



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS AIR COMBAT COMMAND
LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, VIRGINIA

OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER
205 DODD BOULEVARD SUITE 100
LANGLEY AFB VA 23665-2788

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Defending our nation is serious and often dangerous business. We continually balance mission demands with acceptable risk to achieve spectacular results. Earlier this week I determined that one of the key pieces of armor that protects our nation's skies currently puts our aircrew at unacceptable risk. As a result, I directed a stand-down of all F-15A-D model aircraft until further notice.

Given evidence earlier this month of a more limited defect, I stood down F-15A-D models until they were inspected and cleared. Subsequent discoveries this week suggest defects may be more prevalent than initially thought and point to a possible fleet-wide airworthiness problem. Specifically, AIB investigators, maintainers and engineers found cracks in structural longerons that must be addressed before the jets can safely fly. I will not return a jet to flight until it meets our high standards of safety, weighed appropriately against our country's national security requirements.

To our Eagle drivers, I understand this extended stand-down brings challenges. While I know that a number of you will lose currencies and the ability to maintain the proficiency that the world has come to expect, I ask that you don't lose your focus. Trust that your leadership is keeping a watchful eye and will be poised to execute a plan that will put all of you back in the air as fast as safely possible.

The duration of the stand-down will also have an impact on our maintenance professionals. The inspection process is long and methodical. To everyone who touches these jets, from the flightline to the back shops, I understand there are challenges for you as well. Let me take this opportunity to say that your dedication and professionalism are unwavering and the actions you have taken over the years to maintain these F-15s are second to none. I ask that you keep your eye on the task at hand.

We are a nation at war and remain dedicated to the defense of our nation. While our F-15 fleet remains on the ground, Air Combat Command continues to work with the Air National Guard, the Air Force Reserve, other Air Force assets, as well as joint and coalition partners, to ensure mission coverage.

Finally, to the entire F-15 community, I thank you for your continued hard work and dedication. Stay focused as we work through these challenges. Our Nation demands nothing less.


JOHN D.W. CORLEY
General, USAF
Commander

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