Air Force Medical Agency

Current Insights and Updates in Military Occupational Medicine

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Disclosures

- I have no employment or financial influences
- The views expressed in this presentation are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Department of Defense, Department of the Air Force, Defense Health Agency, or the U.S. Government.
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Goals

- **Review previous and current OEM initiatives from DoD & VA**
- **Understand basic organizational hierarchy of OEM in the DoD**
- **Describe the delayed transition of OEM to Defense Health Agency**
- **Describe standing up Air Force Medical Agency (AFMED)**
- **Discuss future of OEM in the DoD**

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Previous and Current Initiatives

**Excludes ILER and PACT Act initiatives

- Atomic Veterans
- Operation Tomodachi Registry, Japan
- Potential Agent Orange Exposure in Blue Water Navy during Vietnam War
- Chemical warfare agent exposures during testing in 1940s to 1975
- Chemical warfare agent exposures in OIF
- Veterans of 1990-91 Gulf War: Potential exposures to nerve agents due to the demolitions at Khamisiyah, Iraq
- Exposures to burn pit emissions and other airborne hazards in OIF/OEF
- Potential exposures at Karshi-Khanabad Air Base, Uzbekistan in 2001-2005
- Historical drinking water contamination at Marine Corp Base Camp Lejeune, 1950s-1985
- PFOS/PFOA in Ground Water and Drinking Water Near Military Bases
- Red Hill Incident

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Previous and Current Initiatives

Atomic Veterans

- DoD/VA efforts:
  - VA provides the name of an individual veteran and specific test to the Nuclear Test Personnel Review, which is an office in the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA).
    - DTRA confirms the veteran was present at the test and provides a radiation dose estimate.
    - VA uses this estimate to determine eligibility to receive disability compensation for diseases on the presumptive list. (Most diseases are various cancers associated with radiation exposure.)
  - VA has an Ionizing Radiation Registry which includes 18,000 veterans.
- Recent issues:
  - Controversy about 1966 plane crash in Palomares, Spain; release of plutonium from 2 damaged nuclear weapons due to a US Air Force crash; approximately 1,600 Service members and DoD civilians involved in the clean-up. DoD provided names in this cohort and risk assessment to VA in 2018. Veterans filed class action suit in 2019 with assistance of Yale Law School. Senate bill about VA compensation introduced in April 2021.

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Previous and Current Initiatives

Potential Agent Orange Exposure in Blue Water Navy during Vietnam War

- In 2019, Congress passed law that required VA to provide equivalent compensation to BWN.
- In 2020, VBA started providing compensation benefits to Vietnam veterans in the BWN.
  - VA estimates that between 420,000 and 560,000 may be BWN veterans.
  - VA worked with the Naval History and Heritage Command and National Archives and Records Administration to identify and computerize the logs of all relevant ships (ships that operated with 12 miles of the demarcation line). Digitized more than 1,800 ship deck logs (>29 million images).
  - From JAN to AUG 2020, VA processed about 27,000 of 58,000 existing veteran claims; 72% of claims were granted. By 2021, VA had provided $565 million of retroactive compensation to BWN veterans.

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Previous and Current Initiatives

Karshi-Khanabad (K-2) Air Base, Uzbekistan 2001-2005

- In early 2020, VA told Congress it would perform an epidemiological study of veterans who were at K-2.
  - DMDC, AFHSD, and USAPHC worked to identify all Service members who were based at K-2 (about 15,000); also, comparison group of veterans who did not deploy to K-2.
  - VA is using VA and DoD medical records to perform a retrospective study of morbidity (outpatient care and hospitalizations) and mortality; results expected in 2024.
- NDAA 2021 requires DoD to perform an epidemiological study of veterans who were at K-2.
  - DoD performed its own mortality study using data from the National Death Index.
  - DoD contracted with Johns Hopkins to perform a morbidity study using DoD and VA medical records.

