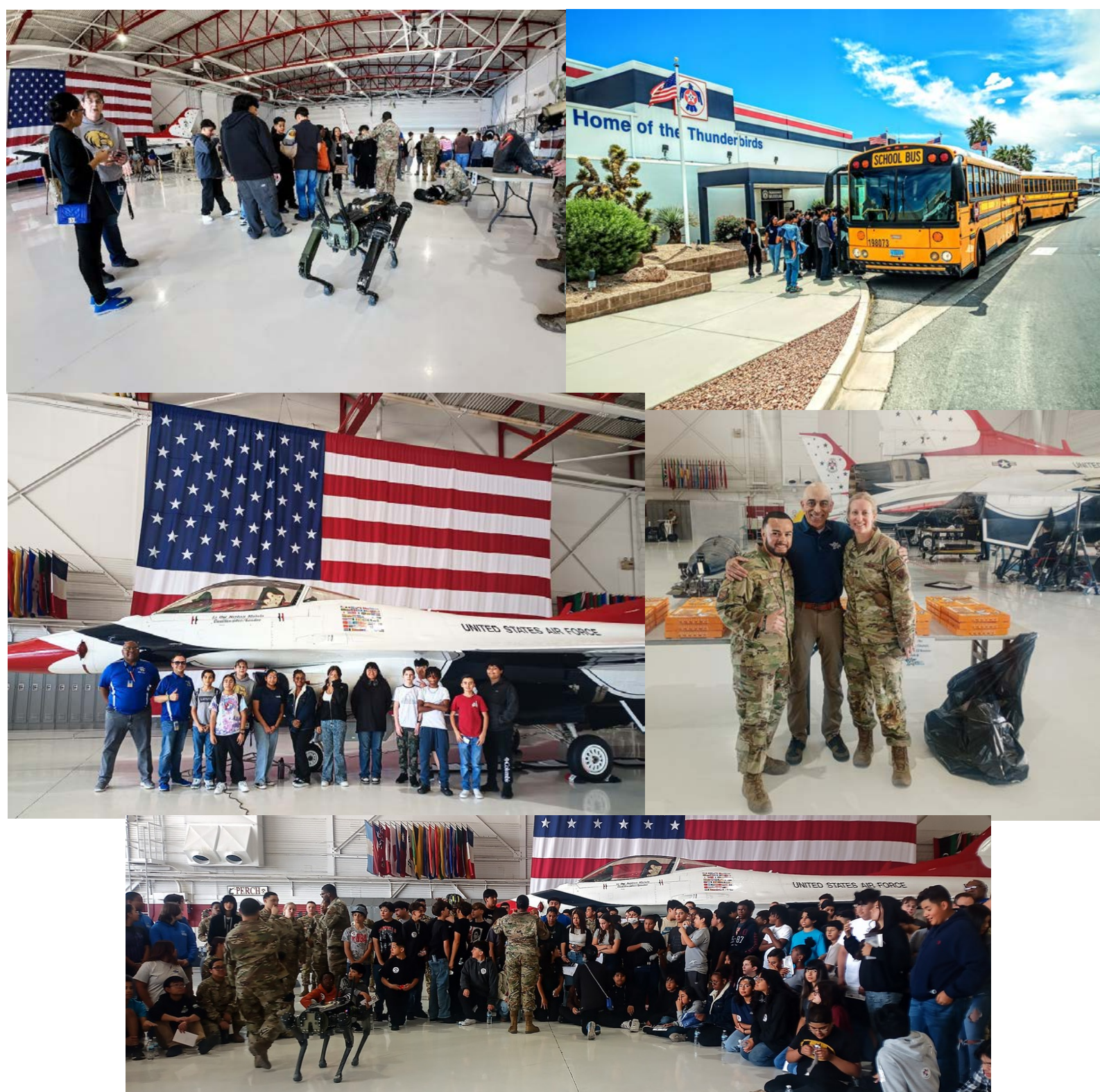
*For more information contact Bobi Oates.*

- Friday, 20 September will be the annual POW/MIA recognition ceremony at Red Horse, the 57th Wing is the host this year.



# *Nellis STEM Inspire Event*

In partnership with Nellis AFB and the Clark County School District, the Thunderbird Chapter helped support a Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) event on 10 May. The Chapter provided pizzas and logistical support while members Reza Karamooz (President) and Floyd Cisco (VP Membership) were on hand to serve and relate their experiences in STEM and in the Air Force.





# *Meet a Member! Member Spotlight:*

## *Col (Ret) Jared 'Jabba' Hutchinson*



After 27 years of active duty service as an F-16 pilot, I found myself at a crossroads. The transition to civilian life was challenging, but joining the Air and Space Forces Association (AFA) provided a new sense of purpose and connection to the only community I have ever known.

Throughout my career as an F-16 pilot, I had the privilege of experiencing many unforgettable moments. From flying combat missions to participating in international exercises, each experience shaped me both professionally and personally. The camaraderie and sense of duty within the military were unparalleled, and I was proud to serve my country alongside dedicated men and women. As my retirement approached, I knew I would miss the unique bonds formed during my service.

The transition from military to civilian life is often a daunting process. I was fortunate to join an outstanding team of Warfighter Advocates with BAE Systems Inc. BAE's clear mission to "Protect those that protect us," gave me a structured environment and clear sense of purpose that were similar to my military career. But, it was clear that I needed to seek out an organization that could provide the additional support and camaraderie I missed from my days in the Air Force.

