

CSO NOTICE TO GUARDIANS (C-NOTE #21)

DATED: 1 DEC 23

SUBJECT: FORGING THE FORCE

FROM: CSO

TO: ALL PERSONNEL

UNCLASS

My last C-note shared my view on great power competition, the generational challenge our nation will focus on for decades to come. Like any challenge, this one presents an opportunity. We can optimize our Service by transforming capabilities and processes that served us well in the last era into those we need for the new era. This compels the questions: How do we stay ahead of our strategic rivals? What is the force we need to compete and win over the long term? How do we get there from here? In my mind, the answer to these questions lies in four interrelated activities.

Force Design is the mechanism by which we conceptualize the *force we need*. Looking five to fifteen years into the future, Force Design leverages mission analyses, wargames, experimentation, and exercises to inform new requirements, architectures, and operational concepts. The output of the Force Design process is an Objective Force – the capabilities, capacity, and force structure that we think are required for Guardians to accomplish their roles and missions in the forecasted operational environment. The Objective Force is an aspirational point of departure for resourcing, but fiscal realities often constrain the *force we buy*. The difference between the *force we need* and the *force we buy* represents operational risk.

Force Development mitigates this risk by adapting our processes, equipment, and thinking to account for projected operational challenges. It does this through talent management, education, training, tactics development, test and evaluation, acquisition, and resourcing. Force Development minimizes the risk that emerges from never having exactly what we think we need to address current and future requirements, and it serves to enhance and optimize the *force we field*.

Force Generation activities build, sustain, and reconstitute force elements capable of conducting prompt and sustained operations. Force Generation transforms the *force we field* into the *force we present* to the combatant commanders. The Space Force Generation model (SPAFORGEN) is the foundation of Space Force readiness and the subject of a future C-note.

Force Employment involves the planning, force management, and decision making required to fulfill military objectives with the Fielded Force. Put simply, Force Employment is what we do today with what we have now. This includes the day-to-day tactical missions Guardians conduct under the operational control of a Space Force Service Component commander, operational-level planning, and strategic-level decision making that occurs under the combatant commanders' authorities.

I need your help institutionalizing these processes across the Service. There are no “silver bullets” in great power competition. Advantage, once achieved, is temporary. Standing still means falling behind. The only way to prevail in this type of strategic environment is to ***institutionalize repeatable processes that deliver continuous improvements to our competitive posture***. Our Force Design, Force Development, Force Generation, and Force Employment processes must be engines of unremitting change that keep us ahead of our strategic rivals—today, tomorrow, and over the long-haul. As Secretary Kendall has said, “change is hard; losing is unacceptable.”

Semper Supra!