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DoD Safety and Occupational Health

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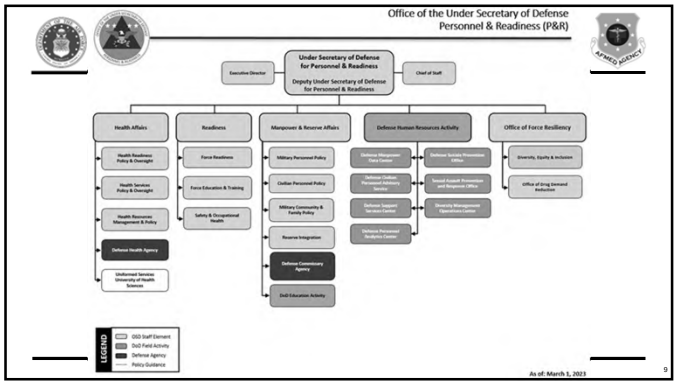

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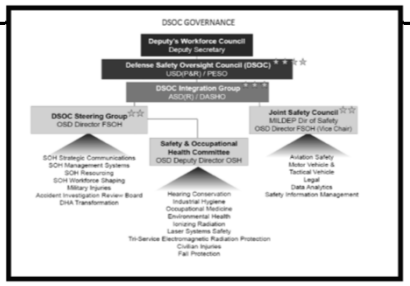

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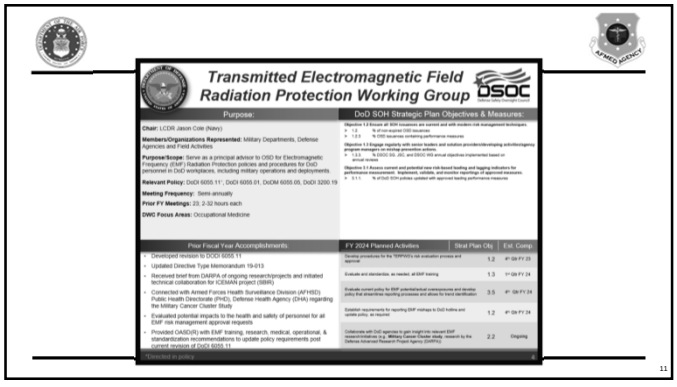

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Air Force Transition

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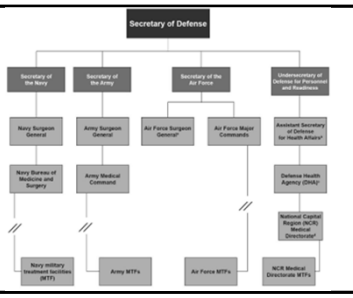
Previous AF Medical Service



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AFMS cont

- DAF unique structure
  - SG policy and advisory
  - Command authority with installation commander

"The Air Force has always been distinct from our sister services, from our structure and number of military treatment facilities, to how we train and deploy our medical forces. As the DHA and MHS have evolved over the past six years, it's become apparent that the AFMS needed to restructure to ensure we could better advocate for our equities and execute the health service support mission at our installations and around the globe."

– Lt. Gen. Robert Miller, U.S. Air Force Surgeon General

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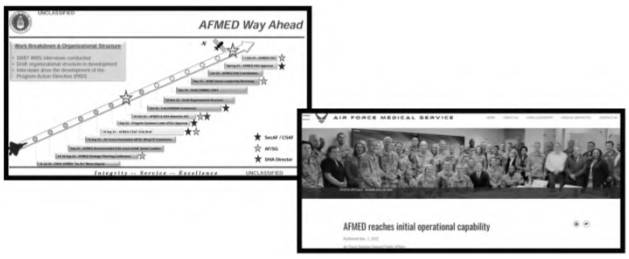
AFMED cont



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Future of DoD Safety and Occupational Health

