

**BY ORDER OF THE
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE**

AIR FORCE INSTRUCTION AFI 13-503

2 OCTOBER 2012



Nuclear, Space, Missile, Command and Control

***NUCLEAR-CAPABLE UNIT
CERTIFICATION, DECERTIFICATION AND
RESTRICTION PROGRAM***

COMPLIANCE WITH THIS PUBLICATION IS MANDATORY

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(Maj Gen William A. Chambers)

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This publication implements Air Force Policy Directive (AFPD) 13-5, *Air Force Nuclear Enterprise* and is consistent with AFPD 63-1, *Acquisition and Sustainment Life Cycle Management*. It provides procedures required for nuclear-capable unit certification, decertification and operational restrictions. Waiver authority for requirements in this AFI is the Assistant Chief of Staff, Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration (AF/A10). Refer recommended changes and questions about this publication to the Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) using the AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Change of Publication*; route AF Form 847s from the field through the appropriate functional chain of command. Ensure that all records created as a result of processes prescribed in this publication are maintained in accordance with Air Force Manual (AFMAN) 33-363, *Management of Records*, and disposed of in accordance with Air Force Records Information Management System (AFRIMS) Records Disposition Schedule (RDS) located at <https://www.my.af.mil/afrims/afrims/afrims/rims.cfm>.

Major Command (MAJCOM) supplements are allowed and must be submitted to AF/A10 prior to certification and approval.

1. Purpose. To establish a clear, thorough and repeatable process to inform, facilitate and document Air Force decisions on certification, decertification and operational restrictions of Air Force nuclear-capable units. Nuclear-capable units are a unit or an activity assigned responsibilities for employing, assembling, maintaining, transporting or storing war reserve (WR) nuclear weapons, their associated components and ancillary equipment. This instruction addresses the certification (initial and recertification), decertification and operational restrictions placed on nuclear-capable units. This instruction applies to all Air Force units that are nuclear-capable, to include Air Force Reserve Command and Air National Guard units.

2. Roles and Responsibilities.

2.1. Assistant Chief of Staff (ACS), Strategic Deterrence and Nuclear Integration (AF/A10) will:

2.1.1. Publish certification and restriction guidance for organizations and units.

2.1.2. Assist Secretary of the Air Force, Inspector General (SAF/IG) in developing the list of nuclear-capable units as is required under CJCSI 3263.05, *Nuclear Weapons Technical Inspections*.

2.1.3. Communicate with Joint Staff and Combatant Command (COCOM) on certification, decertification, recertification and operational restrictions.

2.2. MAJCOM Commanders will:

2.2.1. Certify or decertify nuclear-capable units. They have the authority to decertify any and all levels of a nuclear-capable unit. This authority may not be delegated. The MAJCOM commanders may delegate to the WG/CC the authority to place operational restrictions on units.

2.2.2. Ensure AF/A10 is notified of all decisions regarding certification, decertification, recertification and operational restrictions of a nuclear-capable unit.

2.2.3. Ensure units are notified of any certification changes of status. MAJCOM commanders are not required to notify units of their continued certification.

2.2.4. Document initial certification, decertification, recertification and operational restrictions of nuclear-capable units with a memorandum (Attachments 3, 4 and 5).

2.2.5. Maintain a library of nuclear capable certification, decertification and operational restriction packages and distribute as necessary.

2.2.6. Ensure procedures are developed to certify, decertify, recertify, operationally restrict and operationally unrestrict nuclear-capable units.

2.2.7. Ensure MAJCOM functional experts develop inspection criteria to be used by MAJCOM/IGs, in addition to required AF inspection criteria.

2.2.8. MAJCOMs with nuclear missions will develop guidance and communication products as appropriate for unit Public Affairs to address issues of nuclear certification, decertification and restrictions.

3. Certification of nuclear-capable units will be accomplished for initial assumption of a nuclear mission or after the decertification of a nuclear-capable unit. Certification authorizes nuclear-capable units to employ, maintain, store or transport nuclear weapons using design certified equipment, facilities and procedures.

