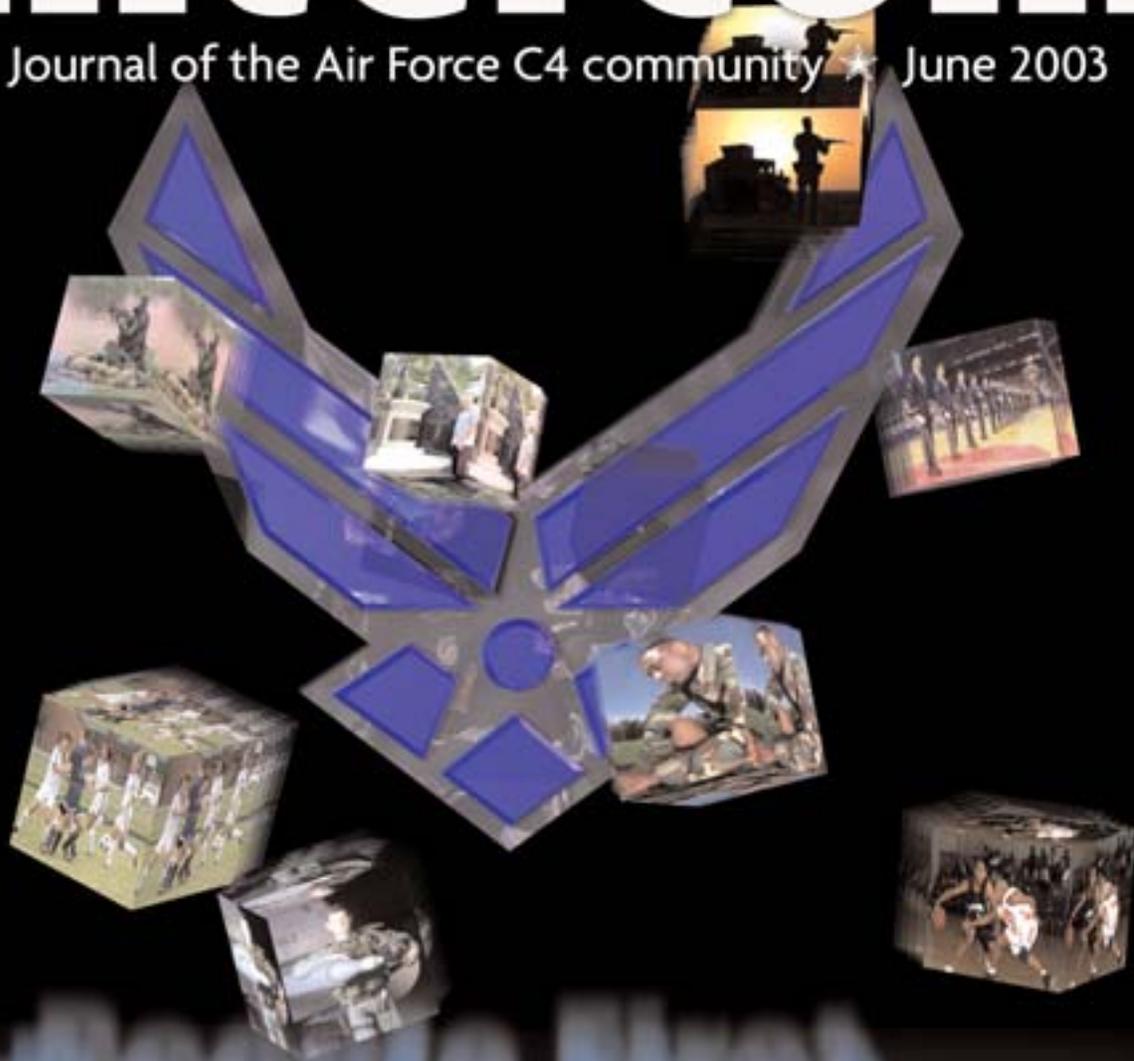


intercom

Journal of the Air Force C4 community ★ June 2003



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- ▶▶ Civilian career force transformation
- ▶▶ Joint Operations, seamless integration
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intercom



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THE JOURNAL OF THE AIR FORCE C4 COMMUNITY

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Submitting to the intercom

Stories should be in Microsoft Word format and should be no longer than 600 words. Photographs should be at least 5x7 in size and 300 dpi. Submit stories via e-mail to intercom@scott.af.mil.

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From the editorial desk

By **Lori Manske**
Chief, AFCA Public Affairs

This issue marks the beginning of a whole new era for the *intercom* magazine as we hop on the warfighting integration world's bandwagon of transformation.

Part of that transformation begins with a change in editorial staffing. Kudos goes to **Tech. Sgt. Mike Leonard** who spent the past four years editing and designing the magazine, and he's done a great job! Honestly, we don't know how he was able to pull it off, working most of this job alone! He's off to the Netherlands now, and in his place is another award-winning editor, **Tech. Sgt. Jim Verchio**. Congratulations to him as he was recently recognized as a Thomas Jefferson Award Winner, which is a Department of Defense-level journalism award for his work on the base newspaper for Travis AFB, Calif. We also brought over **Master Sgt. Karen Pettit**, who previously served as Air Mobility Command's Newspaper

Consultant, working with editorial staffs from the 12 AMC bases, as well as representing the command at Air Force journalism workshops teaching design.

These two folks have reworked the content and tweaked the editorial policy for the magazine based on recommendations from our commander, and feedback from experts who judge Air Force newspapers and magazines each year in the annual media contest for the career field.

Several new initiatives for the magazine include a section called **Techno Gizmo** where we highlight some of the cool technology we're using throughout the Air Force; a historical section called **Time Machine** where we will focus on people and events who've made contributions to the comm and info field; and a **News Briefs** section where we highlight personnel news. Another restructuring you'll see is a narrowing of the theme each month to the front half of the magazine, while the back half is reserved for "operational" stories,

so we can publish those in a more timely manner. So, feel free to keep submitting stories about your achievements even if it doesn't fit that month's theme.

One item we'd like to stress is that we would love to publish **Letters to the Editor**. We want your feedback on the stories published, and your overall comments are welcomed. In fact, one reader already suggested a Q&A session each month with our legal experts. Thanks for that great idea!

We hope you enjoy the fine efforts of our staff as we give you a publication that mirrors the high-tech world we live and work in. Our vision is to be the voice of the warfighting integration community; to keep you ahead of the changing times; to keep you informed of policies, systems, heritage, technology and doctrine; and to increase morale by showcasing the great talent out there. You are a key to this process. Enjoy!



Submissions & Deadlines



Stories: The following guide will help you gauge how a story's length translates into our page layout. Most stories should be around 300-400 words for a one-page layout, usually no more than 700 words for a two-page layout.

400 words

◀ This gives us room to use photos & other enhancing techniques.

Of course, if a story warrants more coverage, then we have the flexibility to do so.

700 words

◀ This would either be edited or run over two pages.

Themes: The editorial staff has planned the following themes for the rest of 2003, and listed are the deadlines for submissions:

July: Battlelabs

Deadline passed

Aug: Annual Award Winners

Deadline is June 15

Sept: Operation Iraqi Freedom & OEF updates

Deadline is July 15

Oct: Almanac

Deadline is Aug. 15

Nov: Expeditionary Communications

Deadline is Sept. 15

Dec: Combat Camera

Deadline is Oct. 15

Photos:

Please don't embed photos into a word document or PowerPoint presentation. Photos are best when submitted as a .jpeg or .tiff extension, at least 5x7 in dimension, and at a 300 dpi. If we're using your photo for a full page spread, submit an 8x10 for better reproduction.

Call DSN 779-5690 to discuss story ideas or send an e-mail to intercom@scott.af.mil To provide feedback via survey style: www.afnews.af.mil/internal/survey/survey_index.htm

JOINT OPERATIONS

Closing C4ISR seams through experimentation, strategic planning and an operational focus

From
the Top

By Brig. Gen. Dan Goodrich

Director for Command, Control, Communications, Computer, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Integration and Deputy Chief of Staff for Warfighting Integration

We're living in a fast-paced, chaotic world; stability and predictability are long behind us.

We don't have to look any further than our current opstempo for examples. From Operation Enduring Freedom to Operation Iraqi Freedom, many airmen are still deployed, providing support. Whether or not you're supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom, you're probably deployed, recently returned, or expecting to deploy. And those remaining at home station are working extended hours to make up for comrades who are elsewhere.

Add to the opstempo the global changes we're going through and it becomes apparent that jointness is no longer a slogan, it's a way of life impacting everything from doctrine, to equipment, to tactics, training and operating procedures. Technological change is ceaseless and ever-accelerating. Traditional client-server systems fielded a couple of years ago are now obsolete. Last year's computer is now under powered for current applications and data bases. Bandwidth demands between Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom — only 18 months

apart — reflected enormous growth because of our information intensive systems.

Adding to the mix is the need to transform our forces to reflect new realities, to adopt a capabilities based mindset in evaluating our current and future needs and achieving ever more demanding levels of integration and interoperability.

Responding to this chaotic environment is essential — we can't hope to wait out the need for changes.

In AF/XII, the Directorate of C4ISR Integration in the DCS for Warfighting Integration, we're setting the future of the Air Force within this environment in three complementary ways. First, we're the Headquarters Air Force lead for experimentation. Our Innovation Division, AF/XIIV, is the organization that integrates experimentation and key exercise programs, fusing policy, guidance and oversight of innovation across the Air Force. This organization provides Headquarters Air Force policy, guidance and oversight for Air Force and joint experimentation, Air Force Battlelabs and Advanced Concept Technology Demonstrations also known as ACTDs.

Second, we act as the voice of the operator within AF /XI, our Operational Integration Division. The AF/XIII division is our primary advocate for

C2ISR Systems and acts as a force multiplier and integrator of aerospace combat power.

AF/XIII acts as the implementing agent for C2ISR integration development in support of Air Force and joint concepts of operations. It also develops and advocates Air Force systems interoperability positions within the Office of the Secretary of Defense sponsored Information Superiority Joint Warfighting Capabilities Assessment program. XIII works as much in the joint environment as it does in the Air Force. It's important that we focus in both areas because it's difficult to separate what this organization does in the joint world from its Air Force responsibilities. Examples of current XIII projects include the Single Integrated Air Picture, Network Centric Collaborative Targeting and C2 Constellation Machine-to-Machine Analysis to support the Global Strike CONOPs.

Third and last, we are the DCS's link into the strategic planning process. Our Integration Planning Division, AF/XIIX, is tasked to look out beyond our headlights to identify and prioritize issues and opportunities to achieve the next generation of C4ISR. This Division ensures XI's warfighting integration perspective is incorporated into key plans such as the Defense Planning Guidance, Transformation

Opposite page

photo: Aircraft of the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing and coalition counterparts stationed together in a deployed location in Southwest Asia fly over the desert April 14. Aircraft include KC-135 Stratotanker, F-15E Strike Eagle, F-117 Nighthawk, F-16CJ, British GR-4 Tornado, and Australian F/A-18 Hornet. Photo by Master Sgt. Ron Przysucha



Doctrine isn't a set of esoteric rules with no practical value. It's the distillation of a century's worth of thoughts and experiences in applying airpower in warfare.

Planning Guidance and the Annual Planning and Programming Guidance.

