

*The following excerpts are taken from a “non classified” (non secret) US air-force report in 1996. They might give an idea of a “classified” (secret) report might look like today... Even the tone of this report is quite revealing – highlights are the nonchalant attitude of tacit assumption of global predominance and the somehow candid admission that, if needed, a signed international treaty might not be respected. But what strikes maybe most is the choice of the verb “owning” in the title - it's not modifying, influencing, changing or making the weather, no it's “owning”. The expression “Owning the weather” most probably stems from the military jargon “owning the airspace”, an expression which indicates a situation when the air-force of a military force has supremacy in the air space of the combat area. Using this term denotes the clear intention to extend the supremacy in the air space – a supremacy the US-forces from the times of world war II always have had – to the sphere of weather, a step towards supremacy in “outer space”.*

### “Owning the Weather in 2025”

In 2025, US aerospace forces can “own the weather” by capitalizing on emerging technologies and focusing development of those technologies to war-fighting applications. Such a capability offers the war fighter tools to shape the battle-space in ways never before possible. It provides opportunities to impact operations across the full spectrum of conflict and is pertinent to all possible futures.

A high-risk, high-reward endeavor, weather-modification offers (...) tremendous military capabilities from enhancing friendly operations or disrupting those of the enemy via small-scale tailoring of natural weather patterns to complete dominance of global communications and counterspace control, weather-modification offers the war fighter a wide-range of possible options to defeat or coerce an adversary.

Current technologies that will mature over the next 30 years will offer anyone who has the necessary resources the ability to modify weather patterns and their corresponding effects, at least on the local scale.

Current demographic, economic, and environmental trends will create global stresses that provide the impetus necessary for many countries or groups to turn this weather-modification ability into a capability.

In the United States, weather-modification will likely become a part of national security policy with both domestic and international applications. Our government will pursue such a policy, depending on its interests, at various levels.

Appropriate application of weather-modification can provide battlespace dominance to a degree never before imagined. In the future, such operations will enhance air and space superiority and provide new options for battlespace shaping and battlespace awareness. “The technology is there, waiting for us to pull it all together;” in 2025 we can “Own the Weather.”

By 2015, advances in computational capability, modeling techniques, and atmospheric information tracking will produce a highly accurate and reliable weather prediction capability, validated against real-world weather. In the following decade, population densities put pressure on the worldwide availability and cost of food and usable water. Massive life and property losses associated with natural weather disasters become increasingly unacceptable. These pressures prompt governments and/or other organizations who are able to capitalize on the technological advances of the previous 20 years to pursue a highly accurate and reasonably precise weather-modification capability.

By 2025, the world, or parts of it, are able to shape local weather patterns by influencing the factors that affect climate, precipitation, storms and their effects, fog, and near space. These highly accurate and reasonably precise civil applications of weather-modification technology have obvious military implications.

In the broadest sense, weather-modification can be divided into two major categories: suppression and intensification of weather patterns. In extreme cases, it might involve the creation of completely new weather patterns, attenuation or control of severe storms, or even alteration of global climate on a far-reaching and/or long-lasting scale. In the mildest and least controversial cases it may consist of inducing or suppressing precipitation, clouds, or fog for short times over a small-scale region.

Extreme and controversial examples of weather modification—creation of made-to-order weather, large-scale climate modification, creation and/or control (or “steering”) of severe storms, etc.—were researched as part of this study but receive only brief mention here because, in the authors’ judgment, the technical obstacles preventing their application appear insurmountable within 30 years.<sup>12</sup> If this were not the case, such applications would have been included in this report as potential military options, despite their controversial and potentially malevolent nature and their inconsistency with standing UN agreements to which the US is a signatory.

One major advantage of using simulated weather to achieve a desired effect is that unlike other approaches, it makes what are otherwise the results of deliberate actions appear to be the consequences of natural weather phenomena. In addition, it is potentially relatively inexpensive to do.

The lessons of history indicate a real weather-modification capability will eventually exist despite the risk. The drive exists. People have always wanted to control the weather and their desire will compel them to collectively and continuously pursue their goal. The motivation exists. The potential benefits and power are extremely lucrative and alluring for those who have the resources to develop it. This combination of drive, motivation, and resources will eventually produce the technology.

History also teaches that we cannot afford to be without a weather-modification capability once the technology is developed and used by others.

Even if we have no intention of using it, others will. To call upon the atomic weapon analogy again, we need to be able to deter or counter their capability with our own.

(full text on <http://csat.au.af.mil/2025/volume3/vol3ch15.pdf> )