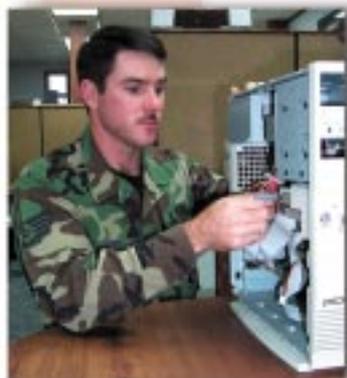


# *intercom*

June 2000



## *People First!*

# intercom

Volume 41, No. 6

*Commander,  
Air Force Communications  
and Information Center*  
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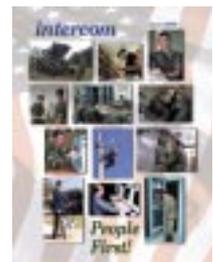
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Cover by Tech. Sgt. Michael Leonard



Lt. Gen. John L.  
"Jack" Woodward Jr.

"We, as supervisors, are entrusted with America's treasure, her sons and daughters.

Protecting our intellectual capital by ensuring comm warriors, both military and civilian, are adequately prepared for the job is a part of the retention issue. Operationalizing and Professionalizing the Network is a major leap toward giving the comm warrior a sense of contribution and mission, and bolsters combat capabilities of the EAF/AEF."

**Lt. Gen. John L. "Jack" Woodward Jr.**  
Commander, Air Force Communications and Information Center

## Active Duty Service Commitment



Effective June 1, all active-duty service commitments are outlined in a two-chart instruction in "plain" English. The new instruction applies to people who sign commitments after that date.

Graphic by Staff Sgt. Cheryl Toner

## Air Force streamlines ADSC program

WASHINGTON (AFPN) — In response to concerns from the field, Air Force leaders have simplified and standardized the active duty service commitment policy, making it less cumbersome and easier to understand.

Secretary of the Air Force F. Whitten Peters and Air Force chief of staff Gen. Michael E. Ryan approved the new ADSC plan.

"The new ADSC Air Force instruction and tables are simple and easy to understand," Peters said. "But, more importantly, they are designed to be fair to the individual service member. This is simply the right thing to do. Nothing can be more devastating in my mind than not treating people fairly."

The revision comes after a month-long review by an integrated process team appointed by the secretary and chief to

fix the ADSC problems. Led by Lt. Gen. Roger DeKok, deputy chief of staff for Plans and Programs, the team was tasked to come up with a plan to simplify and standardize ADSCs.

"Our guidance to the IPT was simple," Ryan said. "Create an easily understood program that is fair and equitable to the Air Force and its members."

During review of the existing program, the team found the rules and tables governing ADSCs to be complex and ambiguous, often contributing to incorrect documentation. The new program lets airmen plan their careers, while allowing the Air Force to manage force requirements.

"We took the ADSC AFI from 15 tables and 189 rules down to only two tables and

See ADSC Page 5

# Ryan targets retention, people programs

By Master Sgt.  
Kenneth Fidler

*U.S. Air Forces in Europe  
News Service*

**RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany (AFPN)** — Air Force chief of staff Gen. Michael E. Ryan says retention is what the Air Force is all about these days, and current budget proposals and people programs reflect its commitment to erasing the effects of a decade of downsizing.

“I believe it in my heart,” he said during a visit here recently. “It is people who make the U.S. Air Force a wonderful, great organization and the strongest Air Force in the world. That’s why we have pushed so hard for increased pay, additional bonuses and to turn around the retirement system.

“It’s why we work on BAH (basic allowance for housing) increases and why we’re currently working on the medical system. These are people issues. For us, retention is the issue.

“All of that wonderful equipment out there is simply machinery if we don’t have the best people in the world to operate it.”

Since 1986, the Department of Defense has undergone sweeping cuts in budget and people, especially after 1990 when the Berlin Wall crumbled and the Cold War ended. The Air Force alone has decreased by 40 percent, Ryan said.

In 1986, the Air Force had more than 600,000 active duty people. In 1999, that number topped out at just over 350,000. The 1986 budget was just about \$120 billion; last year it was about \$65 billion. For fiscal 2001, the proposed budget request for the Air Force is \$71.2 billion.

“This year was the first year we’ve had an increase in defense spending, in particular, Air Force spending, in the past 14 years,” Ryan said. “We have started back up the road to what I think will be a much healthier force for the future.”

For its total housing construction program, the Air Force is allocating \$224 million. This includes new construction funds totaling \$37 million to build 272 units and revitalize another 278 units.



*Photo by Tech. Sgt. Scott Wagers*

**Wideband maintenance technicians, 50th Communications Squadron, review technical orders for one of the many satellite dishes used for voice and data communications at Schriever AFB, Colo.**

In its recruiting and retention programs, the Air Force continues its emphasis on combating downward trends. For fiscal 2001, \$809 million is allotted for recruiting and retention, of which \$354 million is allotted for recruiting programs, an increase of \$42 million from FY ‘00. The money will go toward expanded re-enlistment bonuses, increased promotion rates, implementation of the Expeditionary Aerospace Force, additional recruiters and advertising.

Looking back 10 years, Ryan said that after the Berlin Wall came down, “it was supposed to be a time ... when we were going to have some kind of a strategic pause. There was no pause for our folks. We continued to run an ops tempo that was very high. What we in the Air Force needed to do was acknowledge that.”

For example, in the European theater of operations, U.S. Air Forces in Europe has transitioned from a fight-in-place fighter force ready for a large-scale conflict, to a mobile and deployable mixed force that can operate simultaneously in multiple locations. In 1990, USAFE had more than 25 bases in 12 countries. Now, it has six main operating bases in four countries.

Since the end of the Cold War, the Air Force’s role has expanded from tasks associated with warfighting to a mission that includes supporting humanitarian and

See **PEOPLE** next page

## ADSC

From Page 3

34 rules,” DeKok said. “Our primary premise was simplicity.

“The ADSC program, however, should also not nickel-and-dime our troops for service owed, but rather be a tool that shows a mutual faith and trust for our service to our country,” he added. “The new program puts the trust back where it belongs — in our people.”

The major changes hit three primary areas: advanced flying training, education and training, and promotions.

Changes to flying training include standardized pilot commitments of 10 years — regardless of weapon system or major command — and eliminating ADSCs for in-unit training.

Additionally, 95 percent of education and training ADSCs were eliminated for courses under 20 weeks. This involved approximately 5,600 courses. ADSCs will also move to a standardized three years for all courses longer than 20 weeks. This includes Air Force Institute of Technology master’s degree programs. AFIT doctorate programs will stabilize at a five-year commitment, and ADSCs will be eliminated for Squadron Officer School.

Federal statutes govern

time-in-grade retirement requirements for senior officers. Given these statutory mandates for officer retirements, the previous two-year ADSC associated with promotions for major through colonel was not needed and has been eliminated.

Given the absence of comparable statutory restrictions on enlisted time-in-grade retirement requirements, and Defense Department regulatory requirements that senior noncommissioned officer promotions carry an ADSC, the two year ADSC remains for promotions to E-7, E-8 and E-9.

Air Force members will maintain their current ADSCs — as reflected on the signed Air Force Form 63 in their personnel file. The new AFI went into effect June 1. Now, when airmen sign new ADSC commitments, they fall under the new rules. This primarily occurs as people undergo a permanent change of station or attend extensive training.

For those who feel an injustice has been done in the past or in the way the new rules are being implemented, the Air Force Personnel Center commander has been given wide latitude to grant relief.

For more on ADSC, visit the AFPC Web site at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>



Photo by Master Sgt. Keith Reed

**Army soldiers watch as Staff Sgt. Ken Cox and Airman 1st Class Rusty Nobles rig a parachute to a 105mm Howitzer aboard a C-130 from the 37th AS, Ramstein AB, Germany, for NATO’s Ardent Ground 2000.**

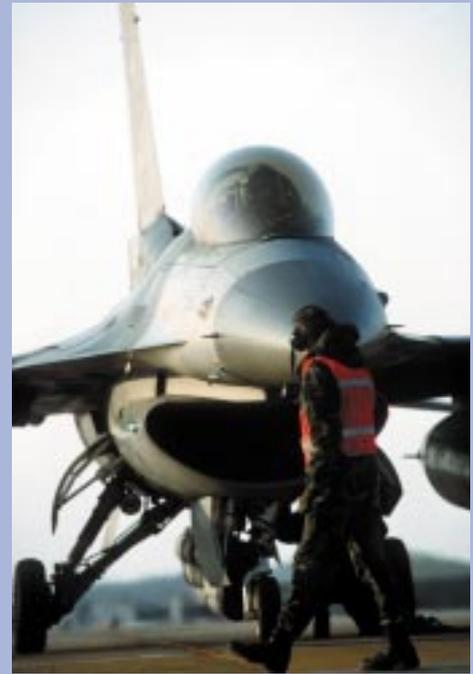


Photo by Tech. Sgt. John K. McDowell

**The Air Force has transitioned from a fight-in-place fighter force ready for a large-scale conflict to a mobile and deployable mixed force that can operate simultaneously in multiple locations.**

## PEOPLE

From previous page

peacekeeping operations.

The Air Force objective now is to retain people and make sure the service is equipped and staffed properly to take on the expeditionary missions Ryan expects will continue for quite some time.

In 1999, the Air Force started reorganizing into 10 Aerospace Expeditionary Forces, which form a rotational structure designed to bring greater stability and cut at-home and deployed workloads.

This comes after the Department of Defense fought for changes such as a 4.8 percent pay raise this year, increased housing allowances to make up for out-of-pocket housing costs and bringing back the 50 percent retirement plan.

“For us, retention is the issue,” the general said. “We have wonderful, wonderful people in the Air Force, and we want to keep them. The concentration of our efforts to make sure their quality of life and their quality of service is the highest we can make it will allow us to retain these people and continue having great success in the future.”

# Changes streamline enlisted upgrade training

**SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, ILL. (AFPN)** — Changes to the enlisted training process have shortened time requirements for completing 7-level upgrade training and reduced the number of people in training.

The changes, which include eliminating the 12-month waiting period required before trainees could attend advanced courses and reducing overall minimum training time from 18 to 12 months, are a result of Air Force leadership's decision at Corona Top '99 to reevaluate the training process.

"These changes are right on target," said Master Sgt. Keith Melton, Air Mobility Command training manager. "Our Air Force leadership recognized that the original minimum training times established under 'Year of Training' were often excessive. The reductions in minimum training times will enable (major commands) to better manage their enlisted upgrades and skill level manning. That translates into more trained personnel to meet mission requirements."

Since Corona Top '99, AMC initiatives have focused on management procedures. The command developed a standard metric to monitor upgrade training time, mandated use of the on-the-job training roster, and now requires unit commander evaluations of trainees to determine potential training problems. Supervisors and trainers are directed to document training milestones to improve system updates and avoid unnecessary delays in upgrade actions. Finally, the AMC commander set a goal to eliminate no-shows at the advanced 7-level course. This has shortened upgrade training times and reduced the number of AMC people in upgrade training.

Two years ago, during field visits, the 15th Air Force commander was presented with concerns that the troops were becoming frustrated with a training system that was time- rather than performance-based.

At that time, a technician in 7-level upgrade training had to complete all 7-level core tasks, all duty position training, a mandatory career development course, spend 18 months in training and obtain a supervisor upgrade recommendation. Additionally, trainees had to complete a formal, Air Force specialty-specific advanced training course.

The trainee had to wait a minimum of 12 months before being eligible to attend the advanced course. Many trainees felt the minimum upgrade training requirements were too restrictive and did not provide an incentive for sharp airmen to increase their knowledge and proficiency as quickly as their abilities would allow.

"Finding the right balance between training time and performance is the challenge," said Col. Richard Fitzhugh, AMC's director of personnel. "Time alone may



*Photo by Master Sgt. Val Gempis*

**Senior Airman John T. Crisostomo, 374th CS telephone systems maintenance technician, monitors a phone line on a line equipment number block to ensure the circuit is working properly during routine maintenance at Yokota AB, Japan.**

not be the best qualifier. Quality and quantity of training accompanied with individual initiative and demonstrated performance are also important."

Further research found management processes within the units were also causing delays in training. Allocated training slots went unfilled as unit commanders canceled attendance citing operational necessity; some individuals failed to meet the minimum requirements for attendance at 7-level school; and still others weren't notified of their selection due to breakdowns in communications at the base level. Additionally, some were not taking advantage of training tools such as on-the-job training rosters to monitor their trainees' status.

"Our research indicates that in AMC alone, several thousand 5- and 7-level technicians could have been upgraded in fiscal 1999, with increased leadership attention on training management at the unit level," Fitzhugh said.

"We have a way to go, but are making steady progress in the right direction," Fitzhugh said. "Leadership at all levels is tuned to improving training efficiency. That is our aim."

Air Education and Training Command is reviewing 7-level school data to determine the correct mix of class size, course scheduling, and instructor billets to reduce the amount of time trainees must wait for formal training. Air Force leaders at all levels have also been charged with minimizing unit-controlled errors, which contribute to unfilled class seats.

# Air Force: An extreme lifestyle

By Maj. Susan E. Kolmer  
*Air Force Reserve*

*(Editor's Note: This article was developed from one of Lt. Gen. Harry Raduege's briefings.)*

These days, extreme sports are it. Adventurous people rappel, climb mountains, jump out of airplanes and go bungee-jumping over gorges. The goal is neither comfort nor ease, but rather the desire to challenge one's self to the limit, to meet and overcome almost anything.

Lt. Gen. Harry Raduege knows about extreme lifestyles, but in a different sense. With 30 years in the Air Force, he has experienced much of what the Air Force has to offer and now seeks to pass on some of that sense of adventure to others. Having gotten his degree in mathematics (many of us would consider that extreme), Raduege is fond of expressing life's truths as mathematical formulas. In this case:  $R=MC+PC$ .

In this formula, "R" equals retention, "MC" is monetary compensation, and "PC" stands for psychological compensation. While the R and MC portions of the equation speak for themselves, it's the psychological, or intangible, aspect of military service that bears further examination, Raduege said.

Tied up in the intangible experiences of being career military are reassurances such as the nearly non-existent possibility of "pink slips," the broad experiences of traveling the world, the immense satisfaction of leading edge technology, overcoming the many challenges presented by military life and deployments, and the gratification Air Force personnel enjoy from holding positions of extreme responsibility at early ages.

Second Lt. Juanita Gonzalez, an acting flight commander who has heard Raduege expound upon this formula, echoes his sentiments, "Where else at such a young age could I get such good experience, learn so much and be with such great people? I couldn't do this in the civilian world."

One aspect of psychological compensation Raduege emphasizes is the higher calling we have in the military. He illustrates this by quoting from a letter his friend, Vice Adm. Lyle Bien, wrote when requesting his

retirement from the Navy. Usually such requests are done with a form, but Lyle handled it differently. He wrote, "Throughout my 31 years as a sailor, I thought some of this day [retirement], but only sparingly and always in a way that avoided the certainty of it. Now that it is upon me, I'm finding the pain to be bearable, but far greater than I ever imagined. It all has surprisingly little to do with the 'What will I do?' question. Rather, it has everything to do with 'How will I live without them?'" Later he thanks the Chief of Naval Operations for "...the privilege to serve."