3.1. The MAJCOM, in coordination with their respective MAJCOM Safety Office and the Air Force Safety Center/Weapons Safety Division (AFSEC/SEW), will determine a unit's need for an Initial Nuclear Surety Inspection (INSI). Refer to AFI 63-125, *Nuclear Certification Program* to assist in determining INSI requirements. The MAJCOM commander will document the decision on whether an INSI is required. The signed memorandum will be distributed to the units affected and the recipients listed in Attachment

2. The MAJCOM commander, through the designated lead staff agency, will prepare a training timeline and determine readiness of the unit to receive an INSI.

3.1.1. Initial certification of a unit accepting a new mission or weapons system will be based on, as a minimum, the unit having the required personnel trained, qualified or certified if required on the new weapon system or mission.

3.1.2. Units will maintain certification unless notified otherwise by MAJCOM commander. Units must complete Nuclear Surety Inspections (NSIs) per higher headquarters guidance.

3.2. Document the MAJCOM commander's certification in a memorandum (Attachment 3) sent to the unit and the recipient list in Attachment 2. If unit certification is part of a initial certification requirements, refer to AFI 63-125 for additional reporting requirements.

4. Decertification of nuclear capable unit removes all of the unit's authorization to employ, assemble, maintain, transport or store WR nuclear weapons, their associated components and ancillary equipment until the unit is recertified.

4.1. Decertification can result from the following conditions:

4.1.1. Results of inspections conducted by MAJCOM/IG, Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) or other inspection agencies, as applicable.

4.1.2. Accident/incident or series of accidents/incidents that directly or indirectly affect the safety, security, reliability and control of nuclear weapons or calls into question the unit's compliance/adherence to Department of Defense Nuclear Weapons System Safety Standards and/or Air Force Nuclear Weapon System Safety Rules IAW AFI 91-102, *Nuclear Weapons System Safety Studies, Operational Safety Reviews and Safety Rules*. If required, prepare and send Air Force Operational Report (AF OPREP-3) IAW AFI 10-206, *Operational Reporting*.

4.2. A nuclear-capable unit must be decertified if it does not receive a Nuclear Weapons Technical Inspection (NWTI) IAW CJCSI 3263.05.

4.3. The MAJCOM commander continues to be responsible for ensuring the safety and security of all nuclear assets during the interim period between decertification and recertification and must develop and implement mitigation measures that ensure safe, secure and reliable WR assets.

4.4. Document decertification with a memorandum (Attachment 4) to include the following as a minimum:

4.4.1. Unit decertified and the specific reason(s) for the decertification.

4.4.2. Specific critical activities the unit is allowed to perform to ensure the safety and security of any nuclear assets under control of the unit. For example, continue to allow the Security Forces Squadron (SFS) to provide nuclear asset security, even though the SFS's parent wing has been decertified.

4.4.3. The decertification memorandum must provide relevant and unambiguous information to the unit and senior leadership on the specific reasons for decertification. The decertification memorandum must be written with sufficient detail and will be classified, marked and handled as appropriate.

4.4.4. Following the decertification vocal order a decertification memorandum will be sent immediately to the unit commander and the recipients in Attachment 2.

4.4.5. A unit that has been decertified must be recertified based on requirements outlined by the MAJCOM. The MAJCOM functional staff, in coordination with the decertified unit, will develop a training plan to correct deficiencies identified in the decertification memorandum. The plan will include a projected timeline for completion.

4.5. The MAJCOM commander will recertify the unit. Document the recertification using memorandum in Attachment 5. Distribute memorandum to the unit commander and the recipients in Attachment 2.

5. Operational restrictions of nuclear-capable units. Operational restrictions remove the unit's authority to perform specific actions directly related to safe, secure and reliable operations involving nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons related materials. They restrict specific actions but do not decertify the nuclear-capable unit.

