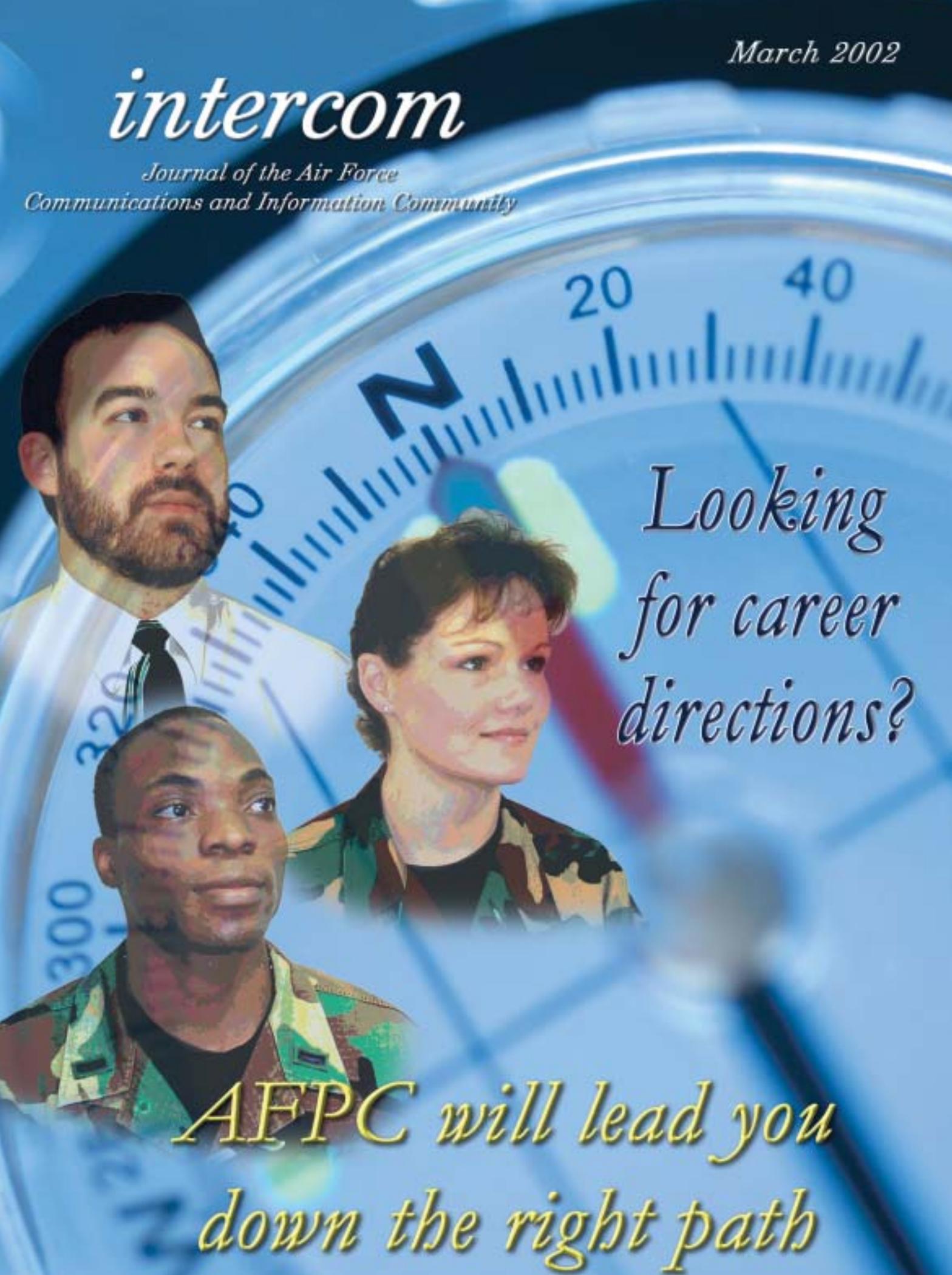


March 2002

intercom

Journal of the Air Force

Communications and Information Community



*Looking
for career
directions?*

*AFPC will lead you
down the right path*

intercom

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About the cover

This month's cover focuses on the Air Force Personnel Center.