Indeed, many people voice similar feelings. Second Lt. Angela Herron speaks of the camaraderie found in the Air Force, especially overseas where she notes it is much greater. Another aspect of the intangibles for

Herron is, "I appreciate the Air Force history and traditions. We need to communicate them more to our younger troops."

More powerful than talk is action. Capt. Chad Raduege, Raduege's son, notes that he enjoys being part of history. "You get to go all around the world and actually be part of events in the news. Right from the start, you get a job which gives you great experience; we get that at a global level. Coupled with all the leadership opportunities, it [the Air Force] is a great place to be."

In light of many of today's careers, a career in

the Air Force is extreme. There are extreme opportunities to travel, lead, command and shoulder great responsibility at an extremely early point in your career, to be a vital part of events which will go down in history, to meet the extreme challenge of being on the front line and subduing leading edge technology, and to have the extreme satisfaction of serving more than yourself.

When Raduege concludes his remarks on the  $R=MC+PC$  formula, he likes to share what his son told him when he decided to pursue a commission. "Dad never pushed the military on me. So when I told him I wanted to join, he asked me, 'Why are you really coming in?' I told him, 'I've been around your friends. They've come to dinner and I've seen what they're like. I want friends who are just like them.'"

In other words, extremely good friends are perhaps the best benefit of the extreme lifestyle we call an Air Force career.



**(Then) Maj. Gen. Harry D. Raduege commissions his son Chad.**

# CMSAF speaks on retention rates, recruiting efforts

By Staff Sgt. Stuart Camp

*Aeronautical Systems Center Public Affairs*

**WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, Ohio (AFPN)** — Air Force leaders continue to wrestle with enlisted retention rates and how those numbers drive recruiting efforts.

Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force Jim Finch pointed out these two issues have a larger effect on the enlisted corps, with their ripples increasing promotion rates and putting more people into recruiting offices.

“The real issue is do we have enough people to do what needs to be done for the Air Force,” he said March 25, after he spoke to the Wright-Patterson Airman Leadership School class.

“It is a true statement we were under our end strength last year, but we’ve been under end strength for a number of years,” Finch said. “Our retention wasn’t as good as we wanted it to be, or projected it to be.”

The desired manning, Finch explained, looks for a little more than half the people to stay past their first term, about three-quarters to stay in past their second term, and virtually everybody to stay in after that. According to statistics from January and February, the Air Force reported first- and second-term reenlistment rates at 52 percent and 70 percent, respectively. These are higher than 1999 numbers for the same months, but still below the Air Force’s goal of 55 and 75 percent, respectively.

“The bigger issue is how do you keep the people to get the job done,” the 13th chief master sergeant of the Air Force said.

“When you don’t have enough people, you further stress the existing force to do the mission. We’ve got to find a way to balance that out.”

Air Force officials are taking measures to combat lower-than-historical retention rates, according to Finch.

“We’re actually working to increase the number of NCOs we have in the Air Force over the next few years,” Finch said.

“We’re going to shift the percentage of NCOs in the Air Force — raise it to about 56 percent (up from 48 percent last year).

We’re going to (increase) the number of mid-level NCOs, and as we do that, promotion rates will increase.”

The chief explained that to sustain the enlisted corps for the long-term, given the retention projections and

other factors, requires promotion rates be 16 percent to staff sergeant, 11 percent to technical sergeant, 19 percent to master sergeant, 6 percent to senior master sergeant and 13 percent to chief.

“It takes us seven and a half years to grow a staff sergeant — that’s excessively long compared to other services,” Finch said.

“The Army promotes to E-5 in about 4.2 years. We have retention rates higher than the other services, so it slows promotion down. That 56 percent will drive down the average pin-on time for promotion to staff sergeant to about six years.”

Not meeting the retention goals at the Air Force level causes the end-strength shortages and increases recruiting demands.

The 338th Recruiting Squadron, headquartered at Wright-Patterson, shares the recruiting burden with 28 other squadrons across the nation. The 338th RCS has just 46 recruiters covering more than 51,250 square miles of territory spread across Ohio, West Virginia and northern Kentucky.

Monthly recruiting goals are around 90 people a month, according to Lt. Col. Roger Foley, 338th RCS commander. His squadron hasn’t met all its goals.

“We’ve been outmanned 13 to 1 by other services in the local area,” Foley said. One Air Force recruiter is covering the same area as, typically, six from the Army, four or five Navy recruiters and a few Marines.

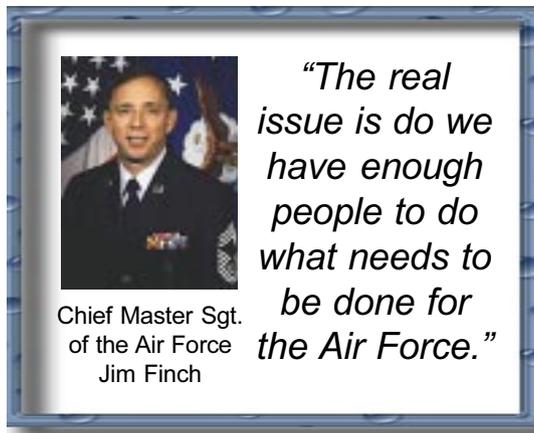
“We’ve been doing it effectively, but it’s been a strain,” he said.

Air Force senior leaders are addressing the strains on local recruiters by managing the overall manning situation.

“When you have low end strength you have to recruit extra people to offset the losses in retention,” Finch said. “Although we recruited more people in 1999 than in 1998, we still fell 1,700 people short. When retention’s down, we have to raise the bar — up to 34,000 (non-prior service) people — in 2000. Unfortunately, it does not look like we’re on the right track to get all the people we’d like to recruit this year.”

Air Force officials are putting more recruiters on the street, Finch said. The chief is asking supervisors and commanders to encourage their best and brightest people to become recruiters.

“I think a lot of people will step up and do the job that they’re asked to do,” Finch said.



Chief Master Sgt.  
of the Air Force  
Jim Finch

# Communicators at heart of EAF efforts to improve lives of airmen

By Capt. Gary Forsberg  
*Deployment Concepts  
Branch, Air Combat  
Command*

**LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va.** — To meet today's demands on aerospace forces, the Air Force must be able to respond rapidly, be trained, capable, lean and agile, and structured appropriately. However, we are constrained by fiscal limitations, political realities, high operations tempo, quality of life needs, and readiness challenges. To accomplish these needs, the Air Force is embracing the Expeditionary Aerospace Force concept.

With the implementation of EAF we raise the question, "How do we take care of our most important asset, our people?" EAF provides something we couldn't expect in an unpredictable world order—deployment predictability. The benefits of reduced time away from home and greater deployment predictability enable our airmen to plan ahead for family support and quality time with their loved ones.

Restructuring the whole Air Force is not likely, since that means moving units, personnel, or creating "super bases." To deliver a total force package to combatant commanders, we need to accomplish this restructuring virtually. This is where the communicator becomes the heart of making EAF work.

As communicators, we will concentrate on equipping units with the right tools, training and people to meet all communications needs for both the forward base and the virtually linked support systems needed for the forward units. The communications squadron will now be assisting the operators and other base units in order to hold this "Virtual Unit" together.

To fulfill the needs, all communicators will act more like combat communicators—quick, professional and confident in deployed operations... "everybody" on mobility, trained and ready. This new attitude and direction for all of our communications comes with equipment to accomplish this movement. Theater Deployable Communications fits this expeditionary role better than ever. It reduces the supporting force size (light and lean), provides more capability and flexibility (agile),



Air Force Chief  
of Staff Gen.  
Michael E. Ryan

*"Every time we roll over AEFs, we learn ways to better prepare and take care of our people."*

and is designed around providing a total communications capability without draining our combat communications assets. It shifts the focus of our combat communications squadrons to robusting the existing deployed Aerospace Expeditionary Force or Aerospace Expeditionary Wing, as deployed base populations grow.

The overall impact to our communicators is fewer deployed days and a stable schedule. Although the deployment requirements for

the normal communications squadron will increase, everyone will now be putting in their share of time.

At the hub of the EAF is the spawn of the AEF Center at Langley AFB, Va. It serves as a centralized, cross-functional, total force team designed to facilitate EAF operations. It assists in the sourcing of AEF assets, identifying and refining training requirements, monitoring readiness, and guiding deployment and redeployment planning.

To aid airmen in deployments, the AEF Center, along with the ACC Way Division, have developed the EAF On-line web site (<http://aefcenter.acc.af.mil/eafonline/>). As one of the virtual unit links, this site is designed to provide the deploying airman all of the information and training requirements needed prior to and during their deployments. Chief Master Sgt. Larry Watlington, 2E functional manager for Air Combat Command, says, "EAF on-line provides more visibility on training resources, enabling better training for our troops before they deploy and identifying training requirements from the AORs." Eventually this site will grow to benefit commanders as well. In the future, the site will be capable of tracking personnel and unit readiness status. It will give the commander a database of assigned people to help manage individual OPTEMP.

As a final thought, under the EAF construct, "responding" is the role of the Air Force through AEFs, and communicators make lighter-leaner AEFs happen. Our mindset should be focused toward this. We create the virtual link for the AEF unit through in-garrison communications and processes and deploying forces to accomplish the comm mission in the theater.

# Comm-Electronics Maintenance: Technology drives scope, range of activities

By Chief Master Sgt.  
Paul Karch  
HQ Air Force

"Maintenance ain't what it used to be" is the refrain I still hear as I listen to communications-electronics maintenance technicians and senior communicators around today's Air Force. You know what? They're still right on target!

Technology has changed the scope and range of our maintenance activities. We're quickly transitioning from removing capacitors and resistors from single-layer circuit boards to troubleshooting software and hardware bugs in statistical multiplexers, or integrating and installing complex communications systems. A perfect example is the overnight transition in the secure communications business from traditional maintenance to the integration of communications signals, protocols, timing and end-to-end systems troubleshooting.

Some of our communications-electronics systems have not been replaced in several decades and consequently many of our 2Es are still trying to keep old legacy systems operating by troubleshooting to the



component level, while they simultaneously chase the information technology tornado.

The entire communications and information community is rapidly discovering the intent of effective maintenance management processes, as outlined in AFI 21-116, and applying them to the world of networks. Our 2Es are developing a detailed understanding of the networks and computers essential to today's upgraded C2 mission systems.

To ensure a solid understanding of networks, we've injected computer and network principles into all of our 3-level schools. We've also transitioned the existing Electronics Principles course into a basic computers electronics and network course, and will bring it on line Oct. 1.

While we're gearing up our AETC schoolhouses, all 2Es must make a concerted effort to learn as much about networks and computers as possible, and to step up to the responsibility of sustaining the network infrastructure. SC leadership is out in front to make sure we're using the skills of all our people as

we operationalize the network. The first step is already being taken by your Air Force career field managers and their executive agents at AFCA, who've created an effective migration strategy that will reshape our community and give us the proper mix of skills required to accomplish the Air Force mission. If you want more information on these initiatives, go to our 2E web page at <http://www.il.hq.af.mil/ilm/ilmm/cemaint/index.html>.

I see endless possibilities for communications and information technicians in the Air Force of the 21st century, but we have to break out of traditional stovepipe AFSC/skill sets and be proactive about our future and the needs of the Air Force.

Our 2E maintainers bring a plethora of skills to the table, such as maintenance discipline, electronic knowledge, integration skills and uncanny troubleshooting ability, to name just a few. It's up to you to make sure the Air Force is able to sustain our forward deployed communications and information systems anywhere in the world. Keep those communications systems 5/5.

**Why I stay ...**

**Staff Sgt.  
Jettie  
Beavers**



**Information  
Management  
Directorate  
HQ Air Force  
Space Command  
Peterson AFB, Colo.**

"I like the job security, the educational benefits and the high level of responsibility that I'm given."

# Comm-Computer Systems: Field balances needs of mission, people

By Chief Master Sgt. Leroy Mills and Senior Master Sgt. Traci Washington  
*Comm-Computer Systems HQ Air Force Communications and Information Center*

Amid the continued explosion of information technology, the Communications-Computer Systems career field has encountered many changes over the past year and some outstanding initiatives are on the horizon. One of our career field's greatest challenges is balancing the needs of the mission with our responsibility to our people.

Retention remains our number one priority. Unlike the commercial industry, we must "grow" our IT professionals instead of hiring fully trained personnel. The Selective Reenlistment Bonus program is the primary tool for retaining members in critically manned skills. SRBs are based on the noncommissioned officer and total manning, current and past retention trends, training factors, and Air Staff and major command functional inputs for each Air Force specialty code. Since last year, we've doubled (or maxed out in some cases) SRBs for our most critically manned AFSCs. We were also able to establish zones where none existed before. Our Zone C eligibles (10-14 years) have the highest SRB of any other Zone C Air Force specialty.

The \$45,000 maximum SRB cap was recently raised to \$60,000, allowing some of our folks to put more money directly into their pockets. We understand money is not the only answer to our retention woes, but it's a positive first step. We'll continue to advocate increases while looking to address the manpower, training and operations tempo challenges you face today.

Manpower issues are also extremely high on our priority list. We often hear, "I do need manpower, but why am I receiving so many 3-levels?" Well, simply put, that's all the Air Force has. With some of our E-4, 5-level manning levels in the mid 40 percent range, the only way we can start to address manpower shortages is by increasing the through-put of accessions and retrainees at the schoolhouses. Production of 3C0X1 Computer Operators and 3C2X1 Systems Controllers was doubled this fiscal year and 3C0X1 production for FY '01 will be at maximum capacity (almost 1,900 graduates). Production for 3C1X1 Radio Comm Systems Operators was ramped up last FY, and we will sustain the schoolhouse at that rate until the AFSC gets well. Production for 3C0X2 will be increased by 50 percent for the next two years. Many forces are coming together to bring more faces to the field as quickly as possible, while improving the quality of training.

Future 3-levels will be receiving much better training. In the past year, we have held Utilization and Training Workshops to update and determine new training requirements for all Comm-Computer AFSCs. The

first impacts were to the Comm Operators and Systems Controllers. HQ USAF/SC put \$2.7 million toward modernizing outdated IT equipment, with HQ AETC bringing an additional \$800,000 in computer equipment to all 3CXXX courses.

Your training managers, CDC course developers and instructors, SMEs and MAJCOM functionals worked diligently to make sure new recruits would have the same equipment in the classroom as in the field. The first members of this "new wave" graduated in January and February, with other schoolhouses to follow shortly.

We are implementing funded changes recommended by the other U&TWs. Some of those changes include: 3C1X1 Radio Operators receiving additional network and technology training; 3C0X2 Computer Programmer course being retooled with modern databases and a commercial standard programming language; and 3C3X1 Plans and Implementation specialty training, using modern project management software. What this means to supervisors and commanders is that once these changes are implemented, 3-levels will be able to greatly enhance your unit by being better trained when they arrive.

