



# U.S. Air Force Strategic Deterrence Capabilities in the 21st Century Security Environment: A Workshop Summary

*Division on Engineering and Physical Sciences, Air Force Studies Board, Committee on U.S. Air Force Strategic Deterrence Capabilities in the 21st Century Security Environment: A Workshop, National Research Council*

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Changes in the 21st century security environment require new analytic approaches to support strategic deterrence. Because current adversaries may be deterred from the use of nuclear weapons differently than were Cold War adversaries, the Air Force needs an analytic process and tools that can help determine those Air Force capabilities that will successfully deter or defeat these new nuclear-armed adversaries and assure U.S. allies. While some analytic tools are available, a coherent approach for their use in developing strategy and policy appears to be lacking. Without a coherent analytic approach that addresses the nuances of today's security environment, Air Force views of its strategic deterrence needs may not be understood or accepted by the appropriate decision makers.

A coherent approach will support Air Force decisions about its strategic force priorities and needs, deter actual or potential adversaries, and assure U.S. allies. In this context, the Air Force in 2012 requested that the Air Force Studies Board of the National Research Council undertake a workshop to bring together national experts to discuss current challenges relating strategic deterrence and potential new tools and methods that the Air Force might leverage in its strategic deterrence mission.

The workshop consisted of two 3-day sessions held in Washington, DC on September 26-28, 2012 and January 29-31, 2013 and was attended by a very diverse set of participants with expertise in strategic deterrence and a range of analytic tools of potential interest to the Air Force. *U.S. Air Force Strategic Deterrence Capabilities in the 21st Century Security Environment* summarizes this workshop.

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