Clockwise from top:
Markus Rogers, MSgt.
Jennifer Ostrander and
1st Lt. Oscar Robinson.



Cover by Janet Moreiko-Gagen



Photo by Capt. Kristi Beckman

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM -- Airman James Risban (left), 376th Air Expeditionary Wing, hands a long-awaited package to Senior Airman Tommy Williams. Both are deployed to Peter J. Ganci Jr. AB, Kyrgyzstan.

Post office in Kyrgyzstan keeps airmen smiling

By Capt. Kristi Beckman
*376th Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs
Ganci AB, Kyrgyzstan*

More than a ton of long-awaited mail arrived Feb. 9 for airmen deployed to Kyrgyzstan who were setting up a coalition air base in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Airman James Risban, a 376th Air Expeditionary Wing postal specialist from Seymour-Johnson AFB, N.C., handed the first package to Senior Airman Tommy Williams, a 376th AEW civil engineer squadron firefighter from Travis AFB, Calif.

"I've been waiting about three-and-a-half weeks for mail," Airman Williams said. "My par-

ents sent me a care package from San Antonio. This is definitely a real morale booster."

It was an exciting day, said Airman Risban, who was the first postal worker to arrive here Jan. 11. "This tent was packed this morning with boxes."

Airman Risban arriving by himself was one of the bitter-sweet stories of this whole deployment, said Brig. Gen. Christopher A. Kelly, 376th AEW commander.

"We were all excited, of course, because we heard a postal worker was inbound, and what we got was a one-striper fresh out of (technical) school who thought he was falling in on a full-up operating post office," General

See **KYRGYZSTAN** Page 38

Postal workers garner special duty assignment pay

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Air Force has approved special duty assignment pay for personnel serving in the postal special duty identifier (8M000). This pay will be fixed at SDAP Rating 2, equivalent to \$110 per month, and will be awarded to personnel with a control Air Force specialty code of 8M000 and who hold the rank of airman first class through chief master sergeant.

According to Air Force Instruction 36-3017, *Special Duty Assignment Pay Program*, this pay is designed as an incentive to induce enlisted members to qualify for and serve in designated duties involving the performance of extremely difficult duties, or duties demanding an unusual degree of responsibility.

"Our postal personnel directly impact both mission success and morale," said Chief Master Sgt. Todd Small, Air Force postal career field manager. "If you've spent time in a deployed environment, you can relate to the absolute criticality of official mail service as well as the personal importance of a 'care package' from home. This pay incentive only reinforces what we've known all along — just how vital our 8M people are to the Air Force's daily mission."

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'Palace Comm' geared to help comm and info personnel

By Maj. Kenneth A. Gaines
Chief, Communications-
Information Officer
Assignments Branch
Air Force Personnel Center
Randolph AFB, Texas

We receive a lot of questions about numerous topics at Air Force Personnel Center, but we don't mind. Keep them coming, because we've got answers. In fact, we're taking advantage of this opportunity the *intercom* is giving us to provide answers to communications and information issues we receive the most questions about. You can learn more about the aerospace communications and information expertise lieutenant program, career broadening, promotions, feedback from the CY '02 communications squadron commander's board, and the assignments system. Other articles cover details of the assignments system, such as entitlements, intermediate assignments, and tips for preparing a preference work sheet.

If you still have questions, feel free to visit our Web page or give us a call. Our team members are hand-picked 33S officers with broad experience in our business and the professional reputation to back it up. In fact, if you're a mid-to-senior captain, ... you may be here next!

Thanks to Air Force senior communications leaders for helping to make our job easier – and I hope all *intercom* readers find these articles informative and useful.

Officer assignment misconceptions explained

By Maj. Marty Schlacter
Communications-
Information
Officer Assignments Team
Air Force Personnel Center
Randolph AFB, Texas

The Air Force Assignment System was created in October 1998 to better meet the needs of today's Air Force and our officer corps. While most officers have had at least one assignment with AFAS, there are still many misconceptions about how the system actually works. The Communications and Information Officer Assignment Team's goal is to educate officers and commanders on the system.