We have also been busy on other training fronts. Mobile Training Teams will be used again to bring NT/Exchange, Oracle and Unix training to the base level. AF/SC, AFCA, AETC and ESC are modernizing and modularizing all Combat Information Transport System training.

Starting in FY '01, we'll provide more focused training in a shorter period of time. We are partnering with the MAJCOMs to gather information to deliver a funded, structured OJT program to the base level, standardizing initial and mission qualification training. In addition, a central computer-based training site was established in April. The site provides greater access to this highly cost effective method of supplemental training from both .mil or after registration with any ISP. All of these initiatives come at a price, but we consider it imperative to invest in modern training to ensure all Communications and Information professionals maintain their technological edge.

A year ago, I wrote we would face many challenges and decisions. This is still true and it will require flexibility and patience as we look to the future. Though we are experiencing retention lows, manpower shortages and high OPSTEMPO, your efforts continue to allow the Air Force to accomplish its mission 24x7 worldwide.

I hope the efforts discussed above and programs on the scope demonstrate our commitment to address the field's concerns. We will continue searching for solutions to our near-term problems, but folks, the future is looking brighter. Thanks for reading and stay blue!

# Visual Info: Changing with the times

By Chief Master Sgt.  
Aletha Frost

Visual Information Career Field  
Manager, HQ Air Force  
Comm and Info Center

Drafting tables, Leroy sets, T squares, lantern slides, 16mm film, sound on slides, Brownies, Mavicas, A/B rolls, Prostars, Versamats, Arc Lamp projectors, Ozalids, three-quarter-inch U-matic VTP ... Do any of these terms sound familiar? Just under 15 years ago, these were some of the quintessential tools of the trade in the then Audio-Visual, now Visual Information, career field.

Once synonymous with our career field, these terms now seem passe. As digital technology evolves, so do the roles and responsibilities of multimedia technicians. The Air Force and the Communications and Information community are re-engineering and restructuring processes to prepare for the future, and so must the VI/multimedia technician.

While technology does not make you an expert in a given skill set, it enhances your ability to perform those skills. There's a temptation to think, "Technology at my fin-

ger tips means I have mastered a skill set." In reality, it may be that the technology has mastered the person. We in VI must not allow ourselves to become subservient to technology, but rather, to be its master.

As digital technology emerges, so will the roles and responsibilities of multimedia technicians. All three of the VI AFSCs are gearing up to meet this challenge. We have made tremendous strides at the Defense Information School at Fort Meade, Md., to ensure the multimedia technician will be prepared to master the digital world. In an article in the January issue of *Government Video*, entitled "DINFOS Makes the Digital Leap," DINFOS was lauded for its migration from analog to digital video format. New equipment items supporting this effort were eight Avid Media Composers, 44 Xpresses, two Avid News cutters and an Avid Airplay. This generation of equipment makes possible the most advanced technical training for the Video Production Documentation AFSC (3V0X3) course.

The VI Graphics AFSC 3V0X1 course is in total review. Graphics is not what it used to be. PowerPoint has enabled even the novice to think like a pro, but there is more to graphics than just building slides. Graphics technicians as visual designers, have moved away from the drafting table to computers. In a 1993 merger of AFSCs, they became presentation, video teleconference and conference room facilitators. Many are being tasked to create animated products for interactive courseware, virtual digital imagery, web pages, interactive CD-ROMs and 3-D designs for stand-alone displays, as well as camera ready art for television. They have also become well versed in copyright laws.

To ensure the next generation of graphics technicians is ready to meet the challenge, we have asked DINFOS to move from Mac-based training tools to PC-based platforms. We're in the process of procuring

multimedia workstations for each base VI/multimedia center. Needless to say, the 3V0XX 13-week course is being completely revamped. Our final review of the course curriculum was in April, and has set the course for the next wave of digital technology.

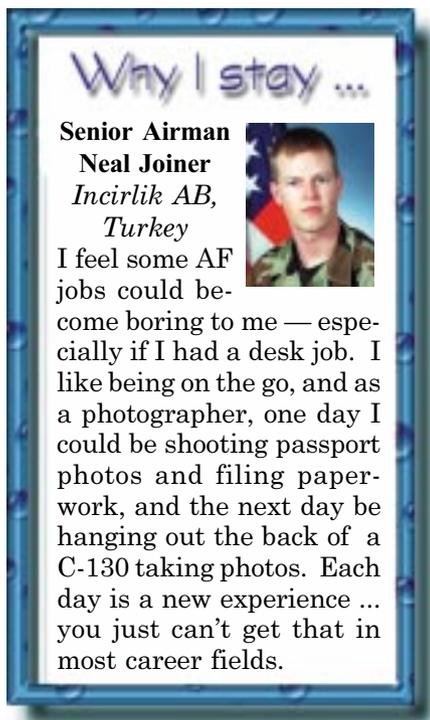
When we speak of digital technology, most people automatically think of photography. Photography was the first of the multimedia skills to step up to the use of digital technology. Currently, every base VI service center has some digital capability, depending on mission requirements. Again, this technology has lulled many people into believing that anyone can take a picture, but ask yourself: Did the photo tell a story? Did it capture important detail? Did it help get bombs on target? These questions are crucial in today's society, when someone asks for the photo as proof.

The Basic Still Photography course, which qualifies trainees for the 3V0X2 AFSC, has made leaps and bounds in revamping its curriculum. We've shortened it from 19 to 14 weeks, and separated the Precision Photographic Maintenance Quality Control training from Basic Still Photography. This merger had created a high failure rate in the CDCs, because many bases had neither the equipment for PPMQC training, nor any requirement to have it. These courses are now taught independently, and PPMQC is only required for personnel assigned to bases that need to perform this task.

Yes, VI is definitely changing, and we're not just repackaging the old way of doing business as new goods. We're at the door of tremendous opportunity, and as it opens, we must step in, step up and be ready to meet new challenges.

In the next decade, terms and acronyms like CD-ROM, DVD, MPEG1, MPEG2, HDTV, Clip Mail Pro, AVI files, CRT, MIDI, etc., may all be passe too.

Be sure to master the technology before it masters you.



*Why I stay ...*

**Senior Airman  
Neal Joiner**  
*Incirlik AB,  
Turkey*

I feel some AF jobs could become boring to me — especially if I had a desk job. I like being on the go, and as a photographer, one day I could be shooting passport photos and filing paperwork, and the next day be hanging out the back of a C-130 taking photos. Each day is a new experience ... you just can't get that in most career fields.

# Postal: Key player on Air Force Comm and Info team

By Chief Master Sgt.  
**Todd Small**  
*HQ Air Force*  
*Communications and*  
*Information Center*  
*Career Field Manager for*  
*Information Managers and*  
*Postal Personnel*

A recent news report said the volume of electronic mail has surpassed traditional mail by a ratio of 10-1. To put that in perspective, consider this: According to the most current data, the U.S. Postal Service "handled" nearly two billion (yes, that's billion with a "b") pieces of mail in 1998, as documented in its annual report for that year. With that said, one might suppose that technological advances will one day sound the death knell for what's come to be known in many circles as "snail mail." However, as is often the case, the facts don't mirror the suppositions. Actually, there's been an increase in the amount of mail being processed (up from 1.9 billion pieces in 1997, and 1.83 billion in 1996).

Anyone who's been deployed can relate to the importance of that "care package" from home. Having recently completed a one-year remote in Bosnia, I can tell you that I never had any trouble getting folks to take the trip across Sarajevo to visit the APO. In fact, it was the opposite – everyone volunteered. Despite what the "techies" say, until they can digitize mom's cookies, the mail is here to stay! In fact, the impact of technology, particularly in the area of e-commerce, is being felt in the overseas postal community. With on-line ordering at an all time high, our postal folks are working hard to plan for and accommodate the increased workload brought on by the military customer's purchases as they flow through the U.S. Postal Service into the APO system.

While many people still associate official mail distribution with Information Managers, the reality is there's been a "sea change" in how the Air Force conducts postal operations. In CONUS, many of the traditional base information transfer system functions have been, or are being, outsourced or privatized. Overseas, however, we've taken a different approach. Beginning



*U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Christina Ann Horne*

**Staff Sgt. Kingsley Thomas, 510th Postal Company Forward Area Support Command, Mannheim, Germany, fills out a Transportation Control and Movement Document for outgoing mail. Thomas was deployed in support of NATO's Operation Joint Guardian.**

community, represented by more than 600 men and women serving in the 8M000 SDI. These personnel have come from all walks of Air Force life: munitions systems, personnel, avionics maintenance, health services management, supply, services, air transportation, civil engineering, security forces and aircrew life support, to name just a few.

The introduction of a Military Postal Service duty badge helped give recognition and a sense of identity to a community with disparate backgrounds. The badge is authorized for wear on service uniforms by Air Force personnel working in the 8M000 SDI. Previously, the only option for postal personnel was to wear the occupational badge of their primary AFSC. The MPS badge was particularly important to individuals who came directly into the special duty from basic training, and hold only the 8M000 SDI.

I'm working closely with the Military Postal Service Agency to get a subdued patch version for wear on woodland and desert battle dress uniforms. Postal personnel around the world have expressed great interest, since most of them normally wear BDUs. As you read this, I anticipate the samples will have been produced and be under review by the Institute of Heraldry. When the badge is approved by MPSA, we'll request the Air

in April 1999, after a one-year test, all overseas BITS and APOs consolidated into one operation. Essentially, the official mail handled by BITS was integrated into the APO's personal mail handling operation. This resulted in more efficient processing of personal and official mail. Manpower authorizations previously used by BITS workcenters have been converted to the Postal Special Duty Identifier 8M000. Incumbent BITS personnel were afforded an opportunity to either relocate into another 3AO position or cross train into 8M000.

As we continue our transition to an Expeditionary Air Force, we are fortunate to have the support of an outstanding Air Force postal

See **POSTAL** Page 14

*intercom* 13



Photo by Senior Airman Esperanza Berrios

**Senior Airman Tiffany L. Persinger, finance clerk from the 52nd CS Postal Flight, Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, helps set up a tent at a simulated deployed location as part of the Wing Initial Communication Package.**

## POSTAL

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Force Uniform Board to authorize it for wear by Air Force postal personnel.

As with any Air Force specialty or special duty, training is paramount, and a key to operational success. Although attendance at the DOD basic postal course at Fort Jackson, S.C., is not mandatory for award of the 8M000 SDI, it's my goal to ensure that every non-prior service student and retrainee has a seat in that classroom. Occasionally, we waive attendance due to scheduling difficulties or lack of training quotas. I recently met with Air Staff training and retraining officials to ensure that we're adequately projecting the training needs of the postal community. This is particularly important now that we've increased the number of authorizations as a result of the BITS/APO

merger. I'm confident that we've identified the solutions to this problem.

While in-residence training lays the foundation for success in the postal environment, we also rely heavily on training led by our experienced postal personnel in the field. The current 8M000 Air Force Job Qualification Standard is a reflection of the postal community's commitment to top-notch training. Field level postal experts from around the world came together to produce this core training document. Not only does it include sections to show what is taught in each course at the postal school in Fort Jackson, S.C., but it also has notes to the supervisor or trainer of any postal trainee, explaining his or her role, and what they need to do. It also includes samples of proficiency codes that help the supervisor, trainer and trainee understand the expected level of knowledge and performance. We are tapping into the postal community's wealth of training experience to develop training tools for the corporate Air Force. Training officials from the USAFE Air Postal Squadron are acting as subject matter experts to develop a qualification training package to prepare augmentees for postal operations duties during contingencies.

Speaking of preparing for contingencies, the Postal War Planners, under the guidance of Lt. Col. Gabe Telles, met recently to continue posturing the new AEF Combat Postal configuration. They tailored Air Reserve Component (Air Force Reserve Command and Air National Guard) dedicated airlift support for four of the 34 AEF "Combat Postal" Steady State requirements. They are also working to provide postal support from PACAF and USAFE consistent with AEF manpower authorization plus-ups. The goal is to have semi-permanent taskings so each unit tasked will know its Steady State contingency location in advance, and can have its people ready as needed to perform a 90-day duty rotation.

Training and preparation

proved essential to successful postal operations during the recent crisis in the Balkans. Senior Master Sgt. James Bowen, Staff Sgt. Sammy Chavez and Airman 1st Class A.J. Haro, members of several European postal organizations, deployed to establish and sustain mail service at Tirana, Albania, for personnel supporting Operations Shining Hope and Task Force Hawk. Three days after their arrival in country, letter class mail was available, followed only four days later by parcel mail. Their outstanding efforts are representative of the caliber of personnel performing Air Force postal operations around the globe.

Why I stay ...



**Airman 1st Class Gina M. O'Bryan**  
20th CS,  
Shaw AFB,  
S.C.

"Before joining the Air Force, I expected to embark upon an exciting career. But I never imagined the magnitude of excitement and job satisfaction I have as a photographer. There's an unparalleled feeling I get knowing that history is captured and recorded every time the shutter opens. I've already seen and experienced more than many people only dream about in a lifetime. I take great pride in knowing that I serve in the greatest Air Force in the world. All this while obtaining a higher degree of education simply can't be beaten. No words can express the pride I feel when I'm approached in uniform and I hear the words, "Great job! Keep up the good work."

# IM: Future force means ‘people first’

By Chief Master Sgt. Greg Skinner  
Chief of Information Management  
Plans and Programs  
Air Force Communications Agency

As I was initiated into my role as a force planner for our comm and info enlisted specialties, I could have sworn I heard the theme from “Mission Impossible” in the background: “*Dum, dum – dum, dum, dum, dum – dum, dum, dum, dum ...*”

What’s that the commander was saying? “Good morning, Mr. Skinner. Your mission, should you decide to accept it, is to help this team develop a vision for the *future*: a vision that better aligns skills of our people against requirements of the mission; a vision that takes technology into account early on, rather than having us react to it; a vision that integrates us into one community, yet returns some much needed specialization that technology has taken away.”

Oh, I had a vision all right, shaking my head with reluctance – one where we left things alone and I went back to working the issues of *today* that the information manager (3A) needed to resolve. How was I going to help work a plan for the future of 2Es, 3As, 3Cs, and 3Vs when we didn’t make it a practice to work together today? As a chief, I was supposed to be leading and helping the troops, working the issues that put people first!

But as I accepted my orders and began all the interface necessary to build this type of strategy, I slowly but surely began to see something. Technology, combined with a higher ops tempo and increasingly lower manning, had driven much overlap between these fields anyway. The advent of the PC and the network had hit the comm and info community like an electronic freight train—people were being overwhelmed, misused, and frequently not used at all where they could be. Our approach to technology had been fragmented at best, and unplanned at worst—and our people deserved better.