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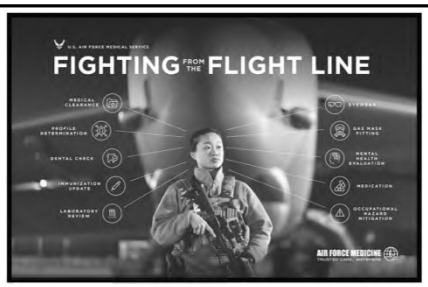
DAF Recognizes OEM



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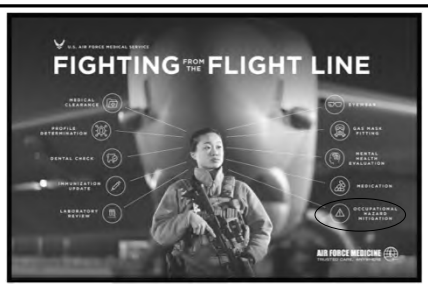

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DoD Initiatives

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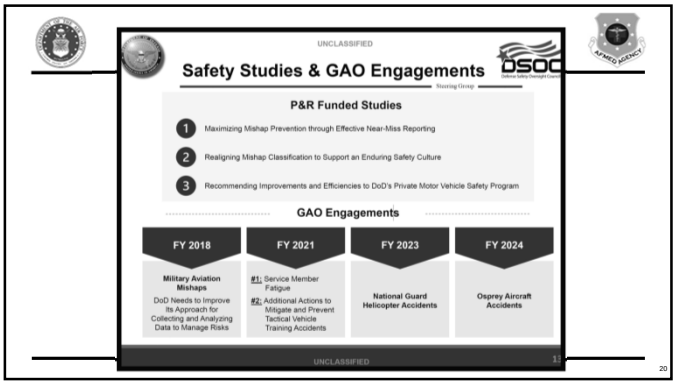

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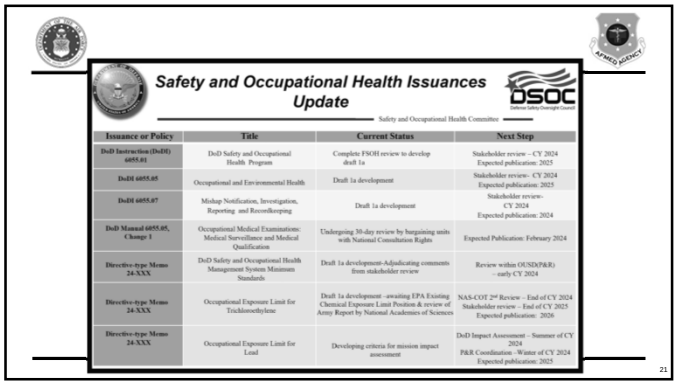

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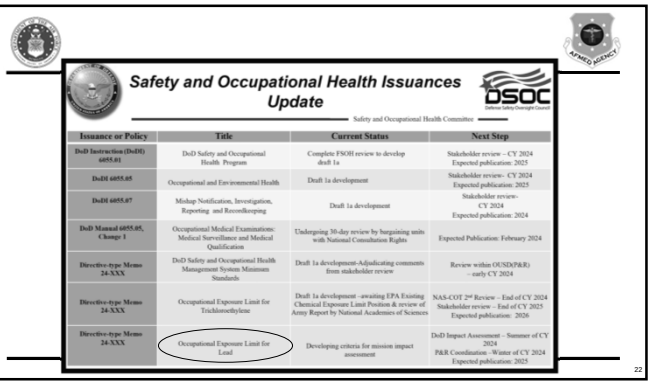

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DoD Lead and Chromium Exposures

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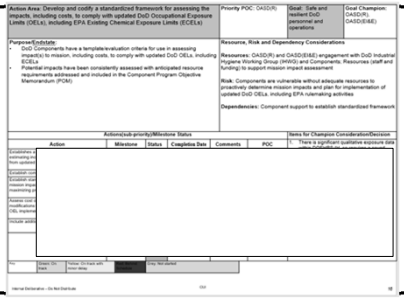