The assignment process has six key elements which are outlined in this article:

- * Timelines
- * Vulnerable mover list
- * Requisitions
- * Preference worksheet
- * Matching dynamics
- * Notifications and report-

ing

The flow chart on Page 5 illustrates the process.

Timelines

The assignment cycle has a philosophy similar to that of the Aerospace Expeditionary Force. It allows some predictability and provides an opportunity for planning. Each cycle coincides with one of the four seasons: summer, fall, winter and spring. Because of the large effort required of everyone involved in the pro-

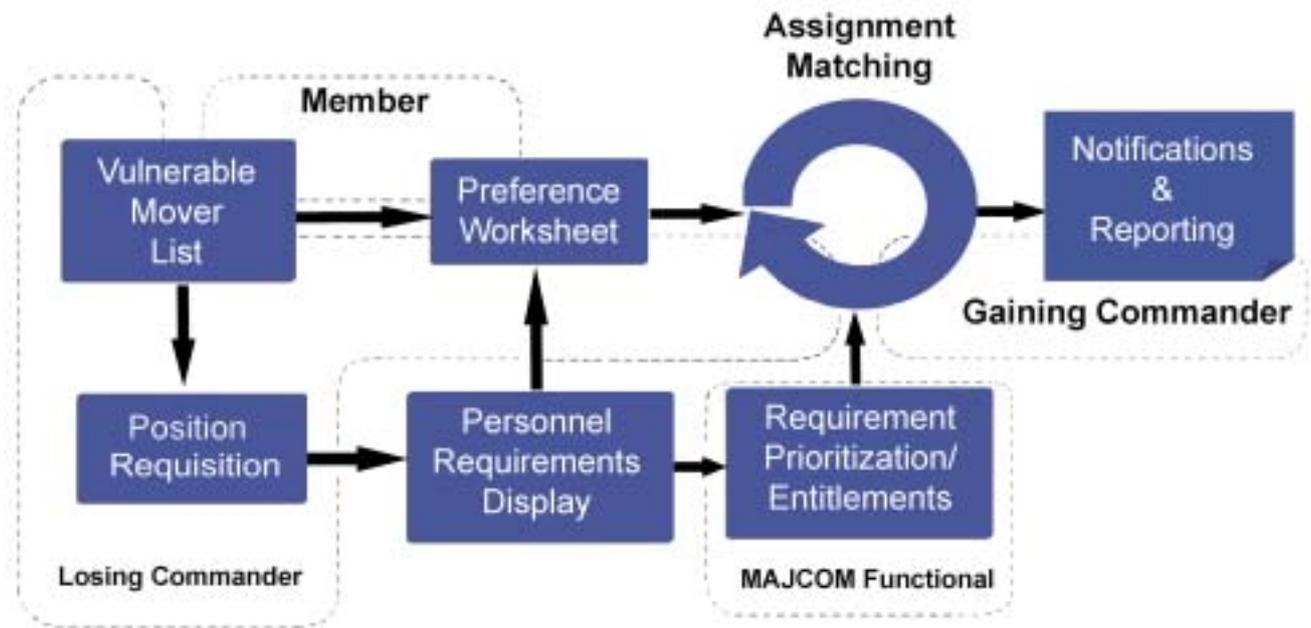
cess – including gaining commanders, losing commanders, movers, and the Communications and Information Officer Assignments Team – each assignment cycle requires more than the three months typically associated with a quarterly process. In fact, each quarterly assignment cycle requires approximately five months to complete, thereby causing two cycles to overlap at any given time. While one cycle is closing out with the last few assignment matches and notifications, a new cycle is ramping up to identify movers and position vacancies.

The table on Page 5 illustrates phases and timing of typical assignment cycles.

