

# **Air Force Advanced Distributed Learning Vision**



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## INTRODUCTION

Distributed Learning (DL) has been around the Air Force in one form or another (paper, audiotape, videotape) since the early 1950s. In today's Air Force, DL is composed of many separate and distinct efforts, which offer primarily paper-based instruction, CD-ROM instruction, Interactive Television (ITV) instruction via satellite, and Internet-based courses. Whereas a few solutions are standards-based today, many DL programs were developed "hobby-shop style" as a conglomeration of manual and automated systems and processes, without common standards, practices, and specifications. With little or no corporate DL experience, these homegrown solutions often cost more to develop and can be quite expensive to maintain, with funding normally coming from a unit's operating budget. These "engineering stovepipes," developed and delivered with proprietary tools and platforms, have become increasingly costly to integrate and operate in today's Internet-based military.

The push for standards-based Advanced Distributed Learning (ADL) began in 1997 and was formalized in 1999, with Executive Order 13111, *Using Technology to Improve Training Opportunities for Federal Government Employees*. The Secretary of Defense followed suit later in 1999 with the DoD "Training Technology Vision", which advocated leveraging Internet and other advanced technologies to "ensure that DoD personnel have access to the highest quality education and training that can be tailored to their needs and delivered cost effectively, anytime, anywhere." In today's environment of decreased personnel strengths, decreased training funds, and increased deployments, ADL can effectively contribute to Air Force readiness.

Sustained, aggressive improvement in ADL support to all Air Force functional areas requires more than development and maintenance of a few software programs. A combination of ADL professionals, software, standards, infrastructure, and oversight is necessary to fully support the Air Force's Title 10 requirements.

# AIR FORCE ADL VISION

**Enhance Aerospace readiness by ensuring that quality education and training are available to all Total Force personnel (active, guard, reserve, and civilian) anytime and anywhere.**

## AIR FORCE ADL GOALS

### **Goal 1. Manage the development of the Aerospace Learning Network (ALN).**

*Objective 1.1:* Develop the AFIADL ALN Portal.

*Objective 1.2:* Link designated Learning Management Systems (LMS) and ADL repositories within the Air Force to the AFIADL hub.

*Objective 1.3:* Host and manage ADL courses that do not have an available LMS.

### **Goal 2. Publish ADL standards and audit compliance with standards.**

*Objective 2.1:* Develop and publish Air Force ADL standards based on DoD and industry standards.

*Objective 2.2:* Ensure that every Air Force ADL course is developed, delivered, and administered according to prescribed DoD and Air Force protocols.

*Objective 2.3:* Audit selected new AF ADL courses for compliance with Air Force standards.

### **Goal 3. Provide ADL program management support and consultation for the Air Force.**

*Objective 3.1:* Build a core of ADL contracts and contractors for developing and converting ADL courses.

*Objective 3.2:* Provide ADL course development and conversion services to the Air Force

*Objective 3.3:* Provide ADL curriculum, course development and implementation consultation and training to Air Force ADL developers and providers.

### **Goal 4. Centralize and coordinate ADL funding through Air Force Program Objective Memorandum (POM) process.**

*Objective 4.1:* Collect, analyze, and evaluate MAJCOM ADL requirements.

*Objective 4.2:* Determine Air Force ADL funding priorities.

*Objective 4.3:* Submit consolidated Air Force ADL requirement to AF/DP.

*Objective 4.4:* Distribute and track Air Force ADL funding to the MAJCOMs.

### **Goal 5. Evaluate and integrate new technology to enhance existing programs.**

*Objective 5.1:* Evaluate and fund new ADL technology, initiatives and experiments.

*Objective 5.2:* Ensure new technological enhancements are inserted into existing ADL systems.

### **Goal 6. Oversee the modernization of existing ADL “stovepipe” systems.**

*Objective 6.1:* Identify existing Air Force “stovepipe” ADL systems

*Objective 6.2:* Modernize those existing Air Force ADL systems, bringing them up to current ADL standards.

## **CONCLUSION**

As the Air Force enters the age of the Expeditionary Aerospace Force, ADL will become a key tool to ensure readiness. To meet the challenges of shrinking training budgets and increased deployments, the Air Force must look to ADL as a cost effective solution, and in order to achieve an optimal ADL solution, a hub must be in place to coordinate and consolidate the many ADL efforts that are on-going throughout the service. The Air Force Institute for Advanced Distributed Learning is ready to work with Air Staff, MAJCOMs, and schools to develop the Air Force ADL Master Plan, which will flesh out the objective laid out in the vision, and provide the necessary focus to achieve the Air Force ADL vision. With a clear plan, ADL has the capability to provide unlimited and timely education and training opportunities to virtually every airman within the service.