5.1. Restrictions will take place immediately upon receipt of vocal order from the MAJCOM commander or the delegated authority. Document using a memorandum (Attachment 4) and immediately distribute to the unit and recipients in Attachment 2.

5.2. The restricted unit in coordination with MAJCOM functional staff, will develop a corrective plan to address deficiencies identified in the operational restriction memorandum. The plan will include a projected timeline for completion.

5.3. The MAJCOM functional staff will develop criteria, training and methods required for the unit to resume unrestricted operations.

5.4. The operational restrictions are removed when the unit is notified by the MAJCOM commander or the delegated authority. Removal can take place with a vocal order. Document the operational restriction removal using memorandum in (Attachment 6). Distribute memorandum to the unit commander and the recipients in Attachment 2.

WILLIAM A. CHAMBERS, Maj Gen, USAF
ACS, Strategic Deterrence & Nuclear Integration

Attachment 1**GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION*****References***

AFPD 13-5, *Nuclear, Space, Missile, Command and Control*, 6 July 2011

AFPD 63-1, *Acquisition and Sustainment Life Cycle Management*, 3 April 2009

AFI 10-206, *Operational Reporting*, 06 September 2011

AFI 63-125, *Nuclear Certification Program*, 15 March 2004, incorporating change 1, 9 November 2009

AFI 90-201, *The Air Force Inspection System*, 23 March 2012

AFI 91-102, *Nuclear Weapons System Safety Studies, Operational Safety Reviews, and Safety Rules*, 24 June 2010

DoDD 3150.2, *DoD Nuclear Weapons System Safety Program*, 23 December 1996, certified current as of 8 March 2004

CJCSI 3263.05, *Nuclear Weapons Technical Inspections*, 4 June 2010

Prescribed and Adopted Forms

AF Form 847, *Recommendation for Changes of Publication*, 22 September 2009

Abbreviation and Acronyms

ACS—Assistant Chief of Staff

AFI—Air Force Instruction

AFRIMS—Air Force Records and Information Management System

CC—Commander

CJCSI—Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Instruction

COCOM—Combatant Command

DoD—Department of Defense

DoDD—Department of Defense Directive

DTRA—Date Time Group

DTRA—Defense Threat Reduction Agency

HHQ—Higher Headquarters

IAW—In Accordance With

IG—Inspector General

INSI—Initial Nuclear Surety Inspection

LNSI—Limited Nuclear Surety Inspection

MAJCOM—Major Command

MGA—Major Graded Area

NSI—Nuclear Surety Inspection

NWTI—Nuclear Weapons Technical Inspection

SEW—Weapons Safety Division

USSTRATCOM—United States Strategic Command

WR—War Reserve

Terms

Initial Nuclear Surety Inspection (INSI)—An inspection to evaluate a unit's readiness to assume or resume a nuclear mission or to evaluate and certify new or significantly modified maintenance and storage facilities or significant changes to weapons systems or portions thereof.

Limited Nuclear Surety Inspection (LNSI)—A limited scope inspection, which does not evaluate all NSI areas applicable to the unit. LNSIs do not alter the CJSCI requirement.

Nuclear-Capable Unit—A unit or an activity assigned responsibilities for employing, assembling, maintaining, transporting or storing WR nuclear weapons, their associated components and ancillary equipment.

Nuclear Surety Inspection (NSI)—A compliance-based inspection conducted to evaluate a unit's ability to manage nuclear resources while complying with all nuclear surety standards.

Major Graded Area (MGA)—Key processes, procedures or requirements based on legal requirements, executive orders, DoD directives (DoDD), Air Force, MAJCOM or applicable Air National Guard Instructions.

Reliability—The ability of a system and system parts to perform their mission without failure, degradation, or demand on the support system. (USAF)

Unit—For the purposes of this Instruction, a “unit” is defined as a squadron, group, wing or wing-equivalent organization.