By knowing the cycle in which an officer is projected to move, the commander can predict when the officer will leave, when a backfill requirement will have to be requested, and when a replacement can be expected. Additionally, it gives the moving officer an opportunity to look ahead and start planning on a new assignment.

Vulnerable mover list

Identifying "vulnerable movers" for a given cycle is the kick-off point for the entire assignment process. Despite being the first step in the process, it's perhaps the least understood. The intent of designating an officer as vulnerable for reassignment is to alert the officer to expect to



be matched to an assignment in an upcoming cycle. Being identified as vulnerable doesn't mean you've already been selected for assignment. It only means you'll be on the list of officers that will be matched against projected vacancies when the matching process begins – typically four to six weeks after the VML is released.

Approximately nine months out from a permanent change of station, Air Force Personnel Center will generate an **initial** Web-based VML. This VML is accessible to commanders, requisition managers and major commands, and indicates which officers are projected to be vulnerable for reassignment. A new VML is generated for each assignment cycle. The assignments team uses the following criteria to determine who's vulnerable in a particular cycle:

- * Three years on station if currently assigned

in the continental United States

- * DEROS date if currently assigned overseas
- * School graduation, such as from SSS, ISS, AFIT or EWI
- * Commanders: Two years on station or DEROS
- * Assignment availability or limitation code; for example, serving in a joint credit position, AFIT payback code, extension code based on operational requirements, or educational deferment
- * Early release, when the commander is willing to accept a position gap
- * Join spouse, or being reassigned early or late to be with a spouse
- * Humanitarian or exceptional family member situations

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Cycle	Mover & Requirement Validation	PW Prep & PRD Visibility	Assignment Matching	RNLTD
Summer	November	December	January - March	June - August
Fall	February	March	April - June	September - November
Winter	May	June	July - September	December - February
Spring	August	September	October - December	March - May



Photo by Maj. Aaron T. Meadows

From left: Maj. Brian Konkell, Capt. Rick Black, and Capt. Karen Sanders, Air Force Personnel

Center Communications-Information Officer Assignment Team, make assignment matches.

AFAS *From Page 5*

It's important to note the initial Web-based VML isn't accessible to members, but only to commanders, requisition managers and major commands. The VML is coordinated with commanders and MAJCOMs to ensure all parties are "on the same page." During this time, organizations have an opportunity to request someone be removed from the list if extenuating circumstances justify a valid mission requirement. After the initial VML is validated by the MAJCOM and approved by AFPC, the final VML is generated.

Officers on the final VML are subject to move during the identified cycle and should prepare an assignment preference worksheet. In addition, this is a trigger for organizations to identify upcoming personnel requirements – typically backfills for someone identified on the VML – and to submit a requisition for a new officer.

Position requisitions

A position requisition is a requirement submitted by a commander or requisition manager to identify the need for an officer. Through the Assignment Management System, the commander submits a request with the position number, report no later than date, brief description, and any required unique qualifications. The MAJCOM reviews and validates the requisition, and forwards it to AFPC. AFPC then determines whether the requisition is valid, and if so, earmarks it for fill consideration during assignment matching. If a

requisition is received in time, the position will be identified on the personnel requirements display in AMS the month prior to assignment matching for a given cycle.

It's important to remember that the PRD is a static listing of projected vacancies. As such, it isn't adjusted to reflect new or changing requirements on a day-by-day basis. From the time the PRD is initiated until AFPC starts matching assignments, a lot happens behind the scenes. For example, new requirements are identified, requirements are deleted, organizations may be deemed unentitled to a fill, or MAJCOM may change requirement priorities based on operational needs. Therefore, it should be considered a "snapshot" of projected opportunities and should by no means be considered a complete list of requirements. The PRD should be used only as a tool to help officers and their commanders generate some ideas and possibilities for future assignments. Emphasis should be placed on using the PRD to identify the right type of duty – for example, staff officer, executive officer, flight commander, or communications and information officer – at the right level, such as joint, MAJCOM, agency or squadron – rather than using it as a classified ad for Air Force job shopping.