It was during my search for a new community that I discovered the Air and Space Forces Association (AFA). Initially, I learned about the AFA through fellow veterans who spoke highly of the organization's mission and impact. My curiosity led me to attend a local chapter meeting, where I was immediately struck by the sense of camaraderie and shared purpose among its members. The AFA's commitment to supporting the Air and Space Forces, advocating for service members, and promoting aerospace education resonated deeply with me.

AFA has provided numerous benefits.

It has reconnected me with a community that understands the unique experiences of military life. The support network within the AFA is incredible, offering resources and opportunities for both personal and professional growth. Additionally, the AFA's advocacy efforts on behalf of active duty members, veterans, and their families ensure that our voices are heard at the highest levels. Being part of an organization that champions the causes I care about has been immensely fulfilling.

Joining the Air and Space Forces Association has been a rewarding decision. It has allowed me to continue contributing to the military community, stay connected with fellow veterans, and support important initiatives. For those transitioning out of active duty, I highly recommend considering the AFA as a way to find renewed purpose and community. It's an honor to continue serving alongside dedicated individuals who share my passion for the Air and Space Forces.





# AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION'S MITCHELL INSTITUTE

## AFA's Mitchell Institute releases "Digital Engineering: Accelerating the Defense Acquisition & Development Cycle in an Era of Strategic Competition"



Arlington, VA | May 22, 2024 — The Mitchell Institute for Aerospace Studies is pleased to announce a new entry in its Policy Paper series, *Digital Engineering: Accelerating the Defense Acquisition & Development Cycle in an Era of Strategic Competition* by Heather Penney, Senior Resident Fellow, with Brian Morra, Non-Resident Visiting Fellow.

Today's Department of the Air Force is in crisis and faces severe capability and capacity shortfalls across nearly every mission area. Despite the need to rapidly recapitalize and modernize the force, the Department of Defense's legacy approaches to acquisition, development, and sustainment have proven too costly and inefficient to meet warfighter needs. They are also too slow to keep pace with the aggressive and ongoing modernization efforts of global adversaries like China. Moreover, perpetual efforts to reform U.S. acquisition policy have fallen short of the need to accelerate new capability development and fielding. Digital engineering has the potential to help develop and field new capabilities faster and at lower costs, independent of acquisition reform.

In this Policy Paper, Heather Penney and Brian Morra describe the way in which DOD leaders and innovators can better integrate and use digital engineering in their workflows and processes in order to accelerate the development and delivery of capabilities that can restore America's military dominance.

The Mitchell Institute Policy Papers is a series presenting new thinking and policy proposals to respond to the emerging security and aerospace power challenges of the 21st century. These papers are written for lawmakers and their staffs, policy professionals, business and industry, academics, journalists, and the informed public.

*The full paper (many pages of great info) can be found here:*

<https://mitchellaerospacepower.org/digital-engineering-accelerating-the-defense-acquisition-development-cycle-in-an-era-of-strategic-competition/>



# Air & Space Forces Association

## FY 2025 NDAA Legislative Priorities



### Increasing the Personnel Strength of the Space Force

Original (2018) U.S. Space Force manning levels are not sufficient to combat today's challenging mission.. *The Air & Space Forces Association ("AFA") respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Air Force and the Chief of Space Operations shall submit to the congressional defense committees a plan to increase the size of the United States Space Force ("USSF") to meet emerging threats.*

### Aircraft recapitalization of Air Force, Reserve and National Guard

Demand by our nation's combatant commanders exceeds current aircraft availability. Planned retirement of over 600 tactical aircraft in the next five years reduces the total combat aircraft inventory by almost 350. To reduce and reverse this decline at a time of unprecedented near-peer competition, *the Air & Space Forces Association ("AFA") respectfully requests that the defense committees maximize the number of F-35As and increase the number of F-15EXs to be procured in the FY'25 NDAA.*

### Flexible Software Funding

Weapons systems software is crucial to performance and requires continuous development and frequent upgrades. A single, flexible software funding mechanism combining development and sustainment dollars is the most efficient vehicle. Based on successful trials in other program areas, *the Air & Space Forces Association ("AFA") respectfully requests the Congress further grant the military services the ability to utilize colorless software funding structures and authorize its use on the Joint All Domain Command and Control ("JADC2") program.*

### Child Care

Quality, flexible and affordable childcare must be available for all service members and their families to ensure readiness. *The Air and Space Forces Association ("AFA") respectfully requests the Secretary of Air Force publish a follow-on report to the 2023 Child Care Strategic Plan which articulates the costs required to implement the CSP's proposed solutions and identifies the most effective funding mechanisms to achieve those objectives. This follow-on report should also contain timelines for achieving the CSP's objectives based upon the proposed funding levels, which must be additive in nature and not supplant other needed Quality-of-Life services*

### Exploiting Commercial Space

Obtaining available commercial space services, where available, grows Space Force capabilities and stretches limited resources. *The Air & Space Forces Association ("AFA") respectfully requests the Congress to further increase funding for the purchase of available commercial space services to support Space Domain Awareness (SDA), Space Mobility & Logistics (SML), and for Tactical Surveillance, Reconnaissance & Tracking (TSRT) products and services to encourage private investment in these areas of the space warfighting domain.*

### Pass-Through

The 20 percent pass-through contained in the Air Force Budget does not allow for budget transparency with respect to true funding levels. *The Air & Space Forces Association ("AFA") respectfully requests the congressional defense committees direct the Secretary of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence to commission an independent research organization to perform an analysis of the positive and negative effects that "Pass-Through" has on the Department of the Air Force's budget.*