

White House Nominates Global Strike Commander as Next U.S. Air Force Vice Chief

July 19, 2025

— Categories: *Defence & Security*



The White House has named General Thomas Bussiere, current commander of the U.S. Air Force Global Strike Command, as its nominee for the next Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force. The move places a seasoned nuclear strategist at the center of America's ongoing modernization of its strategic forces.

General Bussiere, who assumed command of Global Strike in December 2022, oversees key components of the nation's nuclear deterrent, including the B-1, B-2, and B-52 bomber fleets, as well as the Minuteman III intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). His nomination comes at a time when the Air Force is pushing forward on major programs like the new B-21 Raider stealth bomber and modernization of legacy systems.

If confirmed by the Senate, Bussiere would fill a critical vacancy left by the removal of General Jim Slife earlier this year. In the interim, Lieutenant General Scott Pleus has served in an acting capacity. Bussiere's promotion is expected to bring much-needed stability and continuity to the upper ranks of the Air Force during a pivotal period for national defense planning.

The White House is also expected to elevate Lieutenant General Stephen Davis, the current Inspector General of the Air Force, to take over Global Strike Command. Davis has been responsible for major internal investigations, including the inquiry into the leak of classified documents by Airman First Class Jack Teixeira. His background in missile operations and nuclear command makes him a natural fit to follow Bussiere.

A decorated command pilot with over 3,400 flying hours in aircraft such as the F-15C, B-2, and F-22, General Bussiere has long been a central figure in strategic planning. His leadership has helped steer nuclear modernization efforts while maintaining operational readiness. The elevation to vice chief will give him even greater oversight as the service integrates new technologies and adapts to emerging global threats.

Alongside Bussiere's nomination, the administration also announced its pick of Lieutenant General Shawn Bratton as the next Vice Chief of Space

Operations, signaling a broader effort to reinforce top-tier leadership across the military's strategic domains.

These appointments come as the Pentagon faces increasing pressure to modernize aging weapons systems, bolster deterrence against adversaries, and streamline leadership roles. If confirmed, Bussiere's steady hand and strategic experience will likely play a key role in guiding the U.S. Air Force through this crucial phase of transformation.