I realized Future Force is as much a “people” issue as a strategy for the mission. The Future Force vision first looks at the projected environment for comm and info throughout the next decade. As our leadership would attest, it’s an environment that has the network weapon system as its centerpiece. We conduct our comm and info mission through daily use of the network, both in-garrison and deployed.

I saw that the next course of action was to identify the enlisted skills that would be required to operate and sustain the network, and manage its product of critical information. From here, we divided the skill sets into core groups, then further divided the core groups into specific specialties. Then we added core training for all enlisted communicators at the 3- to 5-

level, advocated cross-use within core groups, and threw in advanced, senior NCO core training to produce our planners and implementers. Pretty soon, we had a vision that anticipates our network-centric requirements and provides an integrated force of communicators to execute the mission.

It was apparent that another source of frustration for our enlisted communicators is the perception that not all of today’s AFSCs are equally viewed as part of comm and info. There is sometimes a career field “stove pipe” view that blocks opportunity for us to truly integrate and maximize our skills. Future Force tackles this “people first” issue head on. It gives everyone the same roots by placing us under one Air Force specialty (3D, “Communications and Information” is the proposed choice) with one specialty badge. We decided to canvas the field for a badge concept.

Looking ahead, I asked myself: “If we train from the same foundation, cross-flow our knowledge as we grow to become planners, and eventually merge two of three paths under one chief master sergeant, don’t we also enhance professional development and help eliminate career stagnation?”

The answer was there’s an immense amount of work yet to be done to successfully implement the Future Force vision. There’s vital coordination required with functional communities outside of comm and info; feedback from the major commands must be incorporated; and of course, the processes to work critical manpower, personnel and training issues for the total force represent the greatest challenge. Clearly, we must properly train our people in the field if we are to posture them for success in tomorrow’s environment.

Another challenge is to ensure information regarding Future Force is accurately presented and briefed to the field. HQ AFCA will soon establish a web page for Air Force-wide access to the Future Force briefing and implementation plan. Putting people first means keeping them informed, so this challenge takes high priority on our rather long list of challenges.

But somehow the challenges don’t seem quite as daunting as when I started – the mission not quite so “impossible.” You see, when you put a “people first” context on what we’re doing, you tend to raise the motivation factor for chiefs. Likewise, senior leadership is always receptive to taking care of people; so even if we stumble along the way, I don’t think this vision would be left to “self destruct.” And you know, as I recall, that team from “Mission Impossible” succeeded every time.

H m m m ,  
there’s that \_\_\_\_\_  
tune in my head  
again. Is that a fuse being lit? “*Dum,  
dum – dum, dum, ...*”



# Today and tomorrow

By Judy Adamcyk

*CICP Manager, Randolph AFB, Texas*

The Communications and Information Career Program supports more than 10,000 registrants offering Air Force wide competitive job opportunities in communications, computers, information management and visual information. We also implement the CICP Palace Acquire force renewal program. Our goal is to refer the best-qualified candidates Air Force wide, and assist registrants in becoming competitive. What are we currently doing and what does the future hold?

**Position Management**, Mike Zimmerman and Al Tudyk

**Current:** This team processes referral certificates for more than 2,800 Air Force civilian positions worldwide. It is your responsibility to ensure that your geographical preferences accurately reflect your desires. As positions become available, you are automatically considered based on these preferences. We fund permanent change of station moves for selectees from our certificates. We also provide career counseling to registrants. Prior to calling, please familiarize yourself with our program by accessing our Web page at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp/cicp>.

**Future:** When RESUMIX is implemented this

November, referrals will be based on "self-nomination" not geographical preferences. Resumes will be used instead of skill codes of previous jobs in your application. Vacancies will be announced via the Web and list server. Please use the job kit provided on our Web page to write your resume. It is important that all subscribe to the list server for announcements and vacancy information. Please see our web site for list server subscription instructions.

**C a r e e r  
B r o a d e n i n g ,  
Mike Zimmerman**

**Current:** Our 15 career broadening positions provide opportunities to develop new skills, broaden existing functional skills, and enhance leadership perspective. These 24-month vacancies are announced on the CICP Web site and list server, and require AF-wide mobility. Our first overseas career broadener will arrive in Ramstein this June.

**Future:** This program has been very successful. We intend to continue to have 15 career broadeners. Opportunities will continue to be available for IM to SC at the GS-11/12 level, and SC for GS-13/14 positions. Watch for future vacancy announcements.

**Professional Development**, Chuck Luther and Bea Ramirez

**Current:** We offer both short- and long-term training for executive and managerial development. Desired training should be annotated every spring in your Career Enhancement Plan. Check out our Web site under Whole Person Score – Training, for available courses. The CEP is the main source used to determine training requirements. (Note to supervisors: Please be realistic when completing an employee's CEP and ensure employees be allowed to attend training when selected.)

Registrants pursuing either undergraduate or graduate education to obtain a communications and information-related degree may request tuition assistance. Funding is offered on a "funds available" basis, and are subject to the USAF/DP policy of 75 percent of course cost or \$187.50/semester hour (whichever is less). Application packages can be downloaded at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp/cicp/tuition.htm>. The deadline to submit an application package is July 1 and Dec. 1 each year; however, applications from registrants in acquisition positions are accepted throughout the year. Acquisition and CICP Palace Acquire intern positions are exempt from the 75 percent cap.

**Future:** We anticipate a reduction in training funds, and are exploring alternative training options. We are currently working with MAJCOMs to bring courses to their locations vice TDYs, and are teaming with other career programs to pool scarce training dollars and bring training to high population sites. If your MAJCOM would like more information about bringing courses to your location, please contact Chuck Luther at DSN 665-3691.

**Palace Acquire Intern Program**, James McDaniel and Mark Davidson

**Current:** We have 45 CICP Palace Acquire interns in our civilian workforce renewal effort. This program targets college graduates and offers two to three years of formal and on-the-job training at Air Force organizations throughout CONUS. Positions include comm-computer systems specialists, computer scientists, opera-

Why I stay ...

**Tom Korte**  
AFCA  
Scott  
AFB, Ill.



I continue to enjoy working for the Air Force Comm and Info community. There's always something new and interesting to work on in the communications and information technology business to help Air Force customers. Communications and information are vital to successful Air Force operations, and continue to become even more important.

See CICP next page

# AF civilian personnel processes move to Modern DCPDS

By Marian Bowser

HQ Air Force Communications  
and Information Center

Air Force civilian personnel processes have been streamlined and integrated into a new relational database system known as the Modern Defense Civilian Personnel Data System. This database will support regionalization of civilian personnel management and reduce staff work. Air Force civilian employees will have on-line access to an extensive source of employment information while Civilian Personnel Flights continue to provide face-to-face support to commanders and supervisors.

The Modern DCPDS is part of a larger system that the Department of Defense began using in 1999. De-

signed to be a single information system to process personnel actions and maintain workforce data for all DOD civilian employees, the Modern DCPDS supports appropriated fund, non-appropriated fund, and local national civilian personnel operations as well.

The Modern DCPDS capitalizes on new technology to improve and simplify processing personnel actions, accessing civilian workforce information, and delivering civilian personnel services. It replaces a number of personnel information systems and applications in use today, including the current DCPDS (the "legacy" DCPDS) and some of the Personnel/Functional Process Improvement Suite tools.

Civilian personnel operations across DOD are being consolidated and regionalized to provide more cost-effective delivery of services. The Modern DCPDS supports regionalization of services by efficiently flowing data across organizations and geographic locations. The system operates via a network environment (client-server, multi-tiered, distributed data platform in an open-systems environment). At the core is a relational database. The following are examples of the new system's capabilities.

\* Personnel actions will be electronically routed and easily tracked

between manager desktops, local personnel offices, and regional personnel service centers.

\* Managers can access up-to-date information—ranging from individual queries to summary workforce reports—from their desktop computers.

\* Information flows to outside organizations, via interfaces, for such purposes as payroll and centralized reporting (e.g., DFAS, OPM).

\* Redundant and unnecessary processes (e.g., duplicate data input) are reduced.

The system is a modern tool for managers. Without leaving their desks, managers will have electronic access to initiate personnel actions and send them to the local CPF. Managers will be able to view authorized information about the positions and employees they supervise.

Modern DCPDS is currently in use at Charleston and McChord AFBs and will be deployed Air Force-wide by the end of the year.

Information on Modern DCPDS is on the AFPC web site at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil>. This site provides links to other related web sites such as the AF Civilian Career Management Program, the Veterans Home Page, and the Office of Personnel Management.

ext. 3046, or via e-mail at [cicppaq@afpc.randolph.af.mil](mailto:cicppaq@afpc.randolph.af.mil).

## CICP

From previous page

tions research analysts, and electronic/computer engineers. Please keep in mind that you are eligible to apply even if you are in Federal Service.

**Future:** We will continue force renewal at the current hiring rate of at least 25 interns per year. Organizations interested in sponsoring a PAQ intern and prospective applicants can contact us at DSN 665-3691 or toll free at 1-800-847-0108,

## Registration:

Air Force employees having the appropriate grade and skill codes may register in the CICP. To determine eligibility, visit your local CPF or our Web site. To register, you must submit an AF Form 2675, Civilian Career Program Registration and Personal Availability Form, to your local CPF. We anticipate registration via the Web will be available sometime this month. Check the Web site for announcements.

## Why I stay ...

2nd Lt. Shawn Kitchin

Executive Officer  
AFSPC Communications  
Support Squadron  
(Prior enlisted - 12 years  
in the military)

Peterson AFB, Colo.

"Probably my biggest gratification is the camaraderie, the closeness between people. You feel you're a part of a team, and there's a lot of job satisfaction with that. I like the freshness, and the opportunity for training and to change jobs. There's no stagnation, as there might be in civilian industry."



# Education With Industry -- a terrific opportunity

By Lt. Col. Lisa Jacques  
HQ Air Force Communications  
and Information Center

organization. After this orientation phase, the officer works with company management to solve problems and achieve goals. In essence, the officer becomes a company employee experiencing the same responsibilities, opportunities, and frustrations that company managers encounter. The "learning by doing" opportunity EWI provides really drives home an understanding of the corporate environment.

EWI participants are required to submit reports identifying and analyzing issues of concern between government and industry, and must propose possible solutions. Performance is also gauged through on-site visits by the AFIT program manager and the company's evaluation of the officer. Participants receive a training report at the end of the program.

If you are an officer and are interested, discuss EWI with your commander to ensure the program matches their officer professional development needs. For more information, contact Lt. Col. Lisa Jacques, HQ AFCIC/XPF, DSN 425-1526.

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to work in a high tech private corporation, but didn't want to give up your Air Force career to find out? Well, now there's a way to satisfy your curiosity. The Education With Industry program sends officers on a 10-month PCS tour with a selected company to learn leading edge technology and management processes.

Not only is it a great deal for the individual officer, but both the Air Force and industry benefit by developing a cadre of officers and civilians who understand how industry works, can interpret Air Force needs in industry terms, and have an in-depth understanding of industry objectives, problems, and processes.

The Air Force Institute of Technology has been running the EWI program for years, but the Communications and Information officer career field has not been an active player. That changed when HQ USAF/SC signed out a message March 16 announcing the career field's renewed participation in the program, and the response has been fantastic.

Through the combined efforts of HQ AFCIC/XPF, AFPC/DPASC, and the EWI program manager at AFIT, we will fill three EWI quotas this year, and intend to increase that number in following years.

Captains and majors who are medically unrestricted for worldwide duty and available for reassignment are eligible for the 10-month program. A master's degree is desired. Officers also must have retainability for a 3-to-1 active duty service commitment upon EWI program completion.

Typically, an EWI officer begins the program with a short top-level overview of the company. The next four weeks focus on understanding the various functional areas in the

## Why I stay ...



**Airman 1st Class  
Tanaya M. Harms**  
Incirlik AB, Turkey

I came into the Air Force with the guaranteed job of photographer. This was a career I was very interested in, and I was very excited to be entering a field I enjoyed. I was sure the Air Force would provide me technical expertise and knowledge above and beyond what private industry had to offer. It has done just that. My training has enhanced my overall performance and has proven to be a viable asset in meeting my career objectives. The Air Force demands excellence, with attention to detail in every task that's performed. When a work order leaves the shop, I know the customer is receiving a quality product. I give each individual job the full and complete attention it deserves. Although I haven't been in the Air Force long, I fully intend to make it my career. I believe the Air Force instills a positive attitude in its workforce, and it has provided me positive role models to contribute to my success.

## Why I stay ...

**Tech. Sgt.  
Dave  
Streed**  
53rd CSS  
Eglin AFB,  
Fla.



"I like my job. I enjoy the people I work with and how we support the mission. Sure, I could be making more money 'on the outside,' but I think the positives, such as traveling and moving frequently, far outweigh the negatives, like deployments."

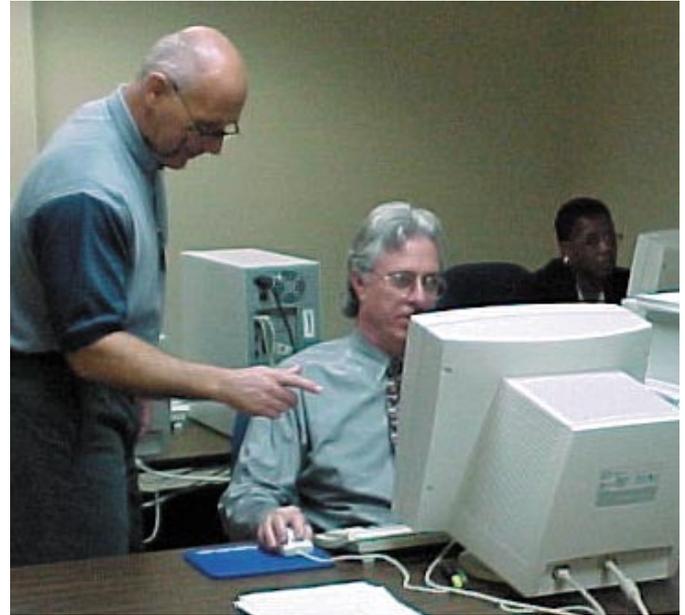
# 333rd meets essential training needs of Comm and Info community

By Lt. Col. Corrinne A. DeMoss  
333rd Training Squadron

**KEESLER AIR FORCE BASE, Miss.** – When the Air Force needs cutting-edge technology training in Communications and Information, it turns to the 333rd Training Squadron at Keesler. The 333rd offers everything from basic to specialized courses for managers and technicians, and constantly updates its offerings to serve prospective customers.

If a particular type of training is of interest to commanders in the field, it's of interest to us. Our subject matter experts are always looking for feedback from field experts. The sooner we can include emerging technology training requirements in our courses, the sooner commanders will get the trained officers, NCOs and civilians they need. Some ways to help us keep the instructor-to-field network alive are to invite instructors to conferences and exercises, and to get them involved in the systems definition phase of a new or replacement weapon system. Or just give us a call or send us an e-mail.

