

# Air Force Academy: Drago VI Receives Second Lieutenant Ranks

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The ceremony for the conferment of Second Lieutenant ranks to **81 Aspirants of the Drago VI Course** took place on Friday, December 12, at the Officers' Club of the **Air Force Academy of Pozzuoli**. The event marked the culmination of an intense and challenging educational and professional journey, characterized by dedication, a spirit of sacrifice, and a profound sense of duty.

The ceremony was attended by the Head of the General Liaison Office of Defense for the National Cybersecurity Agency, **Air Division General Enrico Degni, Patron of the Drago IV Course**, whose authoritative presence underscored the value of continuity in the principles, traditions, and values of the Air Force across the different generations of the Drago Courses.

In his speech, the Head of the Drago VI Course expressed heartfelt thanks to General Degni for attending the ceremony, along with the other Patrons of the Drago Courses, recounting the main milestones experienced at the Academy. A period marked by daily challenges, overcome

thanks to the esprit de corps, cohesion, and a strong sense of belonging, foundational elements in the training of the Blue Force Officers.



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## The Patron's Speech and the Values of Leadership

During the ceremony, General Enrico Degni addressed the attendees of the Drago VI Course, also conveying greetings from General S.A. Basilio Cottone, Patron of the Drago II Course, General Vincenzo Camporini, Patron of the Drago III Course, and Lieutenant Colonel Luca Guasti, Patron of the Drago V Course, who were unable to attend but remain constantly close to the achievements of the sixth generation of the Drago Courses.

Congratulating the new Second Lieutenants on reaching this first significant milestone in their military careers, General Degni emphasized that the new rank entails greater responsibilities and authority, particularly towards younger attendees. «**Rank and authority are not enough – he stressed – one also needs to build authority, which must be developed day by day. Example, consistency, and the ability to lead others are fundamental tools for preparing for future responsibilities in an increasingly complex international context** ».

The General also urged the young Officers to be agents of change, to adopt an innovative approach, and to face challenges with courage and responsibility, reminding them of the importance of seizing every professional and human opportunity, «flying high, with the claw and the wing», as the motto of the Drago Courses goes.



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## The Training of Pilots and Navigators of the Air Force

The conferment of Second Lieutenant ranks marks the beginning of a new phase in the professional journey for the young Officers, many of whom are moving towards specialization in the Navigating roles, such as pilots and navigators, the operational core of the Air Force. The training received at the Academy indeed forms the essential foundation upon which subsequent training, technical, and operational phases are built.

During the academic period, attendees acquire a solid and multidisciplinary preparation, integrating university studies with military training, physical activity, and command education. For future pilots and navigators, this path aims to develop not only high technical-scientific skills but also decision-making abilities, stress resistance, leadership, and full awareness of the operational role they will be called to perform.

Aeronautical training places particular emphasis on flight safety, knowledge of weapon systems and modern operational scenarios, as well as the ability to operate in joint and international contexts. Future pilots are prepared to undergo progressive training that will lead them to achieve flight qualifications on the various assets of the Blue Force, while navigators develop fundamental skills in mission management, planning, and coordination of operational activities.

With this milestone, the new Second Lieutenants of the Drago VI Course are thus preparing to face the subsequent phases of their training and professional journey, carrying with them the spirit, discipline, and values learned at the Academy. Values that continue to represent the

foundation of the daily actions of the men and women of the Air Force, called to serve the country in a constantly evolving global scenario.

The Air Force Academy, under the command of the Air Force Schools Command/3rd Air Region, is a military higher education institution with a university character, responsible for the recruitment and training of young people aspiring to become Officers of the Air Force. Through attendance at Regular Courses, it is possible to achieve the appointment of Second Lieutenant in Permanent Active Service in the Navigating roles (pilots), Regular of the Arms, Aeronautical Engineering, Aeronautical Commissariat Corps, and Aeronautical Health Corps. The Institute also conducts courses for Complementary and Fixed-Term Pilot Officer Cadets, for directly appointed Second Lieutenants, as well as aeronautical specialist courses aimed at foreign personnel and other Armed Forces.

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