Another important thing to remember about the PRD is exact job titles and duty descriptions are not listed. This practice is in line with the philosophy that the PRD is a list of types of duties at different levels, rather than a specific job-shopping tool. In addition, from the time jobs are iden-

tified to the assignments team, until you arrive to take the position, six to nine months may have passed. During this time, the duty description for the job may have changed somewhat, due to factors such as projects being completed, or new ones begun. And, after you arrive and your new commander is able to assess your capabilities, your duty responsibilities will almost certainly be adjusted again, so you can contribute in the best way possible to your unit's mission. For these reasons, exact job titles and duty descriptions are not listed in the PRD. Again, use it as a tool to identify the right type of duty at the right level – don't expect it to be a classified ad for specific Air Force jobs.

Preference worksheet

Completion of the preference worksheet is the cornerstone of the entire assignment process.

Officers identified as vulnerable to move must complete an assignment preference worksheet with their commander. Accessible through the Web-based AMS, the PW is the primary tool for an officer to communicate personal assignment preferences to the assignments team. It's also used by the commander to recommend the best follow-on assignment for an officer, based on first-hand knowledge of the officer's capabilities and potential.

The PW allows the officer to specify preferences such as duty title and level, MAJCOM, career broadening assignment, CONUS or overseas assignment and location, or join spouse. It also encourages communication of a realistic game plan to the commander, PW reviewer and AFPC.

It's important to remember two additional things about PWs:

- * AFPC can't see the PW until the commander and reviewer save and electronically forward it to the assignments team.

- * AFPC doesn't receive alerts or messages when PWs have changed. If revisions are made after assignment matching has started, officers and commanders should advise their assignments officer with a brief e-mail.

Matching dynamics

By this step in the process, we have all information needed to start matching officers to assignments:

- * List of officers, or VML
- * Officer's duty SURF, a one-page document with information such as service dates, education, and duty history

- * PW, with the officer's and commander's recommendations on the best next assignment

- * List of projected vacancies, or PRD

- * Prioritization of projected vacancies

- * Manning and authorization statistics to prioritize fills for each MAJCOM

With this information in hand, the assignments team begins matching officers to vacancies, sorting them by grade, officer professional development (OPD), special needs, overseas volunteers, and special duty volunteers. Requisitions, or position vacancies, are also sorted by grade, overseas, category type (such as staff, flight commander, or executive officer), and special duty. The assignments team then matches requirements with the available pool of officers to balance Air Force needs, OPD, equity, and officer preferences.

Typically, the eight members of the assignments team break up into two groups to accomplish the matching. Four members work field grade requisitions, matching majors and lieutenant colonels, while the other four handle company grade requisitions, for captains and lieutenants. At this point, team members no longer represent the MAJCOM they normally work for, but are engaged in a collaborative effort, with four team members reviewing PWs and SURFs. With inputs from each team member, a decision is made on the best officer for each requisition. It's important to emphasize we match people to requirements, rather than requirements to people. This is necessary because we don't have enough officers to fill all the vacancies, so we first determine which positions to fill and then find the right officer for each job. A "best match" is made when the team determines that mission requirements, OPD, officer's preferences, and commander's and PW reviewer's recommendations all fit the needs of a particular position.

Not surprisingly, the assignment matching portion of the process takes up the majority of the time – as it rightfully should. In each cycle, several hundred officers are matched to several hundred positions. Each match is scrutinized and evaluated by the team, and then re-evaluated. Upon completion of matching, the teams combine to outbrief the branch chief and resolve any final issues. The team is then given clearance to begin the notification process.

See **AFAS** Page 9

'Entitlements' drive officer assignment system

By Maj. Marty Schlacter
and Maj. Aaron Meadows

*Communications-Information Officer
Assignments Team
Air Force Personnel Center
Randolph AFB, Texas*

Air Force communications and information is, like many other Air Force career fields, critically short of manpower. We just don't have enough people to fill all the vacant positions. Under the circumstances, there are two questions we on the assignments team commonly hear from our customers in the field. They come from different people, and may be phrased a little differently, but they're the same basic questions each time:

* From a commander: "Why didn't you fill my vacancy this cycle? It's a great position and I really need someone. Am I going to have to wait another three months?"