Training is made possible with state of the art equipment, a current curriculum and a highly qualified staff. We teach the latest and fastest in networks, everything from deployable communications to electronic keying. Primarily geared to mid-level enlisted and officer communicators (3C0X1s, 3C0X2s, 3C2X1s, and 33S4s) and new communications-information officers, we have curricula built to take a 5-level from basic networking prin-



**Robert Blaze, a GCCS Windows NT System Administrator course instructor, gives a student one-on-one assistance.**

ciples to advanced networking, troubleshooting and protection. Let's follow that path in the presentation of the curriculum.

The System Network Support course, supporting the Combat Information Transport System, is comprised of four blocks of instruction and lasts 35 days. This fall, the course will split into two separate courses to shorten the time a student is TDY and to boost student through-put in the first part of the course.

The course covers the essentials of intranetworking and internetworking components, protocols, standards and other networking information. In the "build-a-network" block students build network cables, configure network interface cards, networking client software, and then accomplish intranetworking and internetworking with Cisco switches and routers. In the network management block, the focus is on five functional areas of network management using the CITS Network Management System suite of equipment. On final approach is network troubleshooting and optimization, where all the tools learned are used to configure and manage an efficient network and troubleshoot faults.

In parallel with the SNS course, the 333rd teaches four Theater Deployable Communications



**ACOT students lay out AEF deployment groundwork as part of their final class project.**

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courses. TDC instructors review data, transmission and systems aspects to ensure comm and info flexibility not only at a fixed location, but also in a rapidly mobile communications environment. The goal is to provide optimum, reliable communications support to a joint commander in any contingency.

The equipment in the TDC courses includes two major components that provide the warfighter with flexible, lightweight, secure, modular and integrated deployable communications. First, the lightweight multiband satellite terminal provides deployable long-haul communications. Second, Integrated Communications Access Packages provide an intrabase communications capability that is interoperable with LMST and existing long haul communications systems.

The 333rd also offers networking training for classified environments. Equipment and training for instructors is provided by the National Security Agency and meets the information-centric demands of the 21st century. Constant revisions to these courses incorporate the latest technology. NSA provides the 333d all the training equipment and a percentage of work center computers to more than 20 Air Force, Army and Navy military and civilian instructors.

The NEWSDEALER Operator course teaches NSA's version of record communications and automated message handling in 18 days. In the 12-day NEWSDEALER Message Switching System course, students explore advanced system administration and data manipulation for the NEWSDEALER system using Unix and system control software. The CIS course is a 50-day curriculum that includes hands-on operation/maintenance



**Tech. Sgt. Robert Shaw and Senior Airman Kari Rochester review a SANS Institute document as part of their preparations for the new BIP course.**

functions on a variety of "smart" network equipment.

Traditional Communications Security courses are being replaced with Electronic Key Management System curriculum, and software upgrades are continuous in Certification Authority Workstation and the Defense Message System. In fact, the 333rd is a DMS beta test site and CAW will soon be the same.

Base-level COMSEC Account Managers and alternates learn all aspects of COMSEC account management in the 15-day COMSEC Account Management course.

Each year more than 256 students attend the five-day Certification Authority/SSO-Pin Organizational Registration Authority class and the four-day System Administrator/Information System Security Officer class. These courses teach CAW operation and maintenance.

The 333rd trains Emission



**Master Sgt. Charles Clonts, an IPMS course instructor, teaches Staff Sgt. Brian Frazier how to update an inventory using IPMS software as Cindy Seymour and Claire English look on.**

Security managers on the “how to” aspects of the EMSEC process. Students determine and resolve emission security problems to include assessing the threat, reviewing EMSEC publications, applying classification guidelines, proper grounding, equipment and facility zoning, and countermeasures.

For those needing to know how to manage a wing COMPUSEC program, there’s the 15-day Computer Security Management course. The training includes COMPUSEC objectives, roles and responsibilities, policy and requirements, operational concepts, vulnerabilities and risk management. Practical exercises in completing Certification and Accreditation of computer systems and networks is just around the corner.

The Defense Message System capitalizes on existing and emerging messaging technologies to meet DOD requirements for secure, accountable, writer-to-reader organizational and individual messaging at reduced cost. Hundreds of people have found their way through this 22-day course, gaining a working knowledge of DMS principles, concepts and applications.

All of this culminates with the schoolhouse’s newest courses: SNS/NMS/BIP and ITS courses. They all build upon each other so that when completed, one should be qualified to pass the Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer exam.

The Base Information Protection course is being developed to teach Network Control Technicians how to use security administration and tools to implement Information Protection. Graduates of this 15-day course will be able to configure a proxy server for a secure network, perform router security measures for network configuration, configure a secure firewall, and build an operational and secure network. When deployed in an Air Expeditionary Force environment, they will know the techniques to detect any intrusion in the Network Control Center.

The Infrastructure Technology Systems course is under development and primarily sponsored by the Combat Information Transport System program office. It is slated to last 20 days and expected to begin in 2001. It will teach network infrastructure technicians how to install, configure, maintain, troubleshoot and optimize a typical base CITS network infrastructure, and to implement the latest ATM and multi-layer switching technologies.

To complete the course, technicians will build and configure an entire base CITS network infrastructure. Students will learn how to maintain, troubleshoot, and optimize the network employing various net-



**Staff Sgt. Michael Holt performs a pre-deployment inspection of TDC/ICAP equipment.**

work management tools and protocol analyzers.

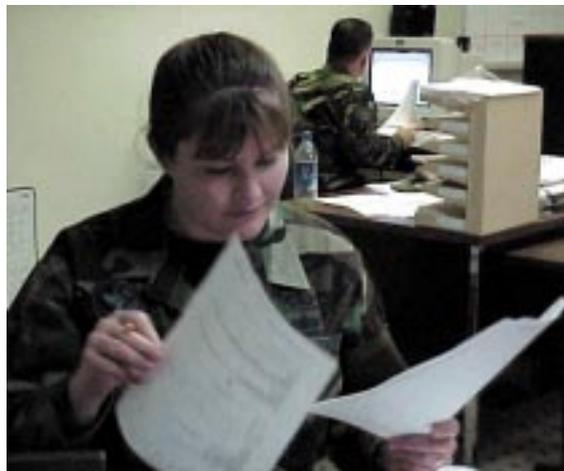
Air Mobility Command has a requirement to train its Command and Control Information Processing System administrators on the client server architecture of that system. It covers system concepts, hardware components, operating system and applications software, system and database administration, network and security administration, and system maintenance.

To meet the needs of specialized operations, the 333rd offers three Mobile Training Team courses: Introduction to Ada, Advanced Ada for Programmers, and Object Oriented Analysis and Design. The base supplies the computers, classroom and students, and the instructor brings the compiler and demo software. In support of AEFs 9 and 10, instructors will go to 15 bases in the next 12 months teaching three all-new courses:

Unix System Administration, Windows Server/Exchange Administration and Oracle Database Administration.

The 333d also trains in the Joint arena—technical training on the Global Command and Control System. Be it Unix or Oracle database training, security or system administration, beginners to advanced, the 333rd Training Squadron has the staff and equipment to meet DISA’s GCCS training requirements.

The GCCS training staff constantly makes revisions to



**Tech. Sgt. Christina Hacker, a GCCS UNIX instructor, reviews course materials in preparation for her next class.**

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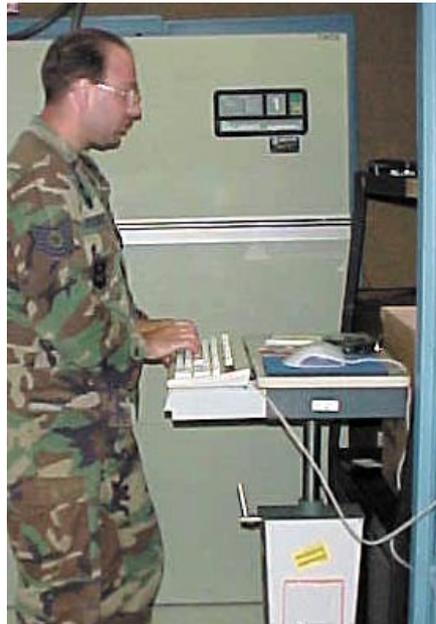
ensure the latest software changes are incorporated. DISA provides beta versions as well as final software releases for instructors to have the latest technology. DISA also provides the latest SUN Ultra workstations and SUN Enterprise servers to give students training on the newest hardware configurations.

The 333rd offers GCCS training at both of its schoolhouses, at Keesler and in Arlington, Va. The staff will also deploy to bring the same quality training to the user at their base or location, depending on the number of students needing training and their training requirements.

GCCS-specific curriculum offerings include a five-day basic GCCS Oracle class geared for the novice. The GCCS Oracle Database Administrator course is 10 days and offers advanced database management principles. For beginning GCCS users who need Unix training, the instructors teach a five-day course which covers the file system, basic commands, VI editor and basic shell scripting. System administrators can also sign up for a 10-day GCCS Basic Administrator course. The GCCS Advanced System Administrator course (five days) takes Unix training to the next level.

The 333rd provides initial training to all new Air Force comm and info officers and it starts with the Basic Communications and Information Officer Training Course. The typical class can also include DoD civilians and international officers from our allies.

BCOT takes officers new to the C&I career field from 3,000 feet with the Air Force Strategic Vision and Joint Vision 2010 to ground zero with information assurance and deployed communications. Like the enlisted supplemental training, a BCOT network lab is equipped with the latest Microsoft software and the newest technology to allow students to learn network planning, setup and administration. To ensure they



**Tech. Sgt. Charles Steiner, a SNS course instructor, configures the Sidewinder Firewall.**

get a broad-brush effect of what they'll be facing when they get to their home units, they're brought to the supplemental training side of the house to learn about TDC, SNS and CITS. It's called system immersion and it's all part of the Keesler Network Training Center of Excel-

lence—a combination of the best equipment, instructors and AETC curriculum to produce top comm and info technicians and officers for the Air Force.

For officers who've been in the field for eight to 13 years, the 333rd offers the Advanced Communications and Information Officer Training course. This is a forum for mid-level captains to share their experiences and learn from each other. Packed with similar, but advanced BCOT topics, one of its goals is to underscore command relationships and joint warfare.

Senior comm and info executives gather for the Air Force capstone comm and info professional development course, Scope Eagle. Corporate policies and issues are discussed and senior leaders refresh themselves technically. It's designed for colonels, select lieutenant colonels and civilian equivalents in the career field.

You can obtain additional information by sending an e-mail to [corrinne.demoss@keesler.af.mil](mailto:corrinne.demoss@keesler.af.mil) or by calling DSN 597-3516, commercial (228) 377-3516 or fax -4882.



**Master Sgt. Keith Fichtemaier, Staff Sgt. Charlotte Derby, and Master Sgt. Manuel Gonzalez check 333rd TRS' LAN connectivity.**



Visit the Computer Based Training  
System web site at  
<https://afcbt.den.disa.mil>

## Information Technology courses go on line

**SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, Ill.** — Air Force Comm and Info personnel now have access to more than 1,000 Information Technology courses on line, thanks to the opening in April of the United States Air Force Computer Based Training System's Central Site.

Military members and civilian employees can take courses on their computers while at work, on temporary duty or at home to increase their knowledge in such areas as specialized technical skills, basic business applications, software programming and world wide web administration. Some examples of course subjects are UNIX, Windows NT, Oracle, Microsoft Office and Netscape Navigator.

The Computer Based Training Initiative 2000 implements the USAF CBT System to help the workforce deal with increasingly sophisticated technology in the conduct of daily business. The USAF CBT System represents a major milestone in providing effective training for the entire Air Force.

Phase one of the program established the central site, hosted by the Defense Information Systems Agency. It includes an IT course software library, help desk, user registration service and metrics collection capability.

Phase two, now under way, ultimately will place courseware and software at base-level network control centers, to minimize Internet traffic between users and the central site.

All users may now access courses through the central site. Upon completion of phase two, on-

base users will access courses through their local NCC, using locally-staged courseware and utility software. Off-base users will access courses through the central site, and will have the option of taking the courses on line or downloading them to their PCs. Users must initially register from a computer with a ".gov" or ".mil" address, and then receive a password to connect from any terminal with Internet access. Progress reports on user metrics will be maintained at the central site, with local data being passed on during off-peak hours. Force planners will use metrics collected at the central site to track proficiency progress and manage their programs.

The USAF CBT System provides training which fulfills the knowledge-level requirements for certifying network professionals as prescribed in AFI 33-115 Vol 2, *Licensing Network Users and Certifying Network Professionals*. Air Education and Training Command is exploring ways to integrate CBT into curricula to maximize the value of in-residence training programs.

Personnel in the Communications and Information community may now use the central site at <https://afcbt.den.disa.mil/usafcbt>. After completion of phase two, all Air Force personnel, regardless of career field or unit assignment, will be encouraged to use the system. Proprietary software is needed to take courses in either download or liveplay modes. Users should check with their local workgroup manager for a customized version. The software may also be downloaded from the central site's "Getting Started

Off Base" option, found in the Courseware menu.

The USAF CBT System is managed by the Air Force Communications Agency's Training Management Branch, at Scott AFB. This branch was created to meet this task and investigate other training possibilities. It fully assessed warfighter requirements and developed a groundbreaking solution to provide cost-effective IT training whenever and wherever needed for a customer base of 500,000+ users with varying needs and resources.

The USAF CBT System uses SmartForce (formerly CBT Systems, Inc.) commercial off-the-shelf courseware. It offers flexible, adaptable training in the face of growing TDY costs and a decrease in funding for traditional in-residence training.

"One of our primary goals ... is to find innovative ways of providing better, faster and cheaper service to the Air Force," said retired Lt. Gen. William J. Donahue, then commander of the Air Force Communications and Information Center, and Air Force director of Communications and Information, at the virtual ribbon cutting for the central site. "This is a prime example of how we are doing it."

Additional information is available at the Air Force Communications Agency CBT homepage at <http://www.afca.scott.af.mil/cbt/> or by contacting the AFCA Training Management Branch at DSN 576-2815 or commercially at (618) 256-2815.



Photo by Master Sgt. Ed Ferguson

**Master Sgt. Len Robertson teaches a seminar at AFCA.**

## New seminar chartered

**SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, Ill.** — A new seminar on Personal Wireless Communications Systems and Installation Spectrum Managers is being offered by the Air Force Communications Agency seminars program.

The 18-month gap filler course is a hybrid of the standard facilitated seminar format and task-based training. It provides strategy, policy and program guidance using facilitated briefings, and includes training on use of the Land Mobile Radio Tracking and Reporting System database and the frequency assignment portion of the Joint Spectrum Management System database. Master Sgt. Len Robertson is

seminar manager. Instructors include subject experts from AFCA and the Air Force Frequency Management Agency.

AFCA seminars provide just-in-time, job specific awareness training for managers on the latest strategies, policies, guidance and programs affecting various communications and information subjects. Other seminars currently offered are Information Management, Information Protection, Maintenance Management, Network Management, and Planning and Implementation Management.

More information is available at <http://www.afca.scott.af.mil/seminars>.