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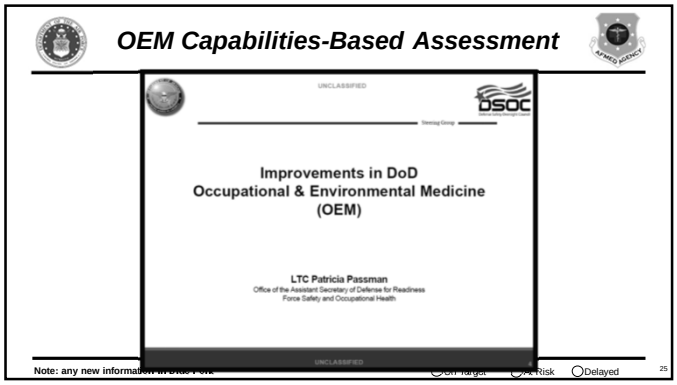

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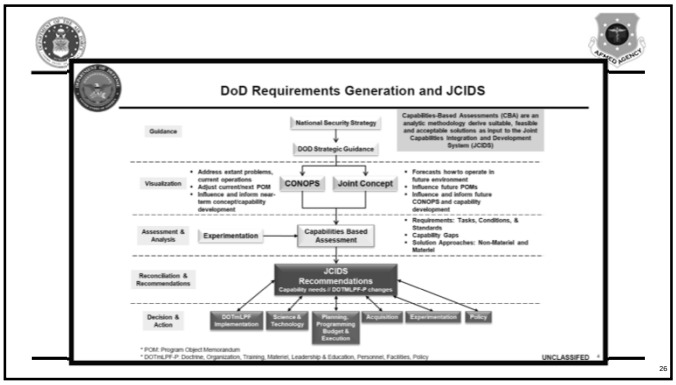

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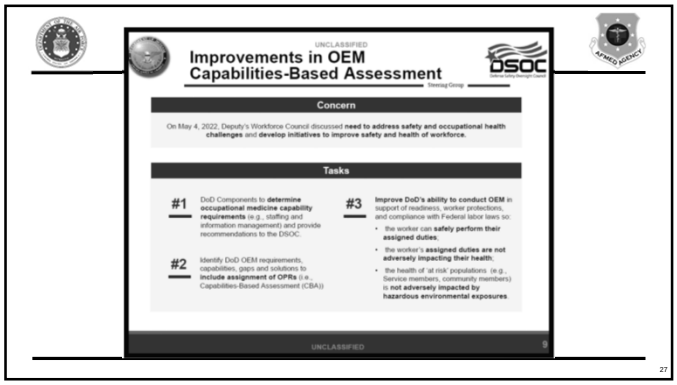

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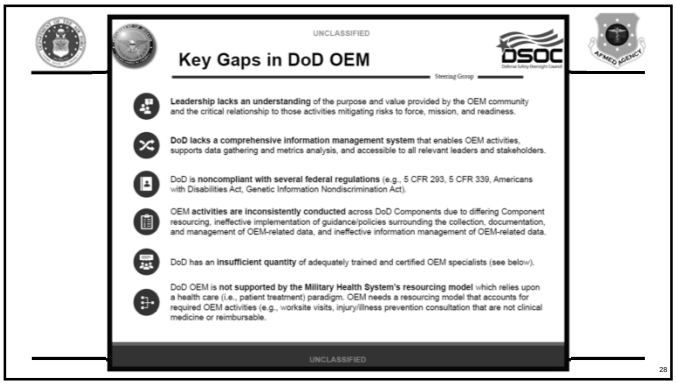