The specifics of our projects and tasks are constantly changing. We live in the same fast-paced, chaotic world everyone else does. But as we work to meet our mission, there are a few overriding principles we in XII all follow. First, we practice the Air Force's core values: Service Before Self, Integrity First and Excellence In All We Do. Much of what we do is indistinguishable from that which those in civilian companies do, but our purpose for which we do it is different. Second, we understand and apply Air Force doctrine. Doctrine isn't a set of esoteric rules with no practical value. It's the distillation of a century's worth of thoughts and experiences in applying airpower in warfare. As we increasingly work in joint environments, it's essential that we understand what makes us different as airmen, what capabilities we bring to the fight and how we can best use these capabilities. Third, we keep learning and expanding our mental thought processes. The understanding needed to deal with the pace of

change can't occur without continual learning.

XII is about providing seamless information from the commanders to shooters. We are working to ensure that the right information is provided to the right people at the right time. We communicate up, down and across. With the increased complexity and constant change, it's important to remember the information we need to make the best decision is often possessed by someone who doesn't know we need it.

Civilian workers require breadth of experience in many mission areas

By Rob Thomas II

Assistant DCS, Warfighting Integration

PENTAGON — The Air Force Communications and Information civilian community faces many challenges as it looks to a future characterized by world-wide deployments, rapid advancements in technology and reductions in career force authorizations.

The current civilian workforce, while extremely well trained technically, does not have the breadth of experience across the multitude of areas that characterize today's communications and information environment.

The future force requires technical skills that span these numerous mission areas. Developing individuals who have made the long-term commitment to serving their country in multiple locations with varied responsibilities throughout their civilian careers is our primary goal. Achieving this transformation in workforce competencies requires a mindset change for our workers and managers alike.

This transformation affects the operations of the Communications and Information Career Program, which manages 10,000 CICP registrants and the more than 2,600 CICP-covered positions. We identified the vital need for a central planning and analysis support necessary to effectively manage and guide the civilian comm and info career force. Recognizing the need for superior technical skills requires the creation of processes that provide opportunities for broader, more varied and in-depth experiences for our mid- and senior-level managers.

Consequently, the Air Force Communications Agency has agreed to serve as project office for developing policy and strategy, based upon verifiable data analysis.

The purpose of this central planning and analysis capability will be to provide trends and projections of current and future needs of the comm and info civilian employees and associated positions. This approach will provide current reports to both senior leaders and employees relating to career broadening and career enhancement opportunities. In doing so, comm and info senior leadership can ensure the Air Force achieves its comm and info workforce goals by further enhancing the abilities and work experiences of our valued professionals.

Marian Bowser, special assistant to AF/XI-2 for Communications and Information Senior Civilian Management Office, serves as the transformation lead. She will partner with CICP Team Chief, Jessica Spencer-Gallucci, and Diane Hancock, AFCA, to ensure the comm and info civilian workforce, Air Force-wide, is strengthened and continues to provide superior support to the warfighting mission.

The end goal is to create the best-qualified comm and info workforce, both technically and managerially, and provide a candidate pool from which to choose our future leaders.

Retired communicator passes away in Virginia

Retired Maj. Gen. Anthony T. Shtogren, (1917-2003) passed away March 22 at Atlantic Shores, Virginia Beach, Va., after fighting through two months of medical challenges. The general retired from active duty in 1971 as deputy director of the J-6 (communications-electronics) organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

After retiring from the Air Force, he became vice president in charge of Construction for

Datran, an early data-only transmission system, building their first line from Texas to St. Louis.

The general is survived by five children, Thomas Shtogren of Sierra Vista, Ariz., Carol Van Valkenburg of Danville, VA., Peter Shtogren of Linewood, Wash., Maureen McGrath of Virginia Beach and Margi Moore of Jacksonville, N.C., his sister-in-law, Margaret Shtogren of Two Rivers, Wis.; cousins, Emil Scholar, Elaine, Paul and John Sudanowicz and Diane Dynan, all of Boston, Mass; and his best friend and adopted daughter, Nicky Dozier of Norfolk. He also rejoiced in his 11 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

His awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, with Oak Leaf Cluster, and the French Croix de Guerre with Palm, the Army Commendation Ribbon, Distinguished Unit Citation Emblem and the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award Ribbon with Oak Leaf Cluster.

Interment was at Arlington Cemetery April 7, 2003. Donations may be sent to Covenant House, P.O. Box JAF 2973, New York, NY 10116-2973 or to your local rescue squadron. (Submitted by AFCA historian)



Maj. Gen. Anthony T. Shtogren

ATTITUDE

Brings team to new heights

By 2nd Lt. Denney Neace

86th Communications Squadron

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany — The Television Intrusion Detection Systems shop here made incredible strides in teamwork during the past year, thanks to the leadership of Master Sgt. Anthony Willis.

Before he arrived, the TIDS shop had low morale and they lacked recognition. He made it his goal to improve both while making them the best shop in the 86th Communications Squadron. People who may be facing the same situation in their shops can benefit from his approach.

First, he met with the airmen and discussed their issues, concerns and goals. He took the same approach with the NCOs, and found they had ideas but lacked direction. Willis realized that for morale to improve they had to work together, so he split the shop in half to create teams.

He co-located the NCOs and airmen of each team to foster communication. Placing the whole team together also improved training and the sense of belonging.

During this time, TIDS also prepared and trained for the upcoming Surety Inspection, and by the time it came around, Airman 1st Class Rachel Underwood said, "Everything ran so smoothly, and the troubles evident a few months before were not noticeable. Systems were checked and rechecked to ensure compliance, and when the inspectors came, it was business as usual and many different two-person teams were sent out to perform SI tasks."

As a result, the TIDS shop favorably impressed the inspectors, and they gave Airman 1st Class Aric Lawrence an SI "Pat On The Back" for his safety program, who was only one of 15 elite airmen selected from over 5,000 eligible.

Second, Willis redistributed duties to hungry airmen, which gave NCOs breathing room and the airmen pride in ownership. Each team also had a dedicated training day each week. As morale improved, the next challenge centered on providing more recognition.

One day each month was used for the TIDS Challenge, a forum to compete and recognize outstanding effort. Events included a relay race using impact drills, volleyball in chemical warfare gear and military knowledge jeopardy. The challenges brought the work center closer as a team and made training interesting and enjoyable.

In recognition of these improvements, and the teamwork they demonstrated, the TIDS shop received the 86 CG Team Award for the first quarter.



IMMERSION TRAINING

Opportunities ensure force is ready for mission

By Chief Master Sgt. Chris Hedge
Air Combat Command 3A Functional Manager

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va. — Training for our enlisted members is vital to ensuring we can meet mission demands for the home station and deployed environments. Putting people first directly correlates to the emphasis we place on training our most valuable resources. Realizing any bad taste from an airman's first assignment could last an entire career; supervisors must accept training responsibilities and exhaust all means to ensure we provide our people the training we owe them.

With the large influx of technical training graduates plus the shortage of frontline five-skill level Information Managers, Air Combat Command is

focusing on providing additional training to ensure graduates are prepared to meet the obligations for which they are assigned. ACC's goal is to provide our technical training graduates every opportunity to excel. New Information Managers arrive at their units' doorsteps with the basic skills and training necessary to perform Workgroup Management and traditional Information Management duties.

To support this objective, many ACC communications squadrons are establishing orientation programs to familiarize new "IMers" with core base-level functions, delivering WM initial qualification training, and providing the required skills upon completion of the immersion program. Although

supervisors and commanders want members on the job as quickly as possible, the time spent in the immersion program is justified by receiving better prepared personnel when they report to their duty station. IM personnel are initially assigned to the local communications squadron for approximately 30 days for participation in the immersion program, and then permanently reassigned to other base organizations.

The 3A0X1 immersion training approach is proving to be so successful, that we're encouraging its application across ACC. Strong training programs will produce more confident troops who in turn will have a more positive outlook on an Air Force career. After all, they are our future.

Putting people first directly correlates to the emphasis we place on training our most valuable resources.

Lip Retention is not just Service

By Chief Master Sgt. Charles Ratliff
Headquarters Air Combat Command

LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va. — I've served in the world's greatest Air Force over the last 24 years, and it's apparent, I love what I do, and you should too! For those of you contemplating retention in the Air Force, I'm confident we can create an environment for you to thrive in and allow for a long and fruitful career. But there's one catch, and simply stated, retention begins and ends with you.

Retention involves having passion, utter determination and a commitment to place service above self. Our Core Values of Service Before Self, Excellence in All We Do and Integrity First transcends money and other materialistic values. The NBA has a slogan: "I love this game," well, retention is no different. It's imperative that you unconditionally love your profession, or you will not reap the benefits or rewards it has to offer. There are many uniformed service men and women risking their lives everyday to ensure our country's values are upheld. If you cannot exhibit the same level of energy, passion and

commitment toward your profession, then unfortunately, our service is not for you. Here's another perspective.

Retention is the brigadier general who is sincere about getting out into the community and mentoring a young airman. Retention is the chief master sergeant who is sincere and takes an airman basic under his wings to further develop his or her professional skills. Retention is the colonel who is sincere about creating a harmonious working environment for all civilian employees. Retention is when a Sr. NCO, NCO or airman is sincere about ensuring our contract personnel are treated fairly. The common bond is sincerity because people are intuitive enough to know when lip service is being passed along.

Our Core Values of Service Before Self, Excellence in All We Do and Integrity First transcends money and other materialistic values.

Retention will increase if people believe and trust in you and your loyalty is given in return. Recognize that retention is more than the word of the day. Retention is a lifestyle governed by a set of standards that keeps each of us on one accord.

Finally, retention is each day when you don the uniform to become that role model, representative and shining example of our Air Force culture. Retention begins and ends with you. Our sister services and civilian counterparts observe and watch how we conduct ourselves each and every day. You really never know when someone is watching you; can you imagine what they see? If you look in the mirror, what do you see? Ask yourself, "do I still have the passion, the determination, the commitment and do I still love this game? Am I sincere in taking care of my people or am I one who's just giving lip service?"

If you can sincerely answer those questions, then you recognize that retention is a lifestyle that begins and ends with you.

Assignments



Getting where you want to go

By Chief Master Sgt. Thomas Porter
ACC 3C Functional Manager

The very title of this piece likely triggered an array of reactions from firsthand past experience. Those on the receiving end of enlisted assignments understandably hold varying opinions, both good and bad. After years of functional management involvement, my own opinion is, well, "I feel strongly both ways." Each assignment, whether welcomed or not, is based on a complex set of circumstances and is guided by a set of rules designed to ensure the most equity and fairness possible. Placing people first demands that. Yet, fairness and equity cannot always accommodate personal or family desires. Assignments involving hardship, heartbreak and stress do often result in career-ending decisions. Likewise, fairness and equity cannot always accommodate commander or functional community real or perceived requirements, even when there's an arguable best interest of the Air Force mission reason. So, feeling strongly "both ways" comes from acknowledging a fair system that will invariably cause some negative impact depending on personal and professional perspective. When "Why?" remains a mystery, it can foster frustration, resentment, and affect retention.

The more you know about the enlisted assignment process, the better your perspective, understanding and acceptance level.

Assignment Factsoids

▶▶ The Air Force Personnel Center has an enlisted assignment force of about 25 functional advisors, 42 assignment NCOs and 22 support personnel. They work more than 70,000 rotational and 30,000 new accession assignments each year. That's a ratio of about 1:11,000. They do benefit from computer assisted work, which allows them to accommodate the large amount of time committed to direct communication with people like you.