## *IMers' migration to WGMs forces changes*

By Master Sgt. Kim Wilkinson  
2nd Communications Squadron

**BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La.** — Who says you can't teach an ol' dog new tricks? The core change to the Information Management career field is teaching new tricks to not only our newest airmen, but our career airmen who have been in the Air Force since the days of IBM electric typewriters and white-out.

Today's information managers are learning to install system operating software and hardware peripherals, and to perform troubleshooting of mail accounts, network issues and hardware problems. This has involved a drastic paradigm change for not only information managers, but our supervisors, commanders and customers, as everyone learns how to shift from our current "paper pusher" status to workgroup managers, responsible for managing all information electronically from cradle-to-grave and the systems the information is created and stored on.

To facilitate our information managers migrating into their new skill sets and to give them knowledge and background to perform these duties, the 2nd Communications Squadron is rotating all their assigned information managers through the local area network office to learn everything they ever needed to know about PC operation and repair.

One of our recent success stories is Senior Airman Koby Harding, whose WGM journey is a story that must be told.

Harding arrived at Barksdale AFB, La., from technical school and was immediately put to work in the Administrative Communications section, managing and

distributing unclassified and classified mail to base organizations. For about 18 months, this was his primary focus and a job he did well. When it came time to rotate him, it was decided he would become the first in the newly established rotation program for workgroup managers.

Harding was as excited as we were to prove our information managers could learn the skills needed to become workgroup managers and use them in the field. Harding first completed all three phases of WGM training to give him some background. He then put that information to use during brainstorming strategies and actual hands-on attempts at troubleshooting software and hardware problems throughout the squadron, learning mostly through OJT and lots of over-the-shoulder help from his colleagues. It took time and great effort on his and his co-workers' part, but within six months some real progress began emerging.

Harding has now been assigned to the LAN shop for 12 months, is adept at his WGM duties and frequently goes out solo on troubleshooting calls. He has become the WGM expert we knew he could be. He has developed such a compassion for the technology field that he recently applied for cross training into the Communications-Computer career field.

This is just one of many success stories at Barksdale and throughout the Air Force — creating workgroup managers out of information managers. All it takes is the initiative of the information manager, his or her supervisor's support and, most importantly, the support and expertise of the local communications squadron. It just goes to prove — you *can* teach an ol' dog new tricks!

# Comm and Info Future Shock?

By Capt. Tony Chu  
*Air Force Communications Agency*

**SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, Ill.** — Science fiction is no longer fiction. As a novice communicator, I am often caught off guard by the realization that the technology I once saw on television and in the movies really exists. Upon further thought, I have to kick myself for completely overlooking all the evidence around me that I have taken for granted. At any given time I can pick up my phone and speak with family on the other side of the Earth. As a kid, I remember having to walk half an hour to the library so that I could conduct research for school projects. Now, a co-worker reminds me daily that virtually any question can be answered through my personal computer. When did it happen that we could do this? And more importantly, what's next?

While it took several thousand years of evolution for humankind to stand upright, protect itself from the environment, and develop crude tools, it only took little more than three decades for us to collectively obtain almost infinite knowledge and awareness.

It all started in 1962, when the Air Force commissioned a study to examine how it could maintain its command and control over its missiles and bombers after a nuclear attack. This study resulted in a 1969 experiment conducted by the Advanced Research Projects Agency to test the value of distributed information management by linking four geographically separated computer sites. Subsequently, more nodes from the world over joined this network. The rest of the story can be accessed through the terminal on your desk.

Today's technology enables us as airmen to obtain and maintain information superiority. In early warfare, it was commonly known that whoever has the high ground wins the battle. Thus, when given the choice between the top of a hill or the bottom of a valley, the army that took the hill lived to tell war stories. High ground has been redefined by the advent of air and space craft, but that only accounts for the physical realm.

Outside the box thinking reveals that the ultimate high ground is no longer a place. Instead, it's a commodity called information, and it is the ability to provide the right information, at the right time, to the right place, and in the right format that puts the U.S. military on top.

We currently have the ability to communicate between almost any two points on Earth. In places where we don't have established communications facilities, we can use satellite telephones and manpacks that enable compact, long range, and mobile communications. On our fixed installations, we depend on miles of cable for

our base networks, enabling our operational and support activities to act in unison. In contrast, we cannot rely on constructing physical networks at every foreign location we are dispatched to. Wireless technology will eventually be the connectivity we use for deployable networks, allowing allied forces to rapidly establish military presence in remote areas.

Despite our present innovations in command and control technology, they cannot function without connectivity. The demand for greater bandwidth and higher data transfer speeds is growing exponentially, telling us that action must be taken now to ensure we maintain the high ground.

To illustrate, Operation Desert Storm required more resources and maneuvers than Operation Allied Force. However, Allied Force required 17 times more bandwidth than Desert Storm. Unmanned aerial vehicles are replacing piloted aircraft for surveillance and reconnaissance missions, thereby decreasing the risk of losing lives.

One of the most advanced systems we have today is called Joint Operations Visualization Environment. It will provide commanders real-time immersion into a virtual representation of the global battlespace, enabling them to make critical decisions with greater precision and from a safe environment. This demonstrates the increased dependency that military operations have on information. For this reason, we must also ensure the connectivity between the excellent technology, which is why senior DOD leadership is setting the priority to build a seamless global network with immense capacity.

The investment we place into building a seamless global network will have tremendous impact on the future. Soon, physical wars may not even have to be fought because they'll be prevented through info warfare. In the future, American warfighters will have the ability to shut down infrastructures of entire countries, disarm militaries, and topple governments with a mere keystroke. Ultimately, physical combat will become a colloquialism that can be found in historical literature. As comm and info warriors, it's our mission to see this happens.

Why I stay ...

**Peggy Fehrmann**  
*AFCA*  
*Scott AFB, Ill.*



I enjoy my career in civil service because of the benefits and training opportunities that are offered. Each day there is a new challenge. I welcome the opportunity to work with civilian and military personnel from all over the United States. The mentorship that has been given to me has provided endless growth and development. I have attained a wide range of experience during my 14 years in civil service.



Photo by Senior Airman Esperanza Berrios, 52nd CS

**Members of the 52nd Communications Squadron (formerly Wing Initial Communications Package) set up the AEF Communications Package in Slovakia.**

## *52nd CS AEF comm package provides communications for Exercise Lion's Claw*

**By 1st Lt. Joseph Petrick and  
2nd Lt. Richard Cullivan**  
*52nd Communications Squadron  
Spangdahlem AB, Germany*

It's cold, windy and raining at the barren site where the deployed 52nd Communications Squadron crew tensely awaits the go signal. Satellite comm people find their mark, and the race begins to get comm up and running in 24-48 hours.

When the 52nd deploys, it relies on its Air Expeditionary Force Communications Package (formerly Wing Initial Comm Package) to establish all comm systems. This robust capability includes secure and non-secure Internet access, land mobile radios, UHF/VHF ground-to-air radios, cellular phone service, secure messaging systems, telephone switches, facsimile, visual information and postal services. All in all, it's a comm package that rivals base level services.

The 52nd's AEF CP was built from scratch in 1997 and currently employs 14 full-time people. It had its first taste of real world missions in late 1998 and early 1999 during Operation Allied Force, providing vital communications to the 81st Fighter Squadron's A/OA-10s deployed to Gioia Del Colle, Italy. Typically, 10 to 20 augmentees are pulled from their primary work centers to support a deployment.

For Exercise Lion's Claw, they deployed March 27

to Kuychna Range, which employs primarily MIG-21s and SU-22s, and were among the first U.S. contingency to operate in Slovakia. As part of the initial team, they first set up local communications infrastructure and reach-back capabilities. Within 24 hours, they established satellite communications with the HQ USAFE Standardized Tactical Entry Point at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, and got initial theater air base communications systems up and running.

Four days later, the 23rd Fighter Squadron's F-16s arrived and were immediately able to take part in flying operations. The two-week training exercise went off without a hitch and provided a fantastic opportunity for the 52nd CS AEF CP to train the way they fight. This was the first of what promises to be a semi-annual event with the Slovakian Air Forces. Although the mission's focus was to provide weapons training, an added benefit was the boost in relations between the Slovakian and U.S. military.

By the end of the exercise, the AEF CP had supported 114 total sorties and 230 deployed personnel with outstanding service and minimal downtime. They developed strong rapport with the Slovakian military, who expressed great interest in U.S. Air Force communications capabilities, and proved to be gracious hosts providing excellent food.

Overall, Exercise Lion's Claw was a highly successful deployment and an incredible learning experience.

# Warrior attitude

By Lt. Col. Frank K. Brooks Jr.

52nd Communications Squadron Commander  
Spangdahlem AB, Germany

To first put things in perspective, most airman basics headed for their first duty assignment weren't even in high school when the following events took place. To those young airmen, I say this story is not unique. In 1994, 20,000 American troops descended on the island nation of Haiti. It wasn't the first time in U.S. history we were asked to deploy, and it won't be the last....

Hot! If I'd been in a bathing suit tanning on the beach, I'd have considered this to be a hot day. During the general's staff meeting, the weather officer had said today's temperature would peak at 110, with humidity remaining around 100 percent. Since I wasn't in a bathing suit, I decided it must be quite a bit hotter.

My dress on this fine Caribbean day was full battle dress uniform, Kevlar helmet, flak jacket, web gear with weapon, and ... guess what ... sleeves rolled down. It seemed our island paradise had a nasty little creature called the mosquito that carried Dungee Fever, which caused severe vomiting, diarrhea and disabling dehydration. The only cure was immediate evacuation state-side for extended hospital care. Although I hung it up the night before, my shirt was still wet with sweat when I put it on this morning. There was too much humidity for our clothes to dry overnight, and too few opportunities to hand wash clothes for a fresh set every day.

The day had started off with my first sergeant's yells. Upon sliding his foot into a boot, he was rudely introduced to an unwelcome visitor. A tarantula had cozied up inside the night before. Tarantulas on this island appeared to have a healthy diet – most were more than three inches long. No, they aren't poisonous, but the first shirt said the one that bit him had a healthy set of fangs and took out a good chunk of

big toe. We averaged finding two a day in our small airfield encampment. Including the shirt, our casualties had risen to 25.

Later I saw him limping to lunch. He said his toe was better – the bleeding had stopped – but he was more upset that no one else had woken up during his wailing. We both knew why. We were working these guys and gals extra hard. Personnel and equipment was still flowing into the headquarters, and our full complement of communicators was yet to arrive. The folks on site worked extended 16-hour shifts in arduous conditions. Twenty-plus rode to work at shift change on the back of two uncovered 5-ton trucks, in full combat gear, with an M-16 pointing skyward, a full magazine and a chambered round.

I told the shirt I needed to set up a convoy to fix a microwave dish we set up at the U.S. Embassy downtown. Any trips off the airfield required a minimum of two vehicles with four armed guards, counting the two technicians we needed to fix the problem, which meant six people would make the trip. The four guards came from off-duty volunteers. I told the shirt I would make this trip, and he volunteered to be a driver, so that meant only two people would lose sleep. Believe it or not, we never lacked volunteers.

Although the previous day snipers had fired on a convoy traveling the same route, our outbound trip was uneventful. At the street-side embassy, we posted four guards around the vehicles, while the technicians went inside. While we waited, a group approached us, and from the back, an elderly lady stepped forward, smiled and said, "I am so glad you have come. Thank you." Then they walked away, leaving me with a reinforced feeling that all this *was* worth it.

It really doesn't matter where we were or what our job was – we were communicators with a mission. As then, in the future we'll continue to find ourselves in situations that require perseverance and mental toughness. Although I described just a few hardships, there were other challenges, such as poor food, water, sanitation and sleeping conditions. Remarkably, however, there were few complaints. The situation improved. Every day someone would do something to make it a little better than the day before. And upon returning home, we were all proud to have been a part of the effort. This was Haiti in 1994. But again, our experiences were not unique.

Most recently, communicators have met similar challenges in Saudi Arabia '91, Somalia '93, Bosnia '95, Kosovo '99, and Mozambique '00. We are a part of the American fighting force. We bring to the fight not just the ability to communicate anytime, anywhere, but to be able to do it under any conditions. "Hats off!" to all of you comm warriors.

## Why I stay ...

**Cheryl  
Kampwerth**  
Air Force  
Communications  
Agency  
Scott AFB,  
Ill.



I continue in the civil service because of the opportunities to excel and opportunities for promotion. The training programs are a big benefit in making this happen. I also find that civil service is very family oriented. This helps when juggling family and career.

# One small *STEP* for ... mankind

By Senior Master Sgt. Bob Borden  
422nd Air Base Squadron  
RAF Croughton, England

When flooding devastated Mozambique in southern Africa, what was one of the first requirements of the humanitarian relief troops on the ground? Communications! Considering the damage and lack of resources, how were these troops going to communicate with the rest of the world to ensure support was directed where it was most critical? The answer was Standardized Tactical Entry Point.

The STEP package is a system of deployable and fixed communications equipment providing mobile forces with quick, reliable reachback communications under virtually any conditions.

During Operation Atlas Response, RAF Croughton, England, provided essential communications support for deployed units in Beira, Mozambique. On the ground in Beira, the 352nd Special Operations Support Squadron, RAF Mildenhall, England, set up and maintained the deployed communications suite. In the meantime, 422nd Air Base Squadron personnel at RAF Croughton configured and maintained the fixed satellite terminal and systems control equipment to allow processing of information to and from the field. This operation solidified STEP's place as a viable communications backbone for deployed forces.

Tech. Sgt. Bill Brodie, systems controller and STEP mission coordinator, said, "Our technicians extended reachback communications services via satellite systems and ensured highly reliable record message traffic, secure and non-secure internet access, and voice support for both mission related and morale purposes."



*Photo by Tech. Sgt. Bill Brodie*

**Tech. Sgt. Craig McClure programs a Switched Multiplex Unit at RAF Croughton, England.**



*Photo by Mike Williams*

**Staff Sgt. John Parker checks the receive signal level of the link providing comm service to Beira, Mozambique.**

These capabilities provided ground troops the tools to maintain contact with aircrews, and ensured availability of telephone communications to send secure and non-secure data. Master Sgt. Brian Roshitsh, NCO in charge, Satellite Communications at RAF Croughton, said, "From a SATCOM point of view, we met the short-notice access request for satellite service, establishing an up-link (RF-loop) four hours prior to the distant end coming on-line." The timely link establishment helped the 352nd bring up their end of the link and gave Croughton the opportunity to coordinate with the Defense Information Systems Agency-Europe (DISA-EUR) to smooth out Integrated Digital Network Exchange (IDNX) demodulator path errors, once the link was activated. The resultant, rather unorthodox change in configuration will be noted as a "lesson learned" by DISA-EUR for future missions when the LMST and USC-59 equipment sets are deployed. Requested by the 352nd as their primary gateway, the 422nd provided seamless, 100 percent reliable service. Additionally, in keeping with our unit goals, Croughton maintained continuous contact with deployed forces during the operation to provide premier service.