Attachment 2

**NUCLEAR CERTIFICATION/DECERTIFICATION AND OPERATIONAL
RESTRICTION RECIPIENTS REFERENCE**

AF/A10
1488 Air Force Pentagon, Room 4E420
Washington, DC 20330-1488
Afa10.workflow@af.pentagon.smil.mil

AFNWC
1551 Wyoming Blvd SE
Kirtland AFB, NM 87717-5617
afnwc.ccx@afmc.af.smil.mil

AF/A3/5
1630 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1400
Afxo.workflow@af.pentagon.smil.mil

Office of Legislative Liaison-SAF/LLW
1160 Air Force Pentagon (Room 4B852A)
Washington, DC 20330-1160
SAFLL.Workflow@pentagon.af.mil

AF/A4/7
1030 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1030
AFA4L.Workflow@af.pentagon.smil.mil

Applicable COCOM:

SAF/IGI
112 Luke Ave SW, Bldg 5683, Ste 350
Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, DC 20032
Safigi.workflow@af.pentagon.smil.mil

USSTRATCOM/JFCC-GS
901 SAC Blvd, Ste 1F22 Offutt AFB NE 68113-6090
NUCLEARCURRENTOPSDO@STRATCOM.SMIL.MIL

AF/SE/SEW
1400 Air Force Pentagon
Washington, DC 20330-1400
Afse.workflow@af.pentagon.smil.mil

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES
EUROPEAN COMMAND
UNIT 30400, APO AE 09131-0400
ECCCSA@SHAPE.EUCOM.SMIL.MIL

AFIA/OV/TI
9700 Ave G SE, Suite 340
Kirtland AFB, NM 87117-5670
Afa10.workflow@af.pentagon.smil.mil

Applicable MAJCOM:

AFSEC/SEW
9700 Ave G SE
Kirtland AFB, NM 87117-5670
afsc.sew@afmc.af.smil.mil

USAFE/IG
Unit 3050, Box 60
APO AE 09094-5060
usafe.ig@ramstein.smil.mil

DTRA/ONI
1680 Texas St SE
Kirtland AFB, NM 87117-5669
CARS@dtra.smil.mil

AFGSC/IG
245 Davis Ave, Bldg T7216
Barksdale AFB, LA 71110
Afgsc.igworkflow@barksdale.af.smil.mil

Attachment 3**EXAMPLE OF NUCLEAR CERTIFICATION MEMORANDUM**

[**NOTE:** This memorandum may contain information not appropriate for public release. This memorandum will not be used as a substitute for HHQ Public Affairs or MAJCOM/PA guidance.]

(CLASSIFICATION)

MEMORANDUM FOR *(Wing/CC or Unit/CC)*

FROM: *MAJCOM/CC*

SUBJECT: Nuclear Certification of *(Wing or Unit)*

References: (a) AFI 13-503, *Nuclear-Capable Unit Certification, Decertification and Restriction Program*, (publish date)

(b) AFI 90-201, *The Air Force Inspection System*, 23 March 2012

(c) AFI 63-125, *Nuclear Certification Program*, 15 March 2004, incorporating change 1, 9 November 2009

1. Effective *(provide DTG)*, the *(Wing or Unit)* is certified to perform all nuclear operations.
2. This certification is based on the unit receiving a READY rating for Initial Nuclear Surety Inspection (INSI) conducted on *(DTG)*.
3. *(Additional comments)*
4. *(List POC, office symbol, phone numbers, and e-mail address.)*

Signature Block

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(CLASSIFICATION)

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SAF/IGI

AF/SE/SEW

AFIA/OV/TI

AFSEC/SEW

DTRA/ONI

AFNWC

SAF/LL

(Applicable COCOM)

(Applicable MAJCOM)

(CLASSIFICATION)

Attachment 4

EXAMPLE OF NUCLEAR DECERTIFICATION

AND/OR OPERATIONAL RESTRICTION MEMORANDUM

[NOTE: This memorandum may contain information not appropriate for public release. This memorandum will not be used as a substitute for HHQ Public Affairs or MAJCOM/PA guidance.]