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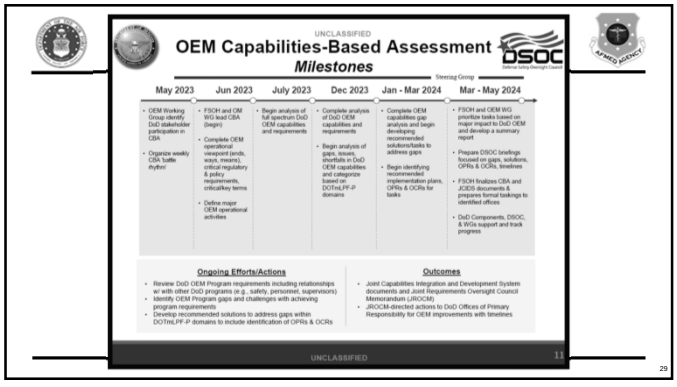

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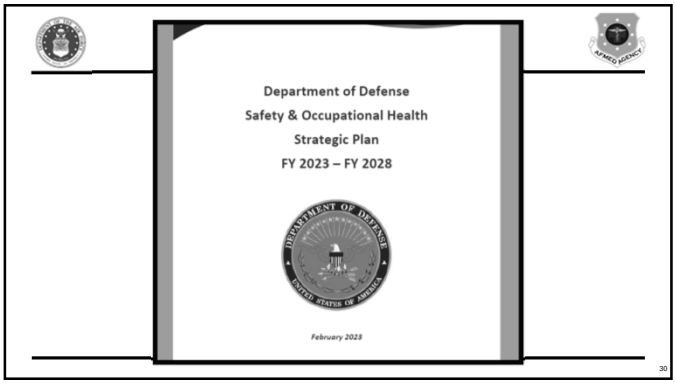

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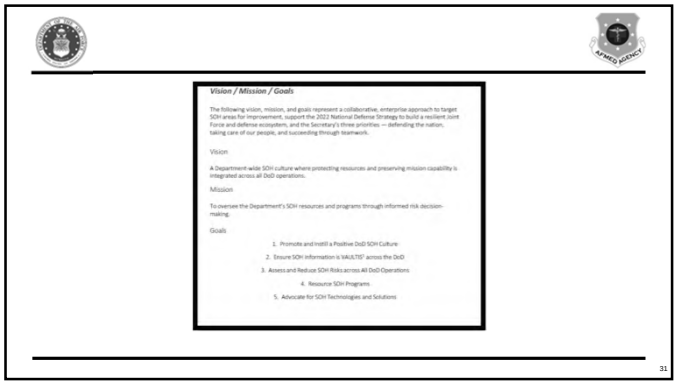

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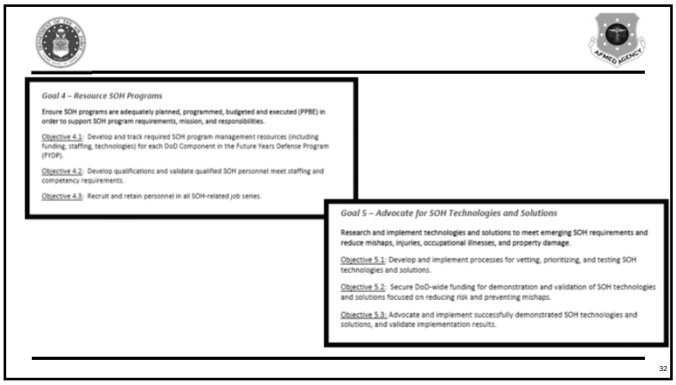

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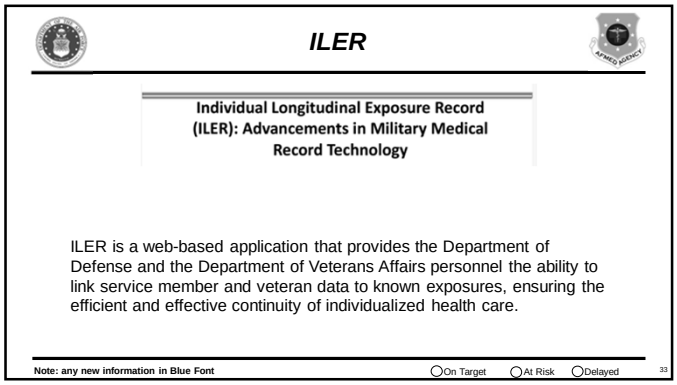