The men and women of the 422nd are proud of the service they provide day-to-day, and especially during operations such as this humanitarian relief effort.

The citizens of Mozambique appreciated United States military support during this difficult time. Everyone, on and behind the scenes, supporting this outreach mission can truly say they contributed to an effort that provided one small STEP for the betterment of mankind.

# NCO's efforts link deployed troops to world

By 2nd Lt.

**Steven Wieland**

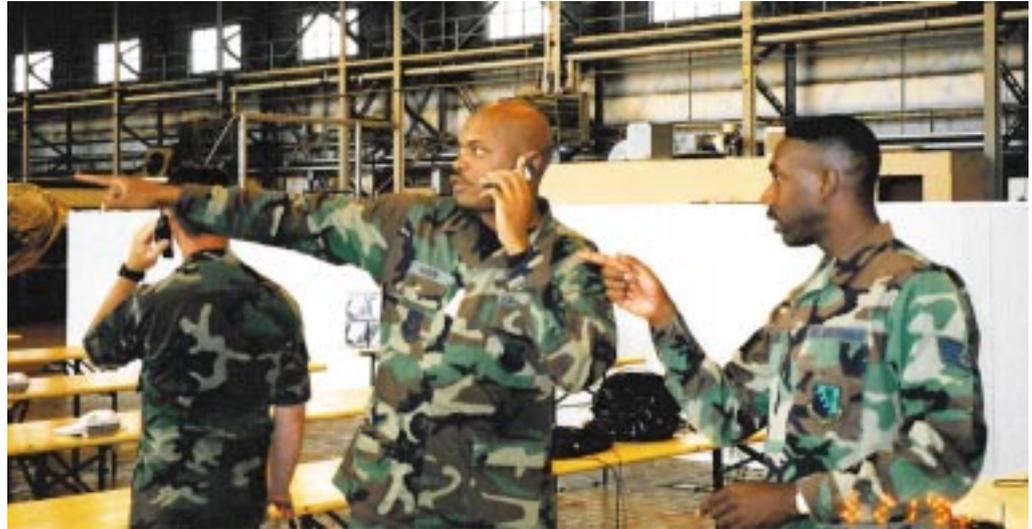
*Officer in Charge, Wire Systems, Aviano AB, Italy*

Describing the telephone shop at Aviano Air Base as "busy" over the past year is like saying that having your head in the mouth of a hungry lion is a "somewhat uncomfortable situation." Between the Yugoslavia air campaign, five Presidential visits and 67 percent manning, the telephone shop still managed to get the job done, thanks in large part to the efforts of Staff Sgt. Gary Hanson.

Aviano underwent three contingency buildups designed as a show-of-force. They required extensive support of short-notice deployments. As crew chief, Hanson held the communications reins for bed-downs of the 52nd Fighter Wing, British Tornados, and NATO Airborne Warning and Control System.

During early stages of Operation Allied Force, Hanson served as field crew chief, overseeing installation of most telephone circuits. In April, Hanson began coordinating all work orders for every telephone circuit on base. Essentially, he determined exact requirements and assigned a crew to install each circuit. A daunting task, considering, as Hanson pointed out, "Anyplace that somebody was working or sleeping, they wanted a phone there. If there was extra space, they put somebody there, and virtually every building on base had more phones installed." In all, 7,500 personnel, supporting more than 200 aircraft in combat operations, demanded that Hanson and his people install more than 350 phones.

After the war, the ops tempo for the telephone shop did not slow one bit. Just two days after cessation of bombing, President Clinton gave a victory speech to the troops at



**Staff Sgt. Gary Hanson helps customers.**

Aviano and to the world. On short notice, Hanson headed a team that ran over 200 circuits allowing the press corps to phone, fax and e-mail stories to their home offices. They also integrated the White House Communications Agency's mobile telephone switch into Aviano's telecommunications. This massive project was so transparent to reporters and others attending the speech that it appeared routine. Over the next year, the President visited four more times, with Hanson leading the way to provide outstanding communications services.

When asked what he likes about the Air Force, Hanson said, "Opportunities for training, working with different people and doing a variety of things." He said his Air Force management experiences are far superior to those offered in the civilian world. In essence, the importance and responsibility of the job keeps him in the service.

After the 79-day war, President Clinton said, "Now, I know this has been difficult for many of you. To sleep 10 to a tent, work 12-hour shifts, six days a week. Hard for some of you to spend last Father's Day alone, waiting to hear your child's small voice a long way away on a *telephone*." That's more proof contributions and hard work from

people like Hanson make bigger impacts than most people realize. So the next time you pick up the phone, think about him and his fellow Air Force telephone technicians, working hard every day to make your calls routinely possible.

## Why I stay ...

**1st Lt.  
Mark  
Long**

*53rd CSS  
Eglin AFB,  
Fla. (Prior  
enlisted)*



"I'm mainly staying in because of the training I'm receiving, and good job security. I really like the quality of life in the Air Force. I work with great people and my job is challenging. Every day we're working with evolving, cutting-edge technology. And as technology changes, we constantly have to keep up. I'm always finding new opportunities to excel."

# Advisors address healthcare concerns

By Staff Sgt. A.J. Bosker  
*Air Force Print News*

WASHINGTON — To better address concerns and questions about healthcare, military health officials are working to make Air Force people more aware of patient advocacy resources.

“For decades, we have had health benefits advisors whose job is to help patients,” said Lt. Col. Ed LeBlanc, deputy chief of Health Benefits and Policy, Air Force Surgeon General. “They may be called by different names at different facilities, but their function is basically the same — help patients resolve their problems or concerns.”

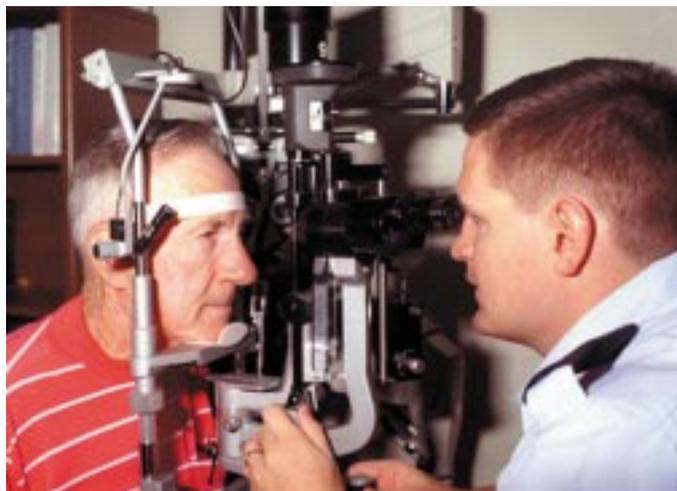
“We discovered the problem is people are not aware of who they (health benefits advisors) are or how to contact them. We need to get the word out and make sure people know there is a system to help them and how to access it,” said Maj. Jon Rychalski, operations officer in the Air Force Surgeon General’s Medical Programs and Resources Directorate.

Formalizing customer service programs into a single patient advocacy program, the military health system established a single position — the beneficiary counseling and assistance coordinator

— at all TRICARE lead agents and military treatment facilities.

“Although there is now one person designated at each MTF whose primary job is to work patient issues and oversee the MTF’s patient relations program, there are many people who are trained to assist patients with issues or questions,” Rychalski said.

In addition to the beneficiary counseling and assistance coordinator, the Air Force Surgeon



**To assist patients with questions or concerns, the Air Force surgeon general established beneficiary counseling and assistance coordinators at all TRICARE lead agents and Air Force military treatment facilities.**

General’s office surveyed Air Force MTFs to see what other initiatives were being implemented, Rychalski said.

“Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., established a customer service center and staffed it with four full-time people trained to handle patient inquiries,” Rychalski said. “At Columbus AFB, Miss., everyone (in the MTF) is taught to be an ambassador. These ambassadors are given time to contact patients to find out what they thought about the service they received rather than wait for a patient to call the MTF about a problem they encountered.”

These two examples showcase the overall patient advocacy program goal — getting all medical personnel to focus on customer service and satisfaction. “Everyone in the MTF should be a customer service representative and assist or refer you to someone for guidance,” Rychalski said. “The best thing for a patient to do if they have a problem is to try to solve it at the lowest level — ask someone at that particular clinic. They may be able to help the patient immediately.”

According to LeBlanc, the objective of these initiatives is not only to address individual patient concerns and problems, but also to use that information to solve system-wide problems.

“We are taking the (most common concerns) among patients — issues with claims processing, appointment and accessibility problems — and working to improve the overall system,” LeBlanc said.

“The system is there to help our patients,” said Col. Allen Middleton, director of Medical Programs and Resources, Air Force Surgeon General. “We want people to know what resources are available and to use them.”

*Why I stay ...*

**1st Lt. John Vickery**  
53rd CSS  
Eglin AFB, Fla.



“Defending our nation is the main reason I’m staying in. This is a very rewarding career field. There’s an incredible level of responsibility in configuring and maintaining multimillion-dollar equipment. I can see how my daily contributions are helping to support our Air Force, not just the bottom line of some business.”

# In for 20? You bet!

**By Senior Airman  
Michael B. Halbrook**

*690th Combat Support Squadron*

**KELLY AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFPN)** — I recently spoke at the Kelly Air Force Base “Right Decision” seminar. This is a program that reminds first-and second-term airmen who are close to re-enlisting about the benefits they will lose if they decide to leave the service. It is also a forum for senior leaders to let these airmen know how important they are and that they care about their future.

As I watched people come through the door, I remembered the feelings I had when I first considered leaving the Air Force. Everyone asked, “Are you sure this is what you want?” and “Think of your benefits.” Like many of the airmen in this seminar, I didn’t want to hear it — I was getting out. I separated from the Air Force in May 1999.

Many asked me why, but I really didn’t have a definite answer. I guess I thought the grass was greener on the other side. I came up with a million excuses back then, but today I see that none of them were really valid. I learned some very hard and valuable lessons last summer. I also found out the job I had in the Air Force wasn’t as bad as I thought.

I started looking for a civilian job eight months before my separation date, but nothing ever panned out. I used every possible means I had, including every online resume Web site on the Internet. So with no job, my wife, Stacey, and I moved back home to Florida and settled in with my parents. It wasn’t a bad experience, but going back to live with your parents is something you really don’t want to do.

My wife is a travel agent and found a job right away, but it paid only half of what she made during

my last Air Force assignment in Colorado. Meanwhile, I continued hitting the pavement in search of the right job. I finally had to take what I could get, and accepted a sales position at a local radio station. Not a bad job, but if you don’t sell, you don’t get paid.

In July my uncle suggested I go to Georgia to look for a job, so Stacey and I loaded up our car again. Like before, Stacey found something right away that paid excellent money, so we were able to get an apartment. I on the other hand, just about lived at the local labor department — I think they knew me by my first name. In desperation, I started dropping off resumes at local department stores along with any leads I got from the labor office.

When the phone finally rang, it was not the job I had hoped for, but we needed the money, so I went for an interview and was hired on the spot. And that’s how, after four years in the Air Force installing high-tech, complex computer systems for the North American Aerospace Defense Command at Cheyenne Mountain Air Station, I ended stocking shelves at a department store. I’m not putting this job down, but I thought I could have found something better. I worked like a dog for four months unloading boxes, helping with inventory, and working late nights and extra hours just to make ends meet.

The real turning point came when Stacey and I had about \$34 left to last us two weeks. If not for our families, I don’t know what we would have done. I knew then that getting out of the Air Force had been a terrible decision. I hadn’t looked at the big picture or how this decision would affect my wife.

The next day I called my local recruiter, and that is why I’m telling my story today.

I have three points of advice for

anyone thinking of getting out without having a job lined up: One: Start saving now, just in case you end up like me with nothing to fall back on. Two: Think of your family. Right now they have insurance, and so do you. It gets real expensive on the outside and most of the time, it takes awhile before the benefits kick in.

Three and most importantly: Get all the education you can and get that degree — it’s the most valuable piece of paper you will ever receive.

I didn’t come back into the Air Force just for the money, but having a job with security is an awesome feeling. I also missed wearing the Air Force uniform and all the perks that come with it.

This is not a feel-sorry-for-me story. I just want to let others know things are a little different on the outside, and to keep what happened to me and my family from happening to them.

Many people have asked if I am in for good this time. I just smile back and say, “For the full 20!”

Why I stay ...

**Pat Stevens**  
*Comm & Info Directorate  
HQ Air Mobility  
Command, Scott AFB*

“Most of my career has been working with the Air Force at Scott AFB. I stay for the people. Friendships come and go, some stay in touch. It’s always a surprise to see or hear from someone who I had previously crossed paths with.”



# Definitive performance feedback carries chief toward 30 years

By Chief Master Sgt.  
Richard A. Baker  
HQ Air Mobility Command  
Scott AFB, Ill.

At 20 years in the service, in the midst of some very negative times and people, I began to ask myself why I continued to do what I felt was right for myself, others, my organization and the Air Force. Why did I persist in being positive, when others constantly said my efforts were a waste of time and would never make a difference?

With more than 28 years of service, I now know exactly what encouraged me to pursue the challenge. It was feedback! But not just



the general type of feedback that's too vague to be worth anything. I'm talking about *specific* feedback that lets you know exactly what you're doing well or not so well.

Definitive feedback on my performance is what carried me through the hard times. Now I want to return the favor and tell you how you can benefit from the right kind of feedback: the *specific* kind. General feedback focuses primarily on feelings and attitudes. For example, if someone says, "Gee, you look good today," or "Great job! Keep up the good work," it's a nice compliment, but they aren't giving you any specific information to help you repeat your success or improve your work tomorrow. And there lies the problem with the general form of feedback.

Specific feedback, on the other hand, deals with the what, when and where of one's actions. For example, if someone says, "That color makes you look older," it may not be something you wanted to hear, but it's still information you can use. Or what about the statement, "You need to improve on customer service?" What would be better is, "When a customer arrives, I don't want them to have to wait more than five minutes before being served." Now at least you have a standard to gauge how well you're meeting or exceeding expected performance.

So what's the point? All concerned will benefit if you ask for, and give, specific feedback on the types of behavior desired. Why frustrate yourself and your workers with generalities? In the long run, you'll be the one to benefit.

One last thing, when evaluating others or even yourself, remember success has many meanings. "Failing less" is a form of success. Supervisors, praise your people, especially when they're failing less. The gains you'll receive will benefit both you and your workers. This is the classic win/win, and isn't that what we're all really looking for?

## NCO starts over at the halfway point

By Staff Sgt. Thomas Zakrzewski  
HQ Air Mobility Command  
Scott AFB, Ill.

I was recently "volunteered" for an assignment that I heard was undesirable to most people. However, after doing a little research and talking to my sponsor, I found that while the job wasn't necessarily the best, taking it was an acceptable sacrifice because the overall package was very desirable. Due my recent assignment selection, I was allowed to reenlist early, qualifying me for a decent reenlistment bonus. This was a huge plus, since it gave me a way to clear out some credit card mistakes earlier in my career. I got a chance to start over, and I'm not going to waste it.

