

1A3 NEWSLETTER

“UNITING OUR COMMUNITY BY STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS & ALIGNING OUR FUTURES”

Current Events

1X3 INFORMATION WARFARE AVIATOR

DANIEL “GRINDER” GRINDSTAFF
18 NOVEMBER 2022

Well, it's official, our organization's name will soon be outdated. At some point in FY24 we will no longer be 1A3's and will start being 1X3's. The new career field will be called Information Warfare Aviators (IWA).

This new AFSC will encompass crew positions on the E-3, E-9, E-11, EC-130, EC-37, MQ-9, RQ-4, RC-135X, and other miscellaneous aircraft. As of writing this article, discussions of including 1A8X crew positions into this AFSC are still ongoing but are currently slated to remain separate. 1X3s will have 3500 active-duty personnel authorizations, compared to 1A3s which currently have 1737 personnel authorized. Although we are picking up RQ-4s and MQ-9s, we will technically be losing the E-4, C-32, C-37, C-40, VC-25.

This change will coincide with a dramatic shift in how we train all enlisted aviators. A single Career Field Education & Training Plan (CFETP) for all enlisted aviators will be created with standardized skill level criteria, verbiage, and duties. Additionally, the 3-skill level will not be awarded until after Initial Qualification Training (IQT).

Additionally, the Center of Excellence will have a more modular approach to training, allowing for easier crossflow between the different enlisted aviator careers. This increased flexibility will be vital for aviators as the Air Force begins modernizing our fleet.



This change will affect all CEAs, not just 1A3s. Here is a general summary of the other new AFSCs:

Mobility Aviator 1X1

They will be a mixture of traditional Loadmasters, Boom Operators, and Flight Engineers, on Mobility Command aircraft.

Special Mission Aviator 1X2

Special Mission Aviators will as the name implies be “Special”. I will just leave it at that.

Executive Mission Aviator 1X4

They will be a mixture of traditional Communication Specialists, Flight Attendants, and Flight Engineers, on aircraft carrying distinguished visitors. This career will be exclusively fed from the other CEA AFSCs.

CEA Senior Enlisted Leader 1X0

Last, but not least, we have our “Career Enlisted Aviator Senior Enlisted Leaders” (yes that is their real name). They will keep doing their chiefly duties.

Current Events

E-7 & E-3 FUTURE

DANIEL "GRINDER" GRINDSTAFF
14 NOV 2022

On 25 April 2022, the US Air Force announced that it would replace the E-3 AWACS with the E-7 Wedgetail. The House of Representative Armed Services Committee (HASC) released a report on 1 July 2022 regarding the FY23 National Defense Authorization Act known as H.R. 7900. The following are excerpts from that report, as it pertains to the E-3 AWACS divestment and the E-7 Wedgetail acquisition.

While the committee understands and supports the requirement to modernize Air Force airborne warning and control capability, the committee continues to be concerned about the lack of underlying analysis provided to Congress to explain the proposed divestment of half the E-3 AWACS fleet in fiscal year 2023. The committee notes that this lack of supporting analysis is an unfortunate hallmark of most of the recent intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance aircraft inventory divestment proposals from the Air Force. Without this information, the committee has difficulty assessing the true operational risk posed by these aircraft inventory changes. The committee expects the Air Force to address the inherent capability and capacity gaps in its E-3 replacement plan to the maximum extent feasible. Options for prudent acceleration of the placement program should be shared with the committee as soon as practicable. *H.R. 7900 (p.29-30)*

This section would prohibit divestment of 2 of the proposed 15 E-3 Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS) aircraft retirements in fiscal year 2023. The section would further restrict divestment of five aircraft until the Air Force enters into a contract for an E-7 replacement aircraft. In addition, the section requires the Secretary of the Air Force to provide a report to Congress on the operational impact to the geographic combatant commanders of a reduced E-3 fleet, the comparative capabilities of the E-3 and its proposed replacement system, and an approved acquisition strategy for the replacement capability. *H.R. 7900 (p.29-30)*

This limitation could create a Catch 22, where the Air Force would need the funds from the divested AWACS, to pay for the Wedgetail contract. Based on recent projections from the Air Force Life Cycle Management Center (AFLCMC), a Rapid Prototyping Program could deliver 2 aircraft plus required ground support equipment by FY28. The program would achieve Initial Operational Capability (IOC) in FY30. 16 additional aircraft for a total fleet size of 18 aircraft could be fielded by FY34. All these milestone's hinge on a contract for the E-7 Wedgetail being signed by February 2023. This timeline is already accelerated, so any delays in awarding a contract would cause the entire program to be delayed. Additionally, during the Air Senior National Representatives forum the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) offered to provide training and integration opportunities for E-7 crews. Tentatively, the USAF plans to send one Pilot, one Electronic Warfare Officer, and four Air Battle Managers to attend the July 2023 Operations Conversion course at RAAF Base Darwin. Although there have been conversations about the potential for enlisted to be part of the Wedgetail crew, the agreement with RAAF does not include enlisted.

Upcoming Events

6 DECEMBER 2022 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Please join us on on 6 December 2022, at 1400 EST for our next General Membership Meeting. Our Career Field Manager, CMSgt Michael Arroyo will be our special guest, and will be discussing "1A3s: Past, Present, & Future". This will be an open forum discussion, so we encourage you to please ask all of the questions.



GOOGLE MEETS

PIN: 442 743

FACEBOOK LIVE



OR DIAL IN - 985-805-2254

Op-ed

From the Editors Desk

18 NOVEMBER 2022

As the world progresses beyond the age of information, into the age of experience, so is the Air Force, and our career field. It would be easy to see all these changes in a negative way, but I see it as a blank slate. I say let the past die and make something new and better than anything that came before.

This will be my last newsletter, as I will be retiring soon. I will still be part of the organization but will be handing over the reigns to a newly elected council. I want to thank you for reading these newsletters this year, and I hope they helped keep the community informed.

My challenge to you, is to take this freshly minted career, and make it into something new and legendary. It up to you to build a legacy that will last another 75 years.



Please visit our website at AssociationOf1A3s.com where we post this newsletter, as well contact information for our Executive Council, and other information regarding the association.