* From an officer on the vulnerable mover list: "Why didn't I get that job I volunteered for at base XYZ? No one else got it, and it's still open, so why can't I have it if no one else wants it?"

The answer to both of these questions is, in a word, **entitlements**.

Entitlements drive the entire officer assignments system. Entitlements are determined with a numerical calculation each assignment cycle that tells us how many officers are available in each particular grade. Specifically, for each grade, it's the number of officers in the inventory, divided by the number of authorizations. This calculation is made after we subtract the number of positions and officers we consider to be 100 percent "must-fill." These might include, for example, short tour, joint credit, commander or instructor.

To illustrate, let's say there are approximately 1,800 authorizations for 33SX captain positions, and about 1,500 captains in the inventory. This yields an initial entitlement calculation of 83 percent. But after we subtract approximately 250 must-fill positions (and officers that are filling those positions) and another 200 officers that are in a career-broadening job (our fair share), we're left with only 1,050 officers to fill 1,550 authorizations. The result is an entitlement of 67 percent, which means we'll have 500 fewer officers than we need to fill all the vacancies.

Must-fill positions

As noted in the illustration, before we can complete entitlement calculations we must identify must-fill requisitions. Must-fills are positions that require 100 percent manning based on law, instruction or rule, and include:

* Short overseas tours – for example, Kunsan AB, Korea; Incirlik AB, Turkey; or Thule AB, Greenland

* Joint credit positions, field grade only – for example, joint chiefs of staff, Central Command, or European Command

* Headquarters Air Force, or Air Staff

* T-prefix instructor positions – for example, BCOT or ACOT

* C-prefix squadron commander positions

* Career broadening positions, which have no associated core career field, so must be filled with a fair share quota of individuals from each of the other Air Force specialty codes.

With a few other exceptions, these are our must-fill requisitions and we must match people to these jobs before filling the rest of our requisitions.

Applying entitlements

After entitlement rates are calculated for each grade, we determine the current manning level for each major command. So at the beginning of an assignment cycle, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, for example, may already have 72 percent of its captain positions filled. If the entitlement rate is only 67 percent, then USAFE is not entitled to any additional captains until all the other MAJCOMs are brought up to at least the 67 percent level. If Air Education and Training Command has only 52 percent of captain positions filled, then a calculation is done to see how many captains they'll need to bring the command up to 67 percent.

MAJCOM prioritization

The assignments team **doesn't** determine which jobs are the most important to fill, except for the must-fill positions. The MAJCOM functional manager – usually an executive officer working directly for the MAJCOM director of communications and information – takes inputs from its units and prepares a prioritized list of projected vacancies for that assignment cycle. After approval by the MAJCOM/SC, the list goes to the Comm-

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Notifications and reporting

Once an officer is matched to a requisition, e-mail notification of the assignment is sent to the gaining and losing commanders, and to the gaining and losing MAJCOMs. This message gives a heads-up that a formal notification will be coming shortly from the base MPF, and gives commanders an opportunity to reclaim the assignment if necessary.

Upon receiving the e-mail, the commander notifies the affected officer. It's important to remember the notification process is handled through the com-

mander or PW reviewer, and **not** between the assignments team and individual officers. The assignments team will **not** circumvent commanders by providing assignment information directly to members. Calling the team will neither gain you information about the assignment, nor hasten the notification process.

After the initial e-mail notification is sent, assignments are formally coordinated and loaded into the personnel system as quickly as possible. All assignment details are electronically transmitted to the officer's MPF, so that a formal assignment RIP can be generated. Once an officer and commander accept the assignment, orders are generated, and the officer departs and re-

ports to the new duty station.