I now have almost 10 years in the Air Force, with no college degree. I figure 10 years gives me enough time to earn a bachelor's, and maybe even a master's, before retirement becomes an issue. With tuition assistance, and possibly even some of the available grant money, I can make my education goals a reality, even

as a part-time student.

Another reason I'm staying in is the fact that my family frequently uses the medical benefits. I doubt that I could have afforded the amount of care my family has received in the last two years if I were a civilian.

My family is agreeable to my decision to stay. The retirement may not seem like much now, but it will be enough to pay for a house while I embark on my new career as a civilian. And the longer I stay, the more opportunities I get for on-the-job training, without having to pay a dime.

Military life isn't for everyone. Other members are in different situations, with various opinions that change from day to day. Sometime down the road, my opinion may change too. But, at least for now, the Air Force is the place for me.



# Airman sees 'big picture' through small lens

By Senior Airman  
Matthew Hannen  
Incirlik AB, Turkey



There are many reasons why I think being an Air Force photographer is such a great career field.

First, when I follow generals around, I learn many things about the Air Force from their point of view, which adds to my normal day-to-day experience of airman and NCO points of view. Being around general officers has really changed my perception of how the political process works. I've been able to see a much bigger picture of the Air Force overall.

I find being a photographer affords me the opportunity to make a lot of career decisions for myself. It's not always easy for airmen of my rank to find this in other career fields. My job requires me to demonstrate

a high degree of responsibility and leadership.

I've been in the Air Force for four years, and I've been lucky enough to have the opportunity to travel around the world and take pictures of the many places I go – whether it's the people, their culture or landscapes. I've also been able to write about these experiences for the base newspaper and various presentations. I feel I'm contributing to the Air Force community by showing my photos and writing about them for others to see.

While I was stationed in Turkey, my photographic skills became invaluable to the Incirlik base community. They helped large numbers of Air Force members coming from the states to learn about an unfamiliar culture. I felt like a guide, helping them to not get lost in the local community. I got to experience this rare opportunity that others can't even imagine. I enjoy being an Air Force photographer, and I can't think of a better job.

## Graphics troop enjoys Air Force's Global Reach

By Staff Sgt. Robert A. Talenti  
Visual Information  
Ramstein AB, Germany



As a 3V071 Visual Information craftsman, I'm very pleased to tell you about the best career field in the Air Force. I've been in it since I was selected for direct duty in basic training. Back then, it was Graphic Arts, and with merging and combining, we've grown to encompass presentations, film library and even facets of reproduction graphics.

I find this job very exciting. I really enjoy being a primary mobility team member, and often a mobility team chief. The photo I provided was taken in South Africa during Operation Atlas Response. It was an incredible opportunity to help flood victims in that area of the world. You might ask, "How did a graphics NCO help in a humanitarian mission?" I provided graphic

support to the Joint Task Force commander, historian and various other deployed organizations. Additionally, our team captured digital still and video images and transmitted them to the Joint Combat Camera Center and other servers. This imagery gave our senior leadership a near real-time feel for the situation at hand. A picture is worth a thousand words, or possibly a thousand dollars... maybe even a thousand lives.

I'm in a job that challenges me and is always different from day to day. I hope to continue to work my way up the ladder of rank and responsibility in the Visual Information world, while mentoring as many subordinates along the way as possible. I have a personal goal of obtaining the position of Air Force Visual Information functional manager.

Global Reach ... Global Images!

### *intercom* special focus issues

The following is a schedule of upcoming *intercom* issues. If you would like to submit an article or photos for any issue, please contact Tech. Sgt. Michael Leonard at DSN 576-4396, or send an e-mail to [intercom@scott.af.mil](mailto:intercom@scott.af.mil).

**August 2000 *intercom***  
*Competitive Sourcing  
& Privatization*  
Deadline is June 30

**September 2000 *intercom***  
*Deployable Comm*  
Deadline is July 31

**October 2000 *intercom***  
*Almanac issue*  
Deadline is Aug. 31

**November 2000 *intercom***  
*Information Operations*  
Deadline is Sept. 29

**December 2000 *intercom***  
*Closing the book  
on 20th Century*  
Deadline is Oct. 31

# What's the AF done for you lately?

By Master Sgt. Mark Overton  
11th Communications Squadron  
Bolling AFB, Md.

“Are you better off now than you were two years ago?” That’s the question the Air Force can ask the enlisted force today with confidence of receiving some positive responses. Facing steadily falling retention rates in recent years, Air Force leaders have sharpened their focus on people issues – providing better tangible and intangible benefits – and their efforts are paying off.

When you originally enlisted, you had your own reasons, but what’s in it for you now if you stay? What has the Air Force done for you lately?

Lt. Gen. Donald Peterson, Air Force deputy chief of staff for Personnel, summarized it saying, “We made many improvements last year in tangible reasons to stay, with significant gains in pay, retirement and compensation. We’ve also worked hard to give our people and their families more stability and predictability with the implementation of the Expeditionary Air Force concept. We must find the appropriate mix of tangible and intangible factors. These intangibles include teamwork, camaraderie, high quality people and the satisfaction of serving our nation.” Carol DiBattiste, undersecretary of the Air Force, added, “There have been many positive changes in pay and benefits this year and we are moving in the right direction.”

Other benefit improvements include increased enlisted promotion rates, expanded selective reenlistment bonuses, and stabilized operations tempo via a reduction in exercises, inspections and post-deployment stand-down programs. Many of the first-term airmen I talked with indicated another key benefit is job security, compared with the relative uncertainties of civilian employment.

In addition to basic pay, there’s the added value of reliable benefits and entitlements: special and incentive pay; monetary allowances for food, quarters and clothing; travel; housing; education; medical and dental care; legal services; family support centers; and retirement benefits. The Air Force definitely offers a high quality Services program, with fitness and wellness centers, sports activities, childcare and youth programs, outdoor recreation opportunities, clubs, libraries, skill development centers, community activity centers, and lodging and food services.

Added to these basic benefits are unique opportu-

nities to serve as an ambassador for peace and America’s culture, traditions and values, in a setting of world leaders and global events. You could be participating in a humanitarian operation in the wilds of Africa; helping to uphold individual freedoms and democracy in Kuwait or Bosnia; serving in our nation’s capital, where local news is world news; or enjoying off-duty time sightseeing in such diverse locations as Rome, Osan, Manila, England, Japan, Panama or Puerto Rico. These are experiences you can never fully appreciate with books, videos or the Internet. You have to be there – and staying with the Air Force gives you that chance.

There are other things to look forward to, such as the satisfaction that comes with achieving your next promotion; learning a new job; gaining supervisory, management and leadership skills; receiving high technology training; building personal character via the Air Force core values; gaining personal respect regardless of rank; being recognized for your achievements; and living a quality life. Whatever your goals, the Air Force offers benefits and opportunities that you can tailor to fit your needs, while you build your experience, qualifications, enthusiasm and self-confidence.

If you want to help make your vision a reality, sign up to reenlist or extend your service in the Air Force when you’re eligible! Although we no

longer have unit career advisors, you can talk with your supervisor, first sergeant or military personnel flight to learn more about the specifics of these benefits and why you should stay in the Air Force. You can also converse with former members and hear about positive things that they miss about serving with the Air Force team. Communicate with your friends and family and listen to their testimonials on why they stayed or want to stay.

On the other hand, if you decide to separate from the Air Force, ensure that you first put all of the planning and transition pieces together, evaluate your needs and resources, and then make an informed decision. The Air Force has an excellent transition assistance program.

Whatever your decision, I encourage you to follow some basic guidelines: control your destiny, go with your strengths, do what is best for you, have a positive attitude, and love every day that you serve.

But my final piece of advice is to incorporate staying in the Air Force into your plans now. Air Force leaders will continue to find new ways to win your confidence. If I can help, you can contact me at DSN 297-0366 or via e-mail: [mark.overton@bolling.af.mil](mailto:mark.overton@bolling.af.mil)



# NCO makes lemonade out of lemons

By **Tech. Sgt. Christopher G. Myers**  
*17th Training Support Squadron  
Goodfellow AFB, Texas*

In 1981, I received my bachelor's degree in graphic design from Portland School of Art in Maine. I worked odd jobs in graphics during that "recession" period for advertising agencies, magazine publication houses, textbook publishers, and media production houses.



In 1982, I finally landed a full-time job with Carlough and Sandage Advertising in Burlington, Vt. I got \$500 a month! I joined the Vermont Army National Guard as a private first class to make an extra \$150 a month as an 81E graphics troop just to buy groceries. I was immediately fired from my civilian job.

The National Guard took great care of me. They put me in their summer hire program as a GS-4 at \$800 a month. In fact, they took such good care of me that I asked my commander to let me go on active duty. He recommended joining the Air Force, since he thought I'd have better opportunities as an artist there than in any of the other services. I enlisted in the Air Force May 3, 1983 as an Airman First Class and was sent to our graphics school at Lowry AFB, Colo.

I made more money as an airman first class than I had as a full-time civilian graphics designer. On top of that, I had free room and board. I also had something I badly missed as a civilian — respect. My peers respected me. My supervisors respected me. It was intoxicating and I was hooked! As a civilian artist, I was thought of as different — all "artists" were. As a military member I was an A1C with a specialty. I was a team member and I loved it.

I made E-4 "buck sergeant" at RAF Mildenhall. I was the first NCO in my family's history. "Sergeant Myers" couldn't have been prouder. I married Diana Welstand, my very best friend, the very next year.

We moved to Edwards AFB, Calif., where I worked the B-1B program. I tested and was promoted to staff sergeant. By that time I was making more money than the very best of my civilian equivalents.

I had more authority and more responsibilities than they would ever see.

I had a house.

Compared to where they were, I was in heaven.

Once again it was the respect that kept me moving. I received three national-level awards from the Society of Experimental Test Pilots for briefings on the B-1B bomber that I designed and produced while assigned to

that team. I then worked the C-17 Combined Test Force for six years — from cradle to grave. I handled all the graphics needs of a bird colonel, several commercial contracting agencies, aircraft companies, and a 1,000-man test force. I did it all! It was my biggest accomplishment to date, and my pride kept me re-enlisting.

Diana and I moved to Goodfellow AFB, Texas, when the C-17 program ended. I worked the P-23 Crash Rescue Recovery Vehicle program here. I won Top Tech VIII! Boy, was that a thrill! My fourth national-level award! No one in my graduating class in college ever did that. I was promoted to technical sergeant, making more money than most of the managers in the graphics field.

I also get better medical care, education and training. But, most importantly I'm able to teach and train those younger than myself. I now facilitate the Airman's Professional Development Course as a member of the Junior Enlisted Council. I assist in molding the next generation of airmen.

The future is bright. I have an excellent chance of making master sergeant very soon and going on to the next level as a unit or base-level manager.

Throughout my 16 years with the Air Force, I have had more of everything than my civilian counterparts. I make more money. I get more respect. I have better recourse for grievances. I have the ability to teach. I have won four national level awards. I have received the respect and even admiration of my peers, both civilian and military. I have been able to make a difference in communicating information — the job I have wanted to do all along, and have lived high on the hog while doing it. It's been a great life and I'm nowhere near done yet — just watch!

Will I re-enlist in 2001? You bet! Thank you for allowing me to share this with you!

*Why I stay ...*

**Staff Sgt.  
Shane  
Ware**  
*53rd CSS  
Eglin AFB,  
Fla.*



"Having the Information Management career field absorbed into Comm has changed my work life greatly. I'm getting great new training and awesome experience that will really help me when I'm looking for a job after I retire from active duty. As an added bonus, I enjoy what I do and the people I work with. Plus I get to see the world."

# Why I stay ...

**Senior Airman  
Tracy M. Anastasia**  
*Sheppard AFB, Texas*

Tracy is currently in Airman Leadership School.

As her flight commander, I can tell you she is a very bright individual. She recently reenlisted for another four years. She made staff sergeant the first time testing and is patiently awaiting her "all remaining" line number to come up. In addition to being a professional video specialist on duty, she is aggressively pursuing her bachelor's degree and only requires eight more classes before completion. In 1999, Tracy was a key member of the Interactive Video Teletraining team that was presented with the 1999 CINC's Installation Excellence Award for Special Recognition at Sheppard.



leaders, and spending 16 years overseas, I guess I can say I achieved my goals. Aim High America!"

**Staff Sgt. Tracey Ulanski**  
*NCO in charge, Certification & Accreditation Support Team, & Communications Systems Computer Programmer*  
*Maxwell AFB-Gunter Annex, Ala.*

"I have always been fascinated with the concepts of teamwork, precision, and serving the common good. I have a stable career job with good benefits. The opportunities for education and self-improvement are virtually limitless, and in my overall experience, the Air Force really does care about its people. The number of self-support and family support programs is incredible. There have been occasions when I needed help, yet couldn't ask for it, and others were there to offer me a hand and pull me up.



I plan on staying in the military for at least 20 years. The experience and fulfillment I have gotten so far would already carry me a long way out in the civilian community, and probably for more pay. But civilian employers don't offer what the military can as far as benefits and personal support.

I like my job, I like my place, and I feel secure in it. As long as my bills are paid, I don't need any more than that."

**Master Sgt. Norman A. Hill III**  
*NCOIC, Interactive Video*  
*Sheppard AFB, Texas*

"Being a member of the Air Force has been a very positive aspect of my life. When I joined, my

goal was to serve my obligation of four years and then go back to civilian life. That was in 1981. I've been in ever since. My career has been primarily in heavy aircraft maintenance. I've worked on several variations of the C-135 (EC, KC and RC) and the NATO E-3A. Being a crew chief for these Air Force logistical workhorses was a very challenging and rewarding job. During my assignment to NATO Air Base, Geilenkirchen, Germany, I accepted an opportunity to retrain into the 3VOX3 Visual Information Production & Documentation field. My previous experience helped me transition smoothly from crew chief to videographer.

Retraining has enhanced my military experience, while helping me contribute in another way to the accomplishment of the Air Force mission."

**Rose McCall**  
*Audiovisual Technician*  
*Maxwell AFB-Gunter Annex, Ala.*

"Although I have been an audiovisual technician for two years, I have worked in the Maxwell-Gunter community for more than 14 years and I love my job.

I get a chance to talk to people all over the world, from Ramstein to Hawaii, and I have made a lot of friends.

I also get calls from people all over the Air Force who have been referred to me to test their equipment on dial-up connections. I have a fun office and I work with some really wonderful people. I wouldn't trade this in for anything."



"I believe the Air Force offers opportunities like no other career calling—boundless opportunities—if you are willing to take advantage of them! I joined the Air Force to get an education and see the world. Nearly 30 years later, having been an airman basic to staff sergeant, Airman Education Commissioning Program selectee, going from second lieutenant to lieutenant colonel, earned a bachelor's degree in computer science, a master's degree in aeronautical science, worked with and learned from the brightest and best