(CLASSIFICATION)

MEMORANDUM FOR *(Wing/CC or Unit/CC)*

FROM: *MAJCOM/CC or designated authority*

SUBJECT: Nuclear Decertification or Nuclear Operation Restriction of *(Wing or Unit)*

References: (a) AFI 13-503, Nuclear-Capable Unit Certification, Decertification and Restriction Program, [Date]

(b) AFI 90-201, The Air Force Inspection System, 23 March 2012

1. Effective *(provide DTG)*, the *(Wing or Unit)* is decertified and/or operationally restricted from performing certified nuclear tasks. *(Wing or Unit)* is still required to maintain the safety, security and surety of all nuclear assets.
2. This decertification and/or operational restriction is/are based on the following discrepancies identified through recent inspection, accident and/or incident that directly or indirectly affected the safety, security, reliability and control of nuclear weapons.
3. *List specific activities unit is not allowed to perform.*
4. *List requirements, time frame and process required to receive recertification and/or remove operational restrictions. For example, successful completion of another NSI, LNSI, staff assistance visit, and/or exercise will be completed within 30 days of previous inspection.*
5. *(Additional comments)*

(CLASSIFICATION)

(CLASSIFICATION)

6. *(List POC, office symbol, phone numbers, and e-mail address.)*

Signature Block

DISTRIBUTION:

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AF/A3/5

AF/A4/7

SAF/IGI

AF/SE/SEW

AFIA/OV/TI

AFSEC/SEW

DTRA/ONI

AFNWC

SAF/LL

(Applicable COCOM)

(Applicable MAJCOM)

(CLASSIFICATION)

Attachment 5

EXAMPLE OF NUCLEAR RECERTIFICATION MEMORANDUM

[NOTE: This memorandum may contain information not appropriate for public release. This memorandum will not be used as a substitute for HHQ Public Affairs or MAJCOM/PA guidance.]

(CLASSIFICATION)

MEMORANDUM FOR *(Wing/CC or Unit/CC)*

FROM: *MAJCOM/CC*

SUBJECT: Nuclear Recertification of *(Wing or Unit)*

References: (a) AFI 13-503, Nuclear-Capable Unit Certification, Decertification and Restriction Program, [Date]

(b) AFI 90-201, The Air Force Inspection System, 23 March 2012

1. Effective *(provide DTG)*, the *(Wing or Unit)* is recertified to perform all nuclear operations.
2. This recertification is based on the successfully meeting the requirements laid out in the nuclear decertification memorandum dated *(DTG)*.
3. *(Additional comments)*
4. *(List POC, office symbol, phone numbers, and e-mail address.)*

Signature Block

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AFSEC/SEW

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AFNWC

SAF/LL

(Applicable COCOM)

(Applicable MAJCOM)

(CLASSIFICATION)

Attachment 6

EXAMPLE OF REMOVAL OF RESTRICTIONS MEMORANDUM

[NOTE: This memorandum may contain information not appropriate for public release. This memorandum will not be used as a substitute for HHQ Public Affairs or MAJCOM/PA guidance.]

(CLASSIFICATION)

MEMORANDUM FOR *(Wing/CC or Unit/CC)*

FROM: *MAJCOM/CC or designated authority*

SUBJECT: Removal of Nuclear Operational Restrictions of *(Wing or Unit)*

References: (a) AFI 13-503, Nuclear-Capable Unit Certification, Decertification and Restriction Program, [Date]

(b) AFI 90-201, The Air Force Inspection System, 23 March 2012

1. Effective *(provide DTG)*, the restrictions placed on *(Wing or Unit)* on *(DTG from restriction letter)* are removed.
2. This removal of the restriction(s) is based on the successfully meeting the requirements laid out in the nuclear operational restriction memorandum dated *(DTG)*.
3. *(Additional comments)*
4. *(List POC, office symbol, phone numbers, and e-mail address.)*

Signature Block

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