▶▶ Last year, they received approximately 450,000 phone calls and 630,000 e-mails.

▶▶ At any given point in time, you can bet they're doing their level best to sustain 78 percent of the enlisted force in the continental U.S., 12 percent in the Pacific and 10 percent in Europe; with overseas consisting of about 3 percent short tours and 19 percent long tours. That equates to about 9,930 and 54,400 people overseas respectively.

▶▶ The vast majority of assignments are driven by overseas requirements, with only a small percentage satisfied by consecutive overseas tour. Of the approximate 218,000 enlisted people in

CONUS, only about half are typically available for overseas assignment. The other half are eliminated from overseas assignment consideration due to a variety of reasons like time on station rules, special duty commitment times, high year of tenure restrictions, force structure freezes, skill-level constraints and deployments. As cumulative time in service increases, so does your chance for an overseas assignment. It pays to be proactive, know your susceptibility, and volunteer for desired locations before you get hot for a non-volunteer assignment.

▶▶ Today, the EQUAL system gives you visibility into requirements for your career field by grade and skill level and allows you to make informed, assignment decisions. If you do not update EQUAL locations as your prioritized assignment preferences, your preferences will be wasted and you'll get what's left. Matching your preferences to requirements won't guarantee you success, but it definitely improves your chances.

▶▶ If someone returning from short tour doesn't pick advertised EQUAL choices, they will go to what's left after everyone else matches to their EQUAL choices.

Overseas assignments

▶▶ All short tour requirements are filled before long tours.

▶▶ PCS eligible volunteers always match ahead of non-volunteers.

▶▶ Only PCS eligible people are considered, and they are ranked by COT volunteers first, then CONUS volunteers in mandatory

move status and then non-volunteers. Non-volunteers are selected by the least number of overseas assignments and overseas assignment return dates. All short tour assignments are filled first, so if your preference sheet contains both short and long tour locations, the short tour locations will be considered first regardless.



Overseas allocation

▶▶ A computer makes allocations nine to 17 months in advance (AIA and MUNS sites are allocated out 17 months) of overseas reporting based on worldwide manning levels.

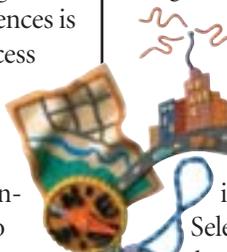
▶▶ MAJCOM/DPs and functional managers play a key role as they review, validate, and change allocations as needed. This is the biggest functional manager role with enlisted assignments, and notice names

haven't matched yet. That's the rationale behind the statement, "Functional managers don't do assignments." Once validated, the requirements are advertised on EQUAL.

▶▶ Reflecting EQUAL preferences is key in this process and your biggest opportunity beyond your past assignment history to influence your chances. You only have about three

weeks to update your preferences before eligible names are matched to the requirements.

▶▶ Assignments flow to Military Personnel Flights and losing commanders who determine if selectees have any disqualifying factors. Selectees are then notified and MPFs process the assignments.



EQUAL-Plus

▶▶ The Air Force uses EQUAL-Plus to advertise "special" assignments.

▶▶ These include Joint Departmental, short notice and out-of-cycle requirements; as well as chief master sergeant assignments.

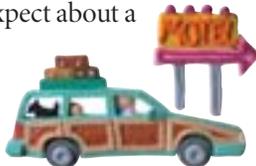
▶▶ All EQUAL-Plus advertisements include qualification requirements, location, volunteer-by date and point of contact information. It is updated weekly.



Online at: <https://afas.afpc.randolph.af.mil>

Special programs

▶▶ **The Voluntary Stabilized Base Assignment Program** provides the opportunity to serve a four- to five-year controlled tour at northern tier or other selected locations that benefit the Air Force. Grand Forks and Minot AFBs in North Dakota; Los Angeles AFB, Calif.; Cannon AFB, N.M. are included. Expect about a 60 percent chance of approval.



▶▶ **The CONUS Exchange Program** allows for a one for one swap of airmen. It is up to the member to find the other member who must be the same grade, AFSC, skill-level and SEI if necessary. Associated moves are at the cost of each affected member.

▶▶ **The Expanded Permissive Program** allows CONUS to CONUS moves. Members agree to pay all expenses involved and all travel and house-hunting time is charged as leave. Manning must support the move,

meaning the losing base must be over the CONUS average even after the loss, and the gaining base must be below the CONUS average and stay below 100 percent with the gain. Expect about a 56 percent approval rate.

▶▶ **The Humanitarian/Exceptional Family Member Program** has a dedicated AFPC office. Contact AFPC/DPAPO at DSN 665-2764 or consult assignment AFI 36-2110, Attachment 7 for detailed information.

▶▶ **The Follow-on/Home-Basing Program** is for individuals who get selected to serve an overseas unaccompanied short tour of 15 months or less. Approved follow-on assignments occur before members depart for their short tour assignment.

▶▶ **The Base of Preference Program** now accommodates both first-term and career airmen. It has become the primary means used for airmen moving from CONUS to CONUS assign-

ments. Only first-term airmen may request an overseas to CONUS BOP. First-term airmen must obtain a Career Job Reservation and submit their BOP request prior to reenlistment. They are eligible to apply after only eight months time on station.

If approved, they must first complete one year on station before Permanent Change of Station.

If requesting an In-Place BOP, there is no minimum time on station requirement. First-term airmen may also request a BOP in conjunction with retraining. Career airmen can request a CONUS to CONUS or IPBOP.

They must have 41 months time on station to apply for BOP. They must complete 48 months time on station before PCS.

For career airmen, overseas vulnerability and manning are considered and can affect approval. Individuals can continue to reapply as long as they submit different choices.



“Why I stay
in the Air Force”
People First

Airman 1st Class LaKisha Buchanan

Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal

The U.S. Air Force: some love it, some don't. To some it's a career, and to others it's just a 9-to-5 job. To me it's a career, and I love it. I have been in the Air Force for nine months. Though I haven't been in for a long time, I have already had some good and bad experiences. Lajes Field is a small base, but the people are really friendly. Being on a remote tour with few distractions makes this a good base for first term airmen because we have more than enough time to study. Being here gives me time to look at where I've been, where I am now and where I want to be in 20 years. The reasons I plan to stay in the Air Force are the same reasons which convinced me to join almost a year ago: the benefits, the pay, the education, the travel, the job training skills, a guaranteed job, and the continued persistency of my recruiter. It's true: No One Come Close. **full version online. No photo available.*

Lt. Col. Jim Appleyard

Ramstein AB, Germany

I have been in the Air Force a short 16 years and since 1991 have deployed with more than five years on the road to places like Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Somalia, all over Central/South America and Turkey. I have many photographs to remember the places, but my most vivid memories are very difficult times with some remarkable people. I can honestly say that the people and the opportunities that we meet and engage are why I stay. **full version online*



Master Sgt. Russell Dodson

Yokota AB, Japan

One of the main reasons that I now stay in the Air Force past retirement eligibility is a sense of loyalty. I've had many good supervisors and leaders



that helped me become a better technician, manager and overall person.

I am now in the situation to provide that same leadership and guidance to our future leaders.

With everything going on in the world, it's important to pass on the experiences we have gained over the years. We have some of the sharpest troops in the world, but they still require leadership and mentorship.

**full version online*

Master Sgt. Barney Sais

Yokota AB, Japan



How many can remember what an IBM Selectric II is? How many still know what a memory typewriter is? Have you ever heard of a PDO? What is an OCR font? These are some questions that most of today's newest Information Managers probably cannot answer. Yesterday's tools, as effective as they were, are no match for today's computers. Likewise, today's computers will only be remembered as dinosaurs compared to tomorrow's technology.

I remember arriving my first duty station, going to my office and having my very own IBM Selectric II typewriter. After a few months, I received a new typewriter that had one page memory. Within my first four years of service, I finally saw my first desktop computer. It was a Zenith 248 with a 540 MB harddrive and 4 MB RAM. Now, we are seeing individual computers with speeds of up to 2.4 GB with 512 MB RAM and hard drives as big as 30 GB, not to mention the additional computing power derived from our local area networks and access to the Internet. Look all around you. Everywhere in the workplace, there is a system that is driven by our computer technology. Our newest weapon systems, aircraft, satellites and yes, even our desktop computer! Information technology is the way of the future, and, as an Information Manager, I am proud to be part of that future. **full version online*

Jim Henderson

Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio

I stay with the Air Force as a civilian for several reasons. I like the fast paced, upbeat tempo of my job. I enjoy working with emerging technologies.



There is great job satisfaction in knowing that I am a major contributor to a project that is actually being implemented for the betterment of the Air Force and its members. (I also like) the opportunity to continue to work with good people. Finally, the benefits are very competitive, i.e., the leave policy, education and training opportunities, and ability to move around to see and try new things.

Maj. Charles R. White, Jr.

Peterson AFB, Colo.



So that others may live and have freedoms that God wants them to have.

Capt. Joe Golembiewski,

Yokota AB, Japan

Why do I stay in the Air Force? That's easy! I love America's Air Force! I've been a part of our Air Force since 1987, but it sure doesn't seem like it's been more than 15 years.

When I see photos of that skinny Airman Basic wearing olive green fatigues and BCGs, I wonder how the years could have gone by so quickly. The answer is simple: time flies when you're having fun. And I've had a lot of fun!

Over the years I've heard a lot of stories about why airmen have stayed—or left—our Air Force. My own reasons for staying can't be summed up easily, but I can share some thoughts that cross my mind when I think about why I'm glad to be in our Air Force.

I've been stationed in Louisiana, New York, Illinois, Texas, and now Japan. I've been TDY to Virginia, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Alabama, Utah, California, Saudi Arabia, Italy, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Germany, and France. I have an upcoming TDY in Thailand. I've learned an incredible amount about America, and I've also learned a lot about other nations of the world.

Not every moment of every TDY is fun, but I have great memories from every trip I've ever taken. I've attended a Papal audience at the Vatican, spent the night in a coastal inn in the south of France, and petted a camel in Saudi Arabia. In every place I've been, one thing has been consistent: I've worked with the very best people. Air Force people. And I'm not done yet! I'm hoping our Air Force agrees that I should visit quite a few more places and work with even more high quality airmen over the next several years.
**full version online*



Master Sgt. K. Joseph O'Donnell

Hickam AFB, Hawaii

I've made the Air Force a career, and stayed in, because of a variety of issues.



My first enlistment was primarily motivated by a desire to work for something bigger than myself, to have a bigger impact than just bringing home a paycheck. Serving our country, the greatest country in the world, through the United States Air Force, the greatest Air Force in the world, was a logical choice. But, my biggest reasons for staying are the men and women I've had the honor and privilege of serving with co-workers, both active duty and civilian, who share the good times and bad, the 'dirty' details and the laughs, the highs of promotions and the lows of frequent moves and deployments, which often cause long separation from family, are irreplaceable ... and they are why I stay in. **full version online*

Mark Munoz

Randolph AFB, Texas

I came on board with the Air Force last year from the Palace Acquire Program after interviewing with many different organizations. The PAQ Program allows me to rotate through various functional areas within the Air Education Training Command to learn their missions.