The assignment process is relatively simple and straightforward. However, a lot of activity and coordination takes place in each step. The important thing to remember is the process exists primarily to ensure Air Force mission needs are met by filling positions with capable officers. At the same time, we strive to groom officers and broaden their experience in preparation for future leadership, to ensure a sense of equity in officer assignments, and to work with officers to meet personal and professional preferences whenever possible. Our mission is summarized in our motto: Right Officer, Right Job, Right Time.

ENTITLEMENTS

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Info Officer Assignments Team.

Entitlement rate implications

After entitlements are calculated, major command manning levels have been determined, and the MAJCOMs have prioritized their needs, we work down our list of fill requirements, in the following order, to match officers to vacancies:

- * 100 percent of must-fill requirements
- * Entitled requirements, in prioritized order
- * Unentitled requirements, in prioritized order

We then use our prioritized list to begin assignments matching. First we meet all of the must-fill requirements. Then we fill positions in each MAJCOM to get them up to the Air Force-wide entitlement rate. Then if we have additional officers to move that cycle, we fill the unentitled requisitions in priority order. We retain the flexibility to fill some jobs out of priority order as needed to accommodate unique circumstances, such as join spouse, humanitarian or officer professional development.

Things to remember

Entitlement rates change each quarter as people enter and leave the Air Force through accessions, retirements and separations. They also change as people are promoted and enter a differ-

ent grade category.

For the last several cycles, entitlement rates for lieutenant colonel and major have been in the 50-55 percent range. Rates for captains have been around 60-65 percent. Lieutenants, by comparison, have been manned at 100 percent. We have recently seen improvement in our manning levels, and the 33SX entitlement figures for the Fall '02 assignment cycle are:

Lieutenant colonel: 59 percent

Major: 79 percent

Captain: 69 percent

Lieutenant: 100 percent

As a final note, we'll soon be adding another level to our job matching sequence under a new plan called the non-rated prioritization plan. The plan differs from the current entitlement process by providing extra "priority fills" for MAJCOM staffs, flight commanders, battlelabs, deputy group and squadron commanders – in other words, one- and two-deep positions. Where previously these positions were included in entitlement fills, we'll now allocate resources to fill 85 percent of them, if resources allow, after the must-fills, but before filling any fill-to-entitlement billets.

As you can see, entitlements drive the officer assignment system, and should be kept in mind by both commanders and individual officers when seeking to fill a position.

ACE makes aces out of communications and information lieutenants

By Capt. Rick Black

*Communications-
Information*

*Officer Assignments Team
Air Force Personnel Center
Randolph AFB, Texas*

The Aerospace Communications and Information Expertise development strategy was initiated in 1998 and applies to accession lieutenants in the communications and information career field.

Goals of the ACE program are to:

- * Provide a common operational foundation for all communications and information officers

- * Provide senior communications officer mentorship to accession officers

- * Improve retention by affording officers the opportunity to take multiple assignments during their initial active duty service commitment

- * Provide leadership opportunities and operationalize future communications and information leaders

- * Provide experienced, operationally-oriented officers to the Air Force at large

The Communications and Information Officer Assignments Team attempts to assign new second lieutenants to units whose mission and commander are consistent with ACE strategy goals, such as:

- * Base-level communications units
- * Combat communications units
- * Combat camera units
- * Air communications squadrons
- * Engineering and installation squadrons
- * Major command computer systems squadrons
- * Similar units

From an ACE unit commander's perspective, there are nearly as many approaches to meeting these goals as there are ACE units. Any game plan that meets the goals is acceptable. Game plans should be flexible enough to take advantage of each



Photo by Maj. Aaron T. Meadows

Maj. Bob Berger and Maj. Paula Gregory, Air Force Personnel Center, discuss a follow-on assignment for an ACE lieutenant.

ACE lieutenant's individual experience and education and the unique mission of the unit.

- * Commanders should try to provide ACE lieutenants formal leadership opportunities within squadrons, making them responsible for a piece of the mission as well as people and resources. If flight commander isn't appropriate, sound alternatives might be officer-in-charge of a work center, or deputy flight commander.

- * ACE lieutenants should stay in one position long enough to gain proficiency and to afford the unit the benefits of having a fully trained officