

Commander's Farewell Address

Fellow Airmen,

It has been my great pleasure to have served with all the superb men and women of the Air Force Intelligence, Reconnaissance and Surveillance Agency for these past 40 months.

It is hard to believe that almost four years have come and gone since I took command of what was then the Air Intelligence Agency. I'd like to briefly highlight some of the tremendous changes we've accomplished in such a short period of time.

Midway through 2006, the 70th Intelligence Wing was realigned under AIA from Air Combat Command. That was a starting point for the Agency's transformation from a signals intelligence staff headquarters into a comprehensive, far-reaching intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance organization, as we also restructured into an A-staff to align with the Air Staff and joint organizations. The 70th realignment returned the Air Force's cryptologic wing to leadership under what was to become an ISR organization the next year, integrating Air Force capabilities into global cryptologic operations to directly supporting the combatant commanders, the warfighters and decision-makers at the national levels.

Since 2006, we have seen the Air Force Technical Applications Center expand to a unit consisting of more than 800 people with field elements in 50 nations on six continents and 15 manned locations. That year AFTAC's U.S. Atomic Energy Detection System performed flawlessly following the first foreign nuclear test in eight years, delivering verifiable scientific data to national authorities that confirmed North Korea's claim of a nuclear test. This critical information was briefed to the President of the United States and was the linchpin data for the United Nations' imposed sanctions against North Korea.

In May of 2007, the first of several huge steps in the overall ISR transformation process began when AIA was re-designated as the Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Agency. We didn't just get a new name, we got our new mission: to organize, train, equip and present ISR forces to joint warfighters and to the nation. We also realigned as a field operating agency, reporting directly to the Headquarters Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for ISR – the HAF/A-2.

Another important move forward in our first transformation phase was the successful move of our National-Tactical Integration initiative into a significantly funded Air Force program, with the 70th Intelligence Wing as the operational lead. NTI program integrated national and tactical warfighting ISR capabilities for the combined and joint forces Air Component Commanders.

Even as we were moving forward, in July of 2007, we took time to recognize our strong foundation as we renamed our headquarters building "Larson Hall" in honor of a true ISR pioneer, retired Major General Doyle E. Larson.

We began phase two of the Air Force ISR transformation in January 2008. All Air Force Distributed Common Ground System capabilities and units were transferred to AF ISR Agency from the Air Combat, Pacific Air Force and U.S. Air Force Europe commands that year. That transfer accomplished two major objectives: the first-ever integration of DCGS worldwide capabilities under one organization, and presentation of ISR forces to the key numbered warfighting Air Forces.

In the spring of 2008, the "unitization" of the National Air and Space Intelligence Center realigned it from a staff-oriented structure into four production-focused groups and three directorates. This restructuring brought the decision-making power closer to the mission and strengthened the authority, accountability and responsibility of the unit commanders, improving the care of our most important asset, our people.

Further successes during 2008 included standing up the first Air Force human intelligence organization in more than a decade, as well as the creation of an AF ISR group dedicated to special operations, the 361 ISR Group.

In January, we announced the renaming of the 70th Intelligence Wing and 480th Intelligence Wing as ISR Wings, and their subordinate groups as ISR Groups, to ensure the rest of the Air Force recognized the full capabilities of these key organizations.

Without the leadership, dedication and expertise of each and every one of you -- from the newest Airman all the way up to our most experienced military and civilian leaders -- we would not have successfully pulled off all the remarkable achievements of these past 40 months. I cannot thank you all enough for the fantastic job each of you has done and for the excellent team effort this has been. Whatever successes I had are a credit to you. I move on with great satisfaction in what we accomplished together and in the knowledge that Air Force ISR is in great hands and the future of this Agency is very bright.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J.C. Koziol". The signature is stylized and fluid.

JOHN C. KOZIOL, Maj Gen, USAF
Commander