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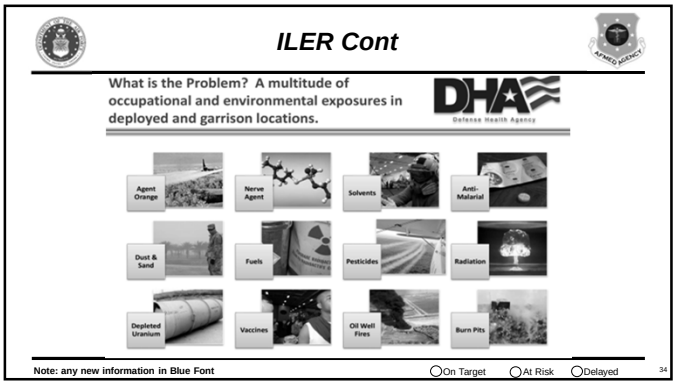

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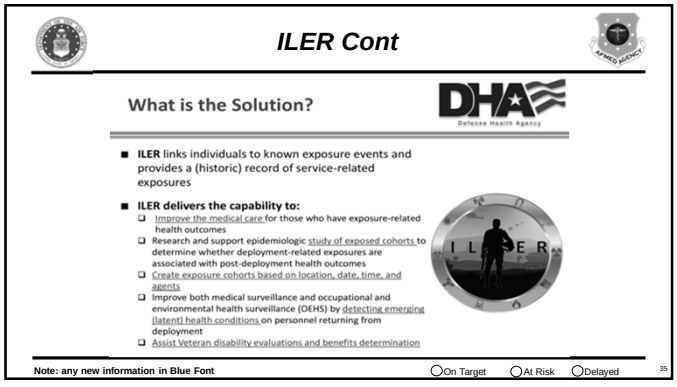

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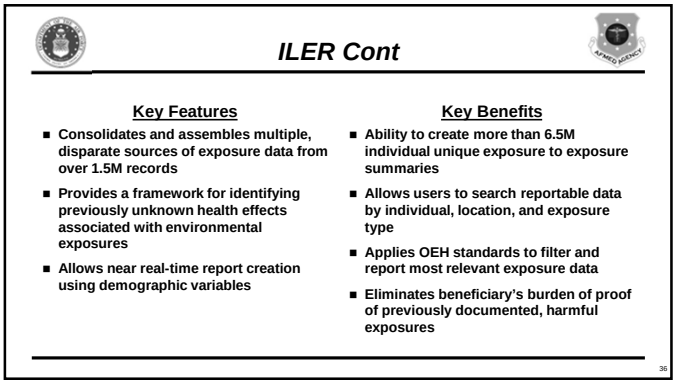

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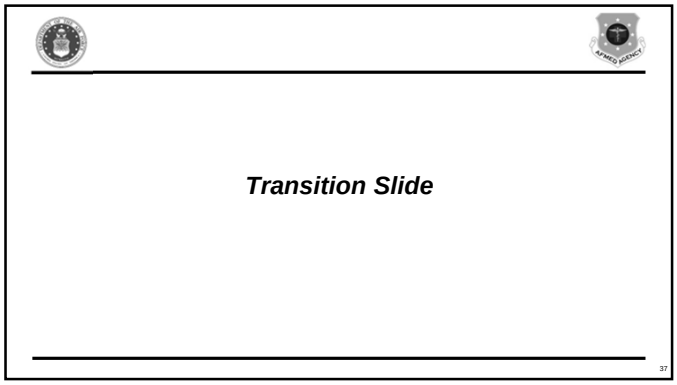

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