These rotations give me the chance to get a big picture of our mission. The Air Force helped me complete my masters degree and the opportunity to advance quickly in my career field through a three-year internship. Another factor that most motivates me to stay is being able to work for an organization that is bigger than me. I am proud to be a USAF employee and doing my part to serve our mission. **full version online*

Staff Sgt. Andrella Hall

Brunssum, the Netherlands



I enlisted in the Air Force in 1991 for a guaranteed paycheck on the 1st and the 15th of each month ... that was until Sept. 11. Once we evacuated from the Pentagon, I remember looking up in the sky and seeing the F15's flying high ... I heard people talking about how glad they were the military was here to protect them and how safe they felt. I now look at the Air Force not as a guaranteed paycheck, but as a mother protecting her children. The image of everyone coming together will be forever burned into my mind. It did not matter about the color of your skin, what gender you were, even if you were military or not, everyone just came together to help in any way they could. For all of the people who came out to help, thank you. I am so proud to have the opportunity to be a member in the United States Air Force, and this is why I stay! **full version online*

Staff Sgt. Colin Loring

Shaw AFB, S.C.

I stay because I enjoy my job and the benefits that the Air Force provides me. My job in the Air Force is graphics, and I couldn't ask for a better job. The

benefits are nice, too, 30 days vacation with pay each year, education and training opportunities throughout my career, medical coverage, and a good retirement plan to name a few.



Tech. Sgt. Ken Bergmann

Peterson AFB, Colo.

I enjoy the benefits such as education, good pay, medical coverage and travel. These are all very nice, but I am here to serve. When I was 5-years-old, I was fishing with my father and saw two F-15 Eagles scream by en route to Langley (AFB, Va.) and my heart skipped a beat. I asked my dad what they were, and when he told me they were Air Force fighters, I knew right then I was joining up as soon as I could. I wasn't joining the Navy like my dad, who served for 22 years, but I would still be serving just like him. Ever since I was a kid, patriotism has been a part of my life. We always had a flag out front. We had a tradition of serving our country, so doing my part, however small, to keep our country safe and guarantee our rights and freedoms, has always been second nature to me. I am honored to serve my country.



Tech. Sgt. Trampas Kilpatric

Elmendorf AFB, Alaska



With limited prospects before me after finishing high school, I joined the Air Force to better my future. I stay to provide a stable environment to support my family. Sure, we move around, but the AF allows me to serve my country while ensuring I have a paycheck and a place to live.

Tech. Sgt. Olga Wells

Peterson AFB, Colo.



I joined the Air Force to see the world, get an education, and because I feel a need to support my country. Well, I've been in for almost 18 years, and I've seen part of the world and have received a B.S. and two A.A. degrees. But, my need to serve my nation still burns strong in me. Being in the Air Force gives me a sense of purpose I'm not sure I'd find anywhere else. Being in the Air Force also has given me a sense of belonging and commitment that I know will be hard to find in the civilian world. Will I stay longer than 20 years? Yes, but only if I still feel I have something to contribute to benefit my country and my fellow service members.

Staff Sgt. William Allen

Minot AFB, N. D.



If I had to give a one-word answer, it would be "opportunity." My career started out in transportation; first at Scott AFB, Ill., then at Howard AFS, Panama. Panama is where I made the decision to cross-train into information management.

The IM career field seemed to be wide open with opportunities – there's that word again. I reenlisted last fall for six more years. It was an easy choice.

No, there's no bonus (yet), and yes, there are civilian jobs out there, but I felt there were too many opportunities left for me in the Air Force. Right now, I'm enjoying what I do too much and see too many future opportunities in it to consider anything else. **full version online*

Senior Airman Michelle McGovern

Peterson AFB, Colo.



I'm staying in the Air Force for a number of reasons. The main reason is my daughter. Another reason is college, even if I decide to stay in for 20 years or just get out after my next four, I'll have a college degree to rely on. I need to finish school, because that was the reason I joined the Air Force in the first place. When I came in I knew I'd learn a good job and have a degree without having to pay back any school loans. And, here I am almost four years later, and I can go to school for free. I also know I can go to school during work hours by working with my understanding supervisors. I wouldn't be able to do that with a civilian job without having to worry about getting paid and losing comp time.

Staff Sgt. Steven Rennie

Langley AFB, Va.



I joined the United States Air Force, for the first time in July 1982, at the age of 19. After spending 10 plus years on active duty, I felt it was time to leave and pursue other endeavors. I missed the people I worked with, having a mission and the pride of wearing the uniform ... (After Sept. 11, I decided to join the Air Force again.) I can now look back and say "I made the right decision." This is where I belong ... I hope I can make a difference, if only a small one at that. **full version online*

Staff Sgt. Staci Bengogullari

Peterson AFB, Colo.



I stay in the Air Force because opportunities abound. I stay because I am paid to learn, become experienced, travel, and meet wonderful people from all over the world. And, because I cannot describe the feeling I have when a stranger sees me in my uniform, pats me on the back or shakes my hand, and says "good job" or "thank you." And, no matter what strange and unusual place I may go, I will always have an extended family.

A1C Lataraneshia Williams

Air Force Communications Agency

What I like most about being in the Air Force is how they take care of you and your family. You get outstanding benefits from the military, and they



provide you with everything you need and then some. As a workgroup manager, I like helping people with their computer problems, also, I get the chance to know the people I work with and support. I also like the various database applications I've been trained on.

Ken Briggs

Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio

When I arrived (here), I observed senior leaders' and managers' high



regard for developing and training their staff into qualified and proficient employees. As a young Information Technology student, I was

interested in working with new and innovative technology. MSG managers promoted comprehensive career broadening and rotation experience to sculpt newcomers into senior level executives. I believe private industry would not have given me the same opportunities MSG has provided. My decision to stay with MSG has provided the necessary skills to become a successful IT manager.

Master Sgt. Scott Wagers

Vandenberg AFB, Calif.



The only disappointment I've experienced during 19 years of service in the Air Force was when I learned that the guaranteed job that I'd signed up for – which read as "Aerial Photography" on my recruiter's job listing – had absolutely nothing to do with snapping highly classified spy pictures from the belly of an SR-71 Blackbird. After spending seven years processing reconnaissance imagery, I took the opportunity to cross-train into the still photographic career field ... Now, I enjoy challenging photographic assignments and motivating younger shooters by helping them to grow. In my opinion, it doesn't get any better than this. In my humble opinion, the worst day behind a camera is better than the best day behind a computer terminal, or under the dusty intake of a jet engine, or patrolling the perimeter of an ice-cold flight line. **full version online*

Jared Aldridge

Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio

In December 2001, when I received my degree, I decided to become a full



time Civil Servant. This was an easy decision because of two factors: the people who I worked with and how they supported me; and a professor in college told us to be "change agents" in whatever position we have in our career. These two factors motivated me to take this position, and those are the two things that I think of when times get tough around the office. Working as a Civil Servant has been a good experience, something that I would not trade for anything in the world.

Kevin Bonifas

Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio

Following my good experience here as a Co-Op, it was an easy decision to



stay and convert to a permanent position after graduation. I saw working in the government as an opportunity to grow and increase my knowledge in the Information Technology field.

Working with MSG/SLW has been a good experience, and I am looking forward to continuing my career development.

Senior Airman Elijah Lewis, Jr.

Scott AFB, Ill.

I like the fact that everyday that I come to work I am going to learn something new. Computers are the future, and the more I know about computers the better job I will be able to get when I get out of the military.

I like being in the Air Force. You get good medical benefits and good education benefits. Its good stability and you don't have to worry about getting laid off. It also teaches you how to act professional and how to present your self in a good manner as well as customs and courtesies. The Air Force also teaches you how to conduct yourself outside of work into your personal life. The Air Force has taught me how to prepare for the future financially.



Staff Sgt. Carrie Pierce

Langley AFB, Va.

I was attending a funeral of a fallen comrade. In my silence at the wake and funeral, I silently wished to his family that it should have been me.

For him I serve. I stood in a most sacred place to reenlist. I stepped onto the Arizona Memorial located near Hickam AFB, Hawaii ... it sent chills up my spine to know I had the distinct privilege to reenlist in the presence of my superior officers and those who gave the ultimate sacrifice ... in defense of this great nation. **For them I serve.** Each time I see the missing man formation fly high above my head, I fully realize the intent. Each time Taps is played at a funeral, I fully realize the intent. Each time I hear the National Anthem, I fully realize the intent. Each time a fellow "airman" retires and a flag folding ceremony is conducted, I fully realize the intent. **For them I serve.** **full version online*



THUNDER

in the

DESERT



By Tech. Sgt. Brian Orban

Combined Forces Air Component Command Public Affairs

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM — An infusion of human decision making and 21st century technology has resulted in a system that has helped U.S. forces and their coalition partners dominate the battlefield in Iraq.

Known as time-sensitive targeting — TST for short — this rapid response system is building a new level of flexibility into combat for allied forces.

TST, one of the Air Force's top priorities since the Gulf War, is the equivalent of a floating football linebacker, keeping eyes on the field and ready to sack the enemy at a moment's notice. In Iraq, this linebacker focuses on a field stretching approximately 500 miles wide and 700 miles long.

The Combined Air Operations Center's TST cell, based at an air base on the Arabian Peninsula, uses the latest in computer technology to collect information from the battlefield. This includes human and electronic intelligence, overhead surveillance and space-based data. A few clicks of a computer mouse boils this stream of data down to the bare facts.

This specialized team of soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and allied military troops gives coalition air force units the option to engage enemy forces not identified in each day's battle plan, according to Lt. Col. Gary Backes, the cell's surface track coordinator.

"The challenge is you don't know exactly when it's going to happen or what your first indication is going to be," he said. "We might get someone tapping us on the shoulder saying, 'I just got a phone call from back in the United States, and they want (a certain location) tar-

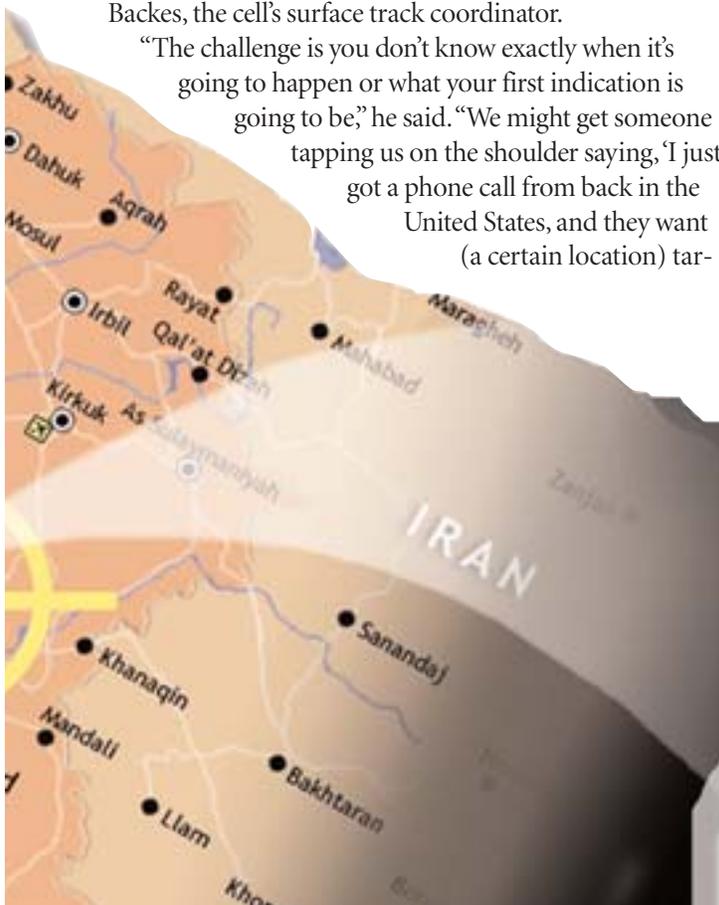


geted in 45 minutes.' Other times, aircraft will report enemy contact and request permission to engage now."

When targets emerge on the battlefield, time is critical, according to Backes, who deployed from Hurlburt Field, Fla. The TST cell may have only minutes to properly identify a target, determine the best action and send in the appropriate combat power.

The computer systems fueling this decision-making ►►

With a few clicks of a computer mouse, the colonel identified a target — a mobile radar truck on the southern outskirts of Baghdad.



Graphic by Staff Sgt. K.D. Williams / AFCA

might were based on technology originally developed during Joint Expeditionary Force Experiment 2002 and included tests on the new Automated Deep Operations Coordination System. Through ADOCS, the TST incorporates lessons learned from past combat operations, including allied combat missions over Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. Live-fire exercises and the Central Air Force's 2002 Internal Look Exercise refined the system further.

Gone are the times where military planners spent days planning one combat strike against one fixed target. TST gives friendly forces the option of striking targets minutes after they are identified, according to Maj. Alex Koven, TST command and control operations director.

"We've had instances where (special operations forces) teams needed immediate support. We were able to provide that support within two to three minutes," said Koven, who deployed from the 8th Weapons Squadron at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

On any given day, the cell's 25-person team focuses on thousands of pieces of information critical to instantaneous combat execution. At the same time, the cell keeps watch on coalition air and ground forces to help prevent friendly fire incidents.

Backes demonstrated the speed and flexibility at his computer station in the CAOC. With a few clicks of a computer mouse, the colonel identified a target — a mobile radar truck on the southern outskirts of Baghdad. At his beck and call are satellite photos and maps, lists of airborne strike and surveillance aircraft, inventories of available

weapons and more. All of this data helps planners decide in minutes whether or not to strike, what weapons to use and when and how to attack.

When it comes to sharing information in the cell, nothing's withheld, according to Backes. "We all work together to positively identify and engage these targets."

Checks and balances are built into the system as well. The cell works with the other military planners in the CAOC before any attack receives the green light. It is a balance of quick decision making and putting steel on target. Once approved, the TST's command and control operations director has direct contact with forces in the field to dispatch aircraft, missiles or artillery where and when they are needed.

Backes, who flew combat missions during Operation Allied Force, used a recent combat mission involving an Air Force B-1 Lancer to demonstrate the effectiveness of time-sensitive targeting. The bomber, flying home after a scheduled bombing mission, was directed to strike a time-sensitive leadership-type target elsewhere in Iraq. After that strike, still loaded with additional bombs and ready to go home, Army ground forces radioed in for help after coming under attack by Republican Guard troops. The bomber swung back into the battlefield and coordinated between the soldiers and the TST cell to unload

precision weapons onto the Iraqi positions.

"To run the distance of the 'field' is quite a test," Backes said. "It's not unheard of to quickly send a crew 200-plus miles north to support (special operations forces) engaged with the enemy and then coordinate additional priority targets for the crew to attack out west on their way home."

As the technology continues to advance, the colonel's team is taking the next logical step forward — developing what he calls "right-time" targeting.

"Thanks to the caliber and operational experience of this team, we've

been able to practice and now very effectively employ a TST process capable of accommodating targets in ... minutes or plan complex strike packages against heavily-defended top-priority targets with consistent results

— target destroyed," he said.

As decision makers and technology continue to shape the battlefield, U.S. and coalition pilots are finding one major difference in their missions — they are returning to bases short on munitions, according to Capt. Dave Doss, TST attack coordinator, who deployed from the 7th Weapons Squadron at Dyess AFB, Texas.

"Our goal is to send our people home (from their combat missions) without any bombs under their wings, and with TST they can do that." Doss said.

The bomber swung back into the battlefield and coordinated between the soldiers and the TST cell to unload precision weapons on to the Iraqi positions.

Comm's efforts help coalition end conflict in 41 days





Senior Master Sgt. Tom McKenzie / 116th ACW

An E-8 JSTARS of the 116th Air Control Wing, Georgia Air National Guard, taxis into Robins Air Force Base, Ga., May 7 after being deployed "somewhere in the middle east."

JSTARS TEAM

Always training for battle

By Lanorris Askew

Warner Robins Air Logistics Center Public Affairs

WARNER ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — As military action continues in Iraq, coalition ground troops are in many ways counting on their guardian angels to guide the way.

Those guardians, crewmembers from the 116th Air Control Wing here, are always ready. They are armed with the E-8C Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System, an airborne battle management and command and control aircraft that conducts ground surveillance to develop an understanding of the enemy situation and to support attack operations.

"JSTARS, as we speak, is performing a very important role in detecting enemy ground movement and then passing that information on to both forces on the ground and our other airborne assets so forces on the ground can be warned of possible surprise attacks," said Lt. Col. George Riebling, 128th Airborne Command and Control Squadron commander. "They can be given real-time information on enemy ground movements and support possible attacks."

Helping to make this possible is a crew of many.

Airman 1st Class Will Highsmith, a communications systems technician, said he seldom looks at the radar screen because he's monitoring the radio.

"If someone in the back of the plane needs to talk to someone in another aircraft, I can change the radio frequency to allow that connection."

He also monitors emergency calls from aircraft in distress.

"You have voice communications and data communications," he said. "As far as data communications, it's very important to have data links up so we can get this information out to our combat commanders in the region and other aircraft so they know where the threats and targets are located."

Also helping in the effort is Maj. Michael Mras, a sensor



Staff Sgt. Matthew Hannon / 1st CCTS

Staff Sgt. Marcus Franklin, a crew chief deployed from the 116th Air Control Wing, Robins AFB, Ga., to the 363rd Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, performs a panels and inlets inspection on a JSTAR system aircraft prior to a mission April 21.

management officer, who keeps his eyes on the radar.

"I monitor jobs that come in, and I juggle the different requirements so the radar is not over-tasked at any one time," he said. "We want to make sure that everyone who has a requirement to see the ground picture gets what they need to do their job, both on and off the jet."

First Lt. Mark Valdez also makes sure the troops get what they need. His job is to talk to the aircraft, to aid in aircraft check-in and to pass information from other members. He also assists in the surveillance aspect of missions. In that aspect, if there are no fighters in the air, he looks for tracks of movements to identify potential threats.

"There are a lot of things we all do as a team to make the mission happen," he said. "Whatever needs to be done at any given time, even (if) it means working 24 hours a day, seven days a week, we make sure it gets done correctly and safely. It lets the people on the ground know what is coming. What we do is critical to the warfighter because of the things we can see and the information we can provide to help commanders make those big decisions. I love it, I wouldn't trade the feeling I get from knowing I've saved lives for anything in the world."

A pilot from 23rd Expeditionary Bomb Squadron, Minot Air Force Base, N.D., loads transmission frequencies on a B-52 March 25 during pre-flight checks.



Tech Sgt. Scott Reed / 1st CCTS



Master Sgt. Cesar Rodriguez / 48th CS

Capt. Dave Pratt, an Instructor Pilot from the 319th Air Expeditionary Group, sets radio frequencies during a nighttime aerial refueling mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Keeping the lines open

By Bob Jensen

Combined Forces Air Component Public Affairs

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM —

Along with the thousands of aircraft that filled the sky over Iraq are thousands of different electronic frequencies used for critical communications between the systems and people who make those flights possible.

For Operation Iraqi Freedom alone there were about 21,000 individual frequencies assigned, said Master Sgt. John C. Zimmermann, the theater frequency manager for the Combined Forces Air Component commander. About 5,000 of those are for the components supporting the air campaign, the domain Zimmermann manages.

“Frequency management is a process to ensure all equipment emitting radio frequency energy work harmoniously within the electromagnetic battlespace,” Zimmermann said, speaking from the Combined Air Operations Center at a desert air base in Southwest Asia.

“That battlespace includes basically everything that supports the fighting mission,” he added. “For instance, each of the satellites we use has its own frequencies. Each of the various radars operate in different bands and within those bands are assigned frequencies.

“Also, every aircraft has its own frequencies to work with in its specific radios. So, to give you an example, I’m trying to make sure the satellite we’re using to control (an unmanned aerial vehicle) with isn’t going to interfere with the (Navy

fighter pilot) the (airborne warning and control system) crews are talking to.”

Zimmermann deployed from Ramstein Air Base, Germany, where he is the NCO in charge of the U.S. Air Forces in Europe frequency management office. While deployed, his job deals with juggling electronic frequencies for handheld radios as well as satellite links that bring in the classified and unclassified military computer network connections.

He and his nightshift counterpart, Staff Sgt. Jermaine Jones, nominated and assigned frequencies supporting missions for Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. They managed electronic emissions in an area that spans from Turkey to Afghanistan.

When assigning frequencies, Zimmermann analyzes a user’s request, reviews the requirements, and then looks at frequencies that have already been issued or assigned to other users. He tries to find an unused frequency or one being used in a geographically separated area.

Finding the right frequency is not necessarily an easy task.

More than 1,500 frequency requests to support Operation Iraqi Freedom have been processed by Zimmermann’s office since December, he said.

Complicating the task further, the electromagnetic spectrum is actually a sovereign resource and each country manages it the way it deems fit.

“When we deploy to places like Southwest Asia, we have to coordinate all the frequencies we use with the host nation. This is to ensure something we use

is not going to interfere with a frequency the host nation may be using for cell phones. And, that’s actually been a case that happened over here.”

Each component has its own frequency manager, and Zimmermann said he is in contact with that person daily. Conflicts between frequencies used by the various components are rare because of the coordination process and the different types of equipment used.

If a conflict does pop up, the component frequency managers usually solve it among themselves, for the few times the managers cannot resolve the conflict, the problem is forwarded to U.S. Central Command to decide which mission has the priority.

“Without any frequency management we’d have something we call ‘frequency fratricide,’” he said.

“Everyone would be ‘stepping on’ each other. There needs to be a clear, relatively clean signal between two links, and if someone nearby is using the same frequency for another communication link, there would be frequency fratricide.

“Providing interference-free communications that allows for uninterrupted command and control of air assets to successfully run the air war,” is the biggest benefit his function brings to the fight, Zimmermann said. “This is an extremely important aspect of the air campaign that most operators don’t have the time to think about.



Staff Sgt. Thomas Thorpe / 460th CS

Tech. Sgt. Daniel Clampitt, Staff Sgt. Lana Winner and Senior Airman John Rioch, all from the 460th Communications Squadron at Buckley Air Force Base, Colo., perform a schematic and functional review of the Central Electronics Bank.

RADIOS and FREQUENCIES

Buckley Air Force Base communications personnel upgrade Land Mobile Radios

BUCKLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Colo. — Land Mobile Radio communications have greatly improved here during the last several months that's because the base transitioned from an analog simplex two-way radio system to a narrow band wide-area digital trunked encrypted radio network.

This means people using hand-held radios get better coverage because we have virtually eliminated all the dead spots on base, and the reception is much clearer.

When the base Personal Wireless Communications office stood up two years ago, the team knew the Land Mobile Radio system was in need of replacement. Half of the Security Forces' radios were broken beyond repair. Some critical users such as the base fire department and the air traffic control tower were operating with radios more than 15 years old. While waiting for replacement funding, the LMR shop managed to satisfy most requirements with radios other bases were turning in. They supplied the base with enough operational radios for emergency personnel. Additionally, antennas were relocated to improve the poor coverage.

Since the transition, everything has changed. The new government-owned system is a Motorola Smart Zone system, which allows Buckley to control and manage its own radios using a remote terminal. It encompasses 18 repeaters geographically separated between four sites. Two additional repeaters are used for the

over-the-air-rekey feature, which allows encryption keys to be updated without physically having to touch each radio. The fire department and security forces now have the capability to patch radio nets together with the local city emergency response teams. Radio users now enjoy other features such as: private call, encryption and an emergency duress alarm. Buckley has tripled the number of radio nets without tripling the amount of radio frequencies.

This was all made possible because of the new trunked radio system, which efficiently uses a small number of frequencies to provide service to a large number of radios. The system does this through a control channel at each repeater site that acts like a traffic cop and assigns permission to talk as soon as a repeater becomes available.

During increased demands, the

users may get a busy tone, but within seconds open-air time is allocated and the radio will allow the user to make the calls.

Currently, four federal agencies share the radio system, with the Department of Homeland Security being the primary manager. Sharing a radio system with other federal agencies is highly recommended by the National Telecommunications Administration, and in doing so saved Buckley more than \$2.3 million in equipment costs.

Handheld radio users can communicate clearly within a 2,200 square mile radius around the Denver area. As other federal agencies attach to the system, the coverage could expand from the Wyoming border to Pueblo, about 40 miles south of Colorado Springs.

Buckley officials would like to pass on special thanks to Harry Kouts at the

Department of Homeland Security Federal Protective Service, who personally dedicated years of hard work on this project; Tech. Sgt. Dan Clampitt from the 460th Communications Squadron Personal Wireless-Communications office who vigorously worked out all the technical performance and programming details and Master Sgt. John Carrillo at Headquarters Air Force Space Command for aggressively securing the necessary \$1.8 million for the equipment.

Finally, thanks also goes out to the numerous commanders, contracting officers and civil engineers at Buckley who worked on site preparation and documentation.

Buckley's LMR success

▶ Virtually eliminated all Land Mobile Radio dead spots on base.

▶ Buckley manages all of its own LMRs by using a remote terminal.

▶ The modernized system allows an over-the-air rekey feature, which allows encryption keys to be updated without physically having to touch each radio.

▶ Buckley's first responders now have the ability to patch into the local fire and police departments' radio systems.

▶ Radio users can now communicate clearly within a 2,200 square mile radius around Denver.

▶ By sharing its system with other federal agencies, Buckley saved more than \$2.3 million in equipment costs.





Staff Sgt. Suzanne Jenkins / 1 CTC5

Airman 1st Class Leah Fisk puts poles together for the camouflage screening system to cover the 2000 watt tactical wide band communication system at Osan Air Base, Korea. Fisk deployed in March to Osan in support of exercises Foal Eagle and Reception Staging Onward Movement and Integration.

Tactical COMM hooks up 353rd Special Ops Group

By Senior Airman Andrew Svoboda
Foal Eagle Public Affairs

TAEGU AIR BASE, South Korea

— When Senior Airman James Perry joined the Air Force in 2000, he had every intention of becoming a satellite communication technician. Little did this airman know, but during the next two years he'd travel throughout the Pacific as part of a tactical communications unit out of Kadena Air Base, Japan.

"I didn't really know where Okinawa was when I first got orders," Perry said. "At first I wasn't that excited because I've got a family and was hoping to work at a normal Sat Comm (Satellite Communications) unit."

Working with the 353rd Operations Support Squadron has been anything but normal, but Perry says he's enjoyed working with the unit, and he has experienced areas of the job he would not have worked in otherwise.

"A tactical unit like this means we're

mobile and must set up our operations at deployed locations," Perry said.

A strategic unit is the home station, which runs the typical base network. At each deployment, the mobile comm troops must set up and take down an entire communications system. This means they can go to any bare base and set up the same communications found at a home station. This includes DSN phone lines, secure and non-secure Internet.

"By working in a tactical unit, I get a better understanding of what the user may be going through when they call back to the home unit," Perry said. "It's not just numbers and names."

The Foal Eagle exercise is just one of many deployments to which the 353rd OSS gets sent. Tech. Sgt. Michael Lester, theater deployment communications team chief, spent more than 200 days TDY last year. He's been everywhere in the Pacific, many times living in tents.

"When we deploy, we bring everything with us including our own tents

and power," Lester said. "This base has better conditions than most places we go." For this exercise, the comm troops worked with the 607th Support Group who pre-wired buildings with phone lines. "We still physically ran wire from the central comm center to all different buildings here," Perry said.

From the time their pallets arrive, it takes the comm troops a couple days to set up, and that's if everything's going smoothly.

"We come in as part of the advanced team, since it does usually take a few days," Lester said. "We've got a good team right now, but depending on who you have, it can take longer to set up."

The setup is time consuming and labor intensive, but the job doesn't end there. Troops are constantly monitoring and tweaking the system.

"Once it's up, we work 24/7," Lester said. "It doesn't matter if there's a pause in the exercise, comm is still here."



By Bob Eichholz

Chief, Air Force Postal Operations and Policy

PENTAGON — Mail programs such as “Any Service Member” and “Operation Dear Abby” enable people to send mail and care packages to military members serving overseas.

These programs brighten the holidays, bolster morale, and serve as a great way to show support to deployed service members.

However, the anthrax incidents of 2001 highlighted the vulnerability of the mail system with respect to chemical, biological, and explosive materials, and resulted in the Department of Defense canceling “Any Service Member”-type programs in October 2001.

Despite the cancellation of these programs, well-intentioned individuals and organizations seem to develop work-around methods quicker than the Air Force can educate them on the reasons why these programs were cancelled, and the dangers they may be exposing themselves to.

Post Offices across the country have been instructed not to accept mail

addressed to “Any Service Member.” Mail addressed to specific service members, however, is accepted.

Many people make an effort to comply with the rules, but some individuals and organizations are finding creative ways to circumvent the “Any Service Member” program cancellation.

Potential dangers

For instance, some Web-based mail programs allow service members to provide their name and unit address, which is then made available to millions of people worldwide. Can you think of why this might be a bad idea? Providing names and addresses to these sites creates an avenue for the introduction of chemical, biological, or explosive substances into the mail system from unknown sources—and helps the sender address it directly to deployed forces.

Other well-intentioned individuals established programs, which used drop boxes at shopping centers to accept mail for members serving overseas.

The contents of the box are then shipped to specific service members.

Again in this instance, both the contents and sender or source are unknown.

While the Air Force genuinely applauds the efforts of Americans and organizations everywhere for wanting to share a kind thought, provide a care package, or send holiday greetings to service members deployed overseas, if Air Force personnel are to be protected, it’s vital to employ security and force protection measures.

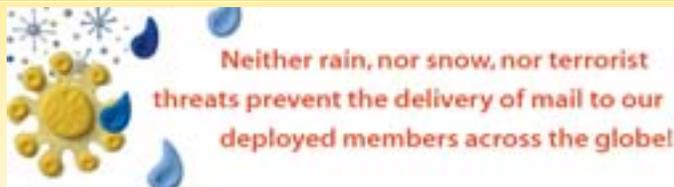
Service members should always safeguard their addresses, and only provide their mail addresses to known sources.

Better alternatives

Some alternatives to “Any Service Member” programs include contributing to military relief societies, using Web-based military support sites that allow for electronic mail to reach deployed members visiting veterans administration hospitals and nursing homes, coaching children’s sports teams, just to name a few. (*Chief Master Sgt. Jeffery Lane and Bob McCall also contributed to this article.*)

Looking for ways to support the troops? www.af.mil/news/opscenter/troop_support.shtml

► More than 200 postal workers have directly supported **Operation Iraqi Freedom**. Establishing suitable postal service at forward locations requires contingency ZIP codes, new routing schemes and lots of hard work.



3 cheers for the postal workers!

► Since the beginning of **Operation Enduring Freedom**, postal workers have dispatched and delivered more than **18 million pounds** of mail to more than 300,000 deployed members.

► Postal workers place mail on chartered commercial flights, passenger commercial flights and military airlift to ensure **timely delivery** and customer satisfaction ... thus **increasing morale** for the troops!

source: AF Postal Operations and Policy



COIN HERITAGE

New displays showcase major command pride

The Air Force Communications Agency is seeking contributions for its display of Air Force communications and information related military coins from each of the major commands.

As each MAJCOM collection is complete, it will be displayed in Ludwig Heritage Hall, Bldg. 1700, at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., where AFCA maintains a repository of Air Force comm and info memorabilia.

"We also welcome other coins representing Air Force comm and info units, organizations or functions," said Len Barry, AFCA coin collec-

tion manager. "That includes all aspects of Air Force command and control, communications and computers, as well as intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance," he said.

"We'd like to have as many representative coins as possible, not only to recognize what each one symbolizes, but to assure they're all given their rightful place in Air Force comm and info heritage.

"We've received a lot of favorable comments, and we're getting more coins in all the time," Barry said. (AFCA Public Affairs)

The collection was first placed on display in April, and so far includes 64 coins:

Air Combat Command: 1st Communications Squadron; 2nd CS; 4th CS; 5th CS; 24th CS*; 27th CS; 32nd Combat CS; 99th CS; 355th CS; 509th CS; 5th Combat Comm. Group; 552nd Computer Systems Gp.; ACC/SC (Comm. and Info. Directorate); ACC Comm. Gp.

Air Education and Training Command: AETC Computer Systems Sq. **Air Force Materiel Command:** 38th Engineering Installation Gp. **Air Force Space Command:** 45th CS; 850th CS; AFSPC/SC. **Air Force Special Operations Command:** 16th CS. **Air Mobility Command:** 22nd CS; 436th CS; 437th CS; 89th CG; 375th CG*; AMC/SC. **Pacific Air Forces:** 3rd CS; 8th CS; 15th CS; 36th CS; 51st CS; 374th CS; 607th Air and Space CS; 611th Air Support Sq.; 613th



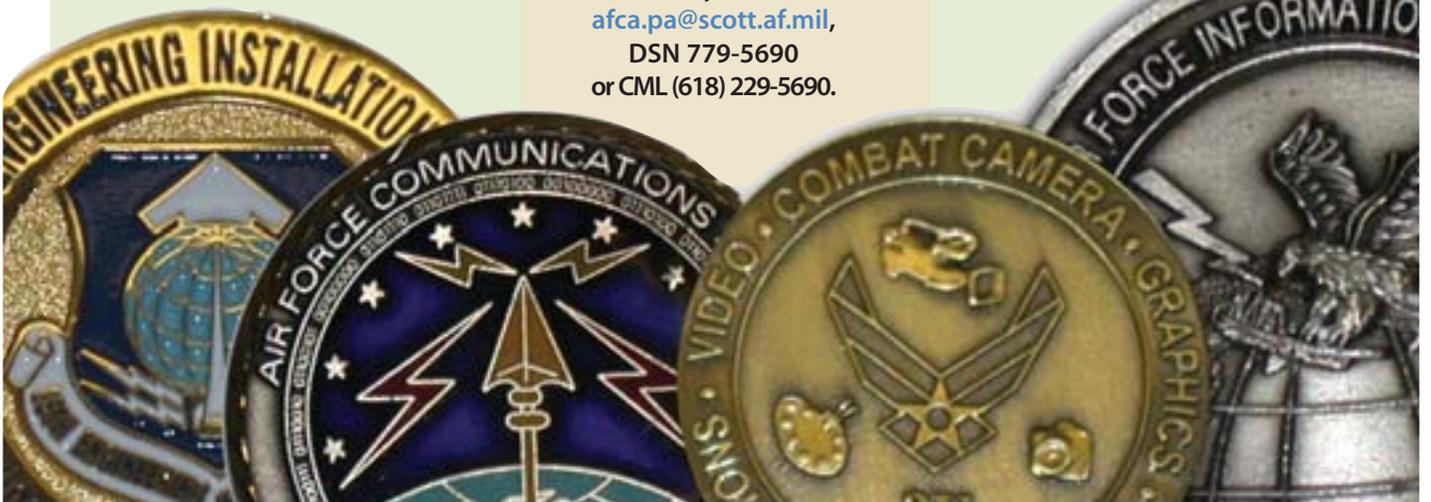
Master Sgt. Karen Pettit / AFCA PA

**Contributors may send coins to
AFCA/PA, Attn: Len Barry
203 W. Losey St., Rm. 1200
Scott AFB, IL 62225-5222**

**Questions may be referred to
afca.pa@scott.af.mil,
DSN 779-5690
or CML (618) 229-5690.**

Air Comm. Sq.*; 611th Air Operations Gp.; PACAF/SC; PACAF Computer Systems Sq. **U.S. Air Forces in Europe:** 31st CS; 39th CS; 48th CS; 52nd CS; 86th CS; 786th CS; 886th CS; 86th CG; USAFE/SC; USAFE Air Postal Sq. **Air National Guard:** 1st Combat CS; 210th Engineering Installation Sq.; 219th EIS; 291st CCS; 293rd CCS. **U.S. Central Command:** 363rd Expeditionary Comm. Sq. **Field Operating Agencies:** Air Force Communications Agency; AFCA SCOPE Network; AFCA Comm. and Info. Seminars; AFCA Top 4. **Other:** Comm. - Computer Systems; Comm. - Electronics Maintenance; Information Management; Visual Information; Combat Visual Information; Information Assurance.

* Inactive Unit



News Briefs

Civilians

EMPLOYEE FRAUD: A former Robins AFB, Ga., civilian employee was sentenced to five months imprisonment, five months house arrest with electronic monitoring and three years supervised probation after being convicted of Federal Employees' Compensation Act fraud.

The former aircraft electrician also has to pay \$97,635 in restitution after being found guilty of falsifying his annual certifications by declaring no earnings and no change in disability on forms submitted from 1998 – 2001. An anonymous tip helped investigators find evidence proving the employee earned income by doing carpentry, painting and construction work during the period of 1997 to 2001.

"Submitting a claim for an injury that didn't occur on the job is a crime," said JoAnn Hutchison, Robins' work force effectiveness branch chief. "Falsifying any part of a claim is also a crime, even if no benefits are paid against that claim."

Information concerning individuals suspected of fraudulent receipt of benefits can be made directly to the FECA Investigators at (478) 926-3681 or (478) 926-3769 or to the Injury Compensation Unit at (478) 926-4971. (AFMC News Service)

PALACE ACQUIRE PROGRAM: The Communications and Information Career Program is one of 20 career programs that hire and manage Palace Acquire interns. The program provides a formal training plan that identifies management and technical level training, as well as on-the-job training assignments that provide a mix of

experience and skills suited to a target position. Upon successful completion of the program, interns are placed in a permanent position, which uses their skills and meets the needs of the Air Force. The CICP recruits top quality individuals for these occupational specialties:

- ▶ Information Technology Specialist;
- ▶ Electronic & Computer Engineers;
- ▶ Computer Scientists;
- ▶ Information Management Specialist;
- ▶ Visual Information Specialist; and
- ▶ Operations Research Specialist.

Each year, major commands have an opportunity to identify base-level Palace Acquire requirements for the next fiscal year. The distribution of controlled authorizations varies each year depending upon changes in mission, projected manpower increases or decreases or reductions, skill requirements, funding constraints and other operational considerations.

Additional information on hosting an intern or to see what the qualification criteria are, visit the Web site at: www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp/cicp.

Questions or comments may be directed to the Palace Acquire team at DSN 665-3691 or e-mail afpc.cicppaq@randolph.af.mil. (Bea Ramirez, Randolph AFB, Texas)

CIVILIAN FORCE DEVELOPMENT:

The Civilian Force Development is a follow-on to similar programs the Air Force chief of staff recently announced for Air Force officers and enlisted people. The goal of CFD is to identify cross-functional paths that will expose civilians to a broader scope of Air Force operational activities and therefore prepare them for senior leadership programs. This means creating opportunities for professional education, advanced academic degrees, broader assignment experiences and upward



Staff Sgt. Stacy Pearsall / 1CCTS

Osan Sunset

Staff Sgt. Garrett Rosier from the 1st Combat Camera Squadron, Charleston Air Force Base, S.C., watches the sun set here. Combat Camera was deployed recently to Osan Air Base, Korea, to cover an annual exercise.

mobility. To take advantage of these opportunities, senior leaders ask civilians to consider widening their job experience base to develop operational and technical skills beyond a single specialty and to take the right assignments to develop the skills and experience base. (Aim Points)

Officers

33S CAREER FIELD INPUTS: The Air Force 33S Communications Officer Career Field Manager, in concert with Air Education and Training Command, Air Force Communications Agency, and communications & information senior leaders, is transforming the way 33S officers and civilian equivalents are trained. A Utilization and Training Workshop is June 16-20 at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., and all inputs, feedback, suggestions or concerns are wel-

comed. This workshop will continue to determine essential education and training requirements for comm and info officers by bringing together the expertise to establish the right blend of formal training, self-study, and on-the-job training requirements.

The cornerstone of this initiative is the development of the first-ever Career Field Education and Training Plan. The plan establishes the framework for managing career field education and training, provides a view of professional development efforts, and serves as a comprehensive guide of tasks, which communications officers are expected to perform during their careers. The CFETP is a living document and will help plan vital changes to the Basic Comm Officer Training and Advanced Comm Officer Training courses, as well as lay a solid found- ➤

AFCA Seminars point way to success * www.afca.scott.af.mil/seminars

- ▶ Information Management
- ▶ Maintenance Management
- ▶ Information Protection
- ▶ Information Systems Management
- ▶ Maintenance Management
- ▶ Planning & Implementation Management
- ▶ Planning & Implementation Project Planning
- ▶ Network Management

Seminars are targeted for C&I officers, civilians and enlisted members, but others may attend upon approval of supervisor. Class size is usually kept to about 20 or fewer.

DSN: 770-5697

source: Senior Master Sgt. Howard Kalinsky

dition for continuous training improvements. Some currently planned revolutionary training changes include: ▶ Exportable self-study training, to help level the knowledge C&I officers will need for the new, more advanced in-residence BCOT and ACOT courses; ▶ More hands-on, applications-based study, with a new emphasis on network command and control, tactical data links and other war fighting integration initiatives; ▶ Field-level subject matter experts to help speed-up course improvements, and keep them current, and industry updates on emerging technologies.

For additional information, go to <https://www.afca.scott.af.mil/33sx/utw/index.cfm>. (Lt. Col. Sheron Bellizan, Pentagon.)

Enlisted

PFE EFFECTIVE JULY 1: The 2003 promotion fitness exam and supervisory examination study guides were expected at Air Force locations world-

wide in May and become effective July 1. The new study guides have a CD-ROM with an electronic version of the study guide included with each volume. Members testing for promotion are required to have their promotion study references at least 60 days before testing. Senior master sergeants testing for chief master sergeant will be the first to test using the new study guides. All enlisted members are authorized a copy of the study guides, but airmen eligible for promotion have priority. (AFPN)

New developments

PRIVACY RESEARCH: Protecting individuals' privacy is what researchers at the Palo Alto Research Center will focus on for the next three plus years courtesy of a \$3.5 million contract from Air Force Research Laboratory officials at Rome, N.Y. Engineers will focus on creating privacy filters, "aliasing" methods, and automated data expunging agents to protect the privacy of U.S. citizens, and those not

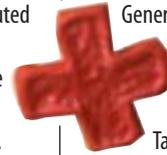
involved with foreign terrorists under a 42-month agreement, "Protecting Privacy of Individuals in Terrorist Tracking Applications."

"We will develop techniques that restrict analysts looking for potential terrorists activities from necessarily knowing the identities of the individuals who might fit patterns attributed to that activity," said Patrick McCabe, program manager in the directorate's information and intelligence exploitation division. DARPA officials said the program's goal is to produce technology required for a database to predict, track and preempt terrorist attacks. A related and DARPA-funded AFRL effort will improve database integration technology.

"We envision software that will mask the identity of any individual whose pattern of activities triggers the suspicion of investigators," said McCabe. "Additional authorizations would be required and some formal process established to allow an inves-

tigator to get an individual's identification." (AFMC News Service)

FRONT LINE MEDICINE: Improvements in the deployment process since the first Gulf War have resulted in a more fit and healthy fighting force, the Air Force Surgeon General told the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Total Force recently. Lt. Gen. (Dr.) George Peach Taylor, Jr., said that the transformation to expeditionary medicine has enabled the Air Force to move medical forces forward rapidly, both in the initial deployment of Operation Enduring Freedom and then during Operation Iraqi Freedom. A key component of this change has resulted in preventive medicine teams arriving in deployed locations on the very first planes, the general said. These small teams of experts provide vital food and water safety capability. They also begin collecting environmental and hazard data, work closely on tent-city siting, and providing basic primary care. Expeditionary Medical Support units are comprised of rapidly deployable medical teams that can range from large tented facilities with specialized services to five-person teams with backpacks. These five-person Mobile Field Surgical Teams, or MFSTs, travel far forward with 70-pound backpacks—in them is enough medical equipment to perform 10 life-saving surgeries anywhere, anytime, under any conditions. During a six-month rotation in Operation Enduring Freedom, one MFST team performed 100 in-the-field surgeries; 39 of these were combat surgeries. Taylor described the newly created Patient Support Pallets, which are rolled onto any cargo or personnel transport aircraft, unfolded, unpacked, and within minutes, convert that aircraft into an aeromedical evacuation platform. He termed the pallets a "monumental advancement" from the Air Force's traditional use of dedicated platforms like the C-9, or extensive reconfigurations of other lift aircraft. In 2002, 1,352 patients were transported in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, of whom 128 were critically



Staff Sgt. Michelle Michaud / 1CCTS

All in a day's work

Senior Airman James Cummings, 65th Communications Squadron at Lajes Field, Azores, troubleshoots a 2,400-pair cable used for base data communications.

ill or injured. He described an incident in Afghanistan in which joint service interoperability was demonstrated after the crash of an Army Apache helicopter in which the two pilots had massive facial and extremity fractures.

While troops are in-theater, their health surveillance continues, Taylor said. "We have fielded data capture mechanisms to extend and enhance our force health protection efforts. Using automated systems, we have documented and centrally stored more than 11,600 deployed patient records since Sept. 11. Tools are now in place to collect relevant environmental health data and forward them for centralized analysis. This linkage between individual patient encounters and environmental data is critical to any future epidemiology studies. (G. W. Pomeroy, Air Force Surgeon General Public Affairs)

KUDOS

MIRACLE MOVE: Two units came together last fall to perform a miracle move of 200 people and their associated communications system in just 30 days. The Reserves' 419th Communications Squadron from Hill Air Force Base, Utah, deployed to RAF Mildenhall, England, to assist the 100th Communications Squadron move its center of operation because of a multi-million dollar renovation project. Contractual obligations forced a 30-day window to vacate the building, and real-world situations required all personnel and systems be moved quickly, safely and with zero downtime. The unavailability of personnel made this move an even more daunting task, as in the weeks prior to the move, an out-of-cycle Air Expeditionary Force deployment gutted work centers. This proved to be



a complex project as it took into play a broad spectrum of C4 capabilities, which required commensurate specialists skills to de-install, move and re-install in operating condition. Systems engineering support was not at hand and there was no room for delay or error.

The impacted C4 systems included wideband, narrowband, crypto logic,



Tech. Sgt. Robert Horstman / 2nd CS

Operation provide LAN

Staff Sgt Daniel Garcia, a computer maintenance technician from the 398th Air Expeditionary Group, strategically routes and runs LAN cable while at a forward deployed operating base located in the Mediterranean region in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

data, analog, voice, video, antennas, and both inside- and outside-plants cabling encompassing light wave and copper transmission medium. The building containing these systems was built in the early 1940s and contained a virtual hodgepodge of overlapping and mixed connectivity for the C4 systems.

In both organizations, journeyman and apprentice technicians received the opportunity for hands-on experience as senior NCOs guided them in the art of relocating complex C4 systems from an unfamiliar, antiquated facility to pre-fabricated temporary accommodations.

The end result was their ability to sustain, with little or no downtime, operational command and control capability for two front-line flying units.

This experience not only proved Reserve strength can be called upon at anytime to support the mission, but also provided an opportunity to share information across the spectrum of the active duty and reserve forces. (Thom Lancy, RAF Mildenhall, England)

NCOS TALK SPANISH: Two NCOs from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., recently gave a week-long orientation course on operations and main-

tenance of upgraded high frequency radio stations used between nations in South America . . . in Spanish.

Although manuals were provided in English and Spanish, members attending the training were from the El Salvador, Ecuador, Honduras and Panama air forces and spoke little or no English. Staff Sgts. Juan Mendoza and Daniel Salvestrini, who taught the class in March, were part of the 612th Air Communications Squadron's efforts since June 2001 to support an Air Force initiative that began in 1998 to modernize telecommunications systems with 17 Central and South American Air Forces.

The upgrades provided to the countries over the past several years entailed procuring new equipment to establish an Automatic Link Establishment, and a HF network for voice communications and data transfer.

The 612th ACOMS members quickly looked at the air force inventory for systems that could provide this capability and be compatible with other systems in use. After integrating old HF radios with new components to provide ALE and data transfer, 12th Air Force requested Congress approval to transfer ownership of the radios to air

forces who needed them.

"The systems work extremely well, e-mail and pictures can be sent at surprising speeds using HF radios with ALE. The radios have earned their reputation for reliable long-range voice communications; data transfer is a new addition to the system," said Mendoza.

Even though the first orientation was conducted at Davis-Monthan AFB, the unit is working with the remaining countries to establish an available timeframe and possible location to convene at in Central America. (Tech. Sgt. Rick Tindall, Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.)

AF THANKS PARENTS: Secretary of the Air Force James G. Roche and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper launched a service-wide campaign May 5 to thank the parents of America's airmen for supporting their children's service.

The Air Force Parent Pin - or "P" pin - program encourages airmen to register on a secure Air Force Web site, www.yourguardiansoffreedom.com, where they can provide the names and addresses of up to two parents (or parental figures). Shortly thereafter, the airmen's parents receive personalized letters from Secretary Roche and General Jumper containing high-quality lapel pins displaying the letter "P" cradled in the Air Force symbol.



The pins are a contemporary adaptation of the World War II "E" flags that were used to recognize companies for contributions to the war effort, and they are presented on display cards that explain their lineage. The letters address recipients and airmen by name.

They are intended to communicate to parents the importance of their children's service to the ongoing war on terrorism, to express sincere gratitude for parents' continued support, and to convey a sense of partnership between the Air Force and the parents of America's airmen. (AFPJN)

The Air Force readies for the next generation of portable computers

What are they?

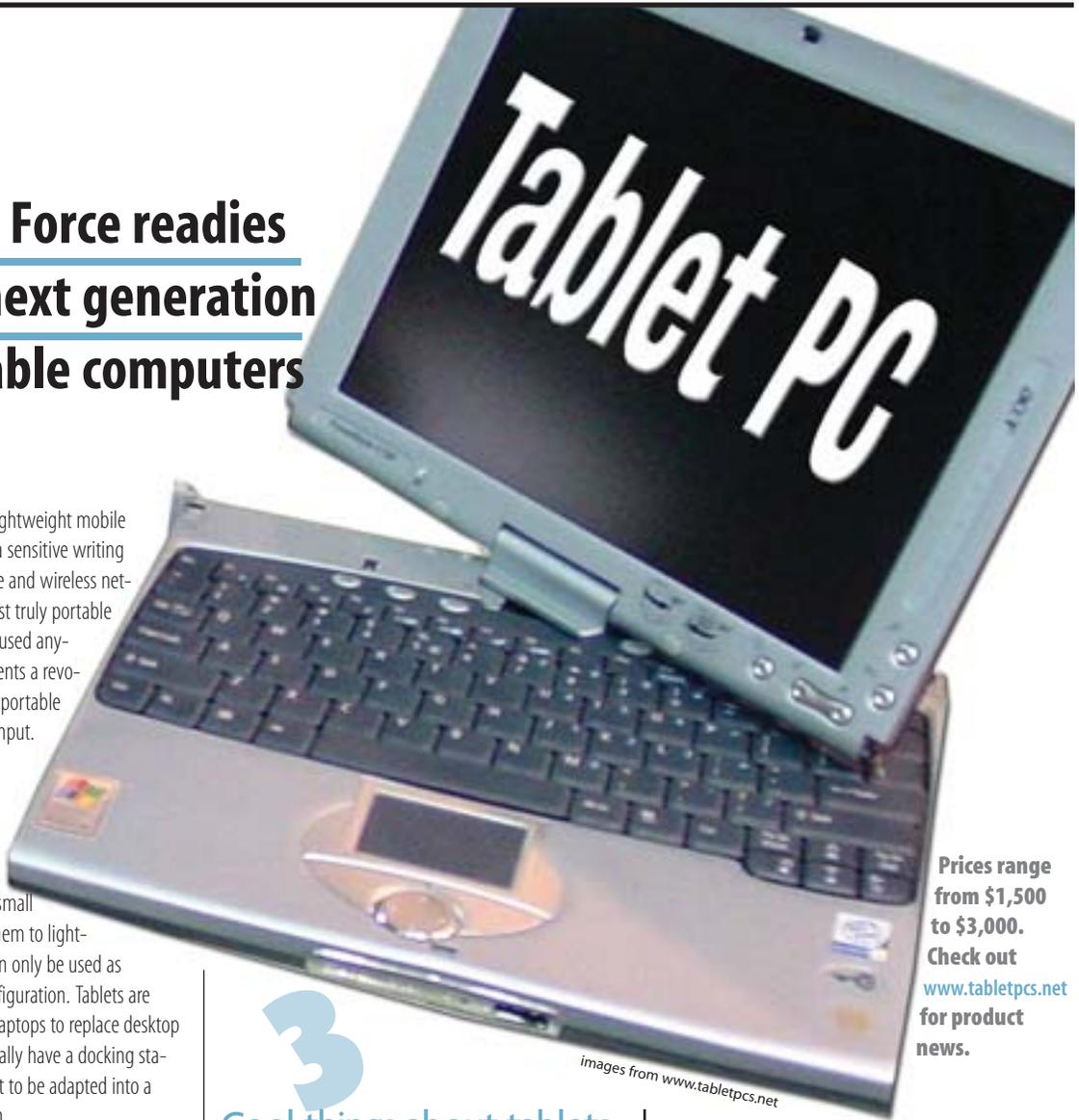
The Tablet PC is a small, lightweight mobile personal computer with a sensitive writing surface. A long battery life and wireless networking make this the first truly portable personal computer to be used anywhere, any time. It represents a revolution in how people use portable devices to capture hand input.

Types:

Tablets generally fall into two categories: "slate" and "convertible" systems. Convertibles have small keyboards that convert them to lightweight laptops. Slates can only be used as tablets in the mobile configuration. Tablets are already competing with laptops to replace desktop computers. Tablets generally have a docking station that allows the tablet to be adapted into a workstation configuration.

What's the Air Force doing?

Since February, Tim Fox, a network engineer with the Air Force Communications Agency, has been testing numerous brands of Tablet PCs for compatibility with Air Force operating systems. His job is to provide commercial, off-the-shelf, product evaluations and provide a comparison chart so that senior leaders or those planning to purchase new technology will have the information they need before making the financial investment. For the Tablet PCs, he's reviewed products from Gateway, NEC, Toshiba, Compact and Fujitsu, and he said they're surprisingly similar. He plans to post his analysis on the Web this month. His report will compare the accuracy of the handwriting recognition system, accessibility to the LAN, and server capability and measure the relative capabilities between the tablets.



Prices range from \$1,500 to \$3,000. Check out www.tabletpcs.net for product news.

3 Cool things about tablets

- ▶ You can write directly on the screen and save your notes in your own handwriting, or convert them to typed text for use in other applications. The pen can also handle common mouse and keyboard tasks like opening applications, selecting text and displaying menus. Or, if you prefer, you can still use a mouse or keyboard with Tablet PC.
- ▶ Tablet PC supports grab-and-go removal from a docking station and has a fast resume-from-standby time. These capabilities, combined with wireless network support, give you greater mobility and immediate access to the full power of your PC.
- ▶ The Air Force is working to ensure there are security features to include the Encrypting File System and to support a secure log on to a network.

Where can I find the assessment?

<https://www.afca.scott.af.mil/prodeval/>

The staff at AFCA's Technology Directorate solicits your comments on the Technology Assessments and Reports pages so they can make the site more effective and easier for you to use. They also want your recommendations as to what new assessments you would like to see them undertake.

e-mail afca.tc@scott.af.mil

Phone 618.229.5612 / DSN 779.5612

AFCA's Technology Directorate has expertise in network infrastructure, wireless/RF systems, computer architecture, emanations security engineering and systems integration. During the past few years, they have published more than 100 reports.

Expeditionary Communications

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM



A network of more than
800 megabites per second
made up the largest tactical
communications enterprise in
Air Force history, which was
20 times larger than Desert Storm,
and
8 times larger than
Operation Enduring Freedom.

Tech. Sgt. Denny Tankersley, from Robins Air Force Base, Ga., prepares to splice fiber-optic cable at Tallil Air Base in southern Iraq.
Photo by Master Sgt. Terry Blevins / 36 CS

“Today’s high-tech warfare is made possible by our amazing communications capabilities and people. It’s incredible how communications have transformed the way we fight wars. Communications gives us the capability to identify targets and direct strikes quicker and more accurately than ever before.”

Lt. Gen. T. Michael Moseley
Combined Forces Air Component Commander
Operation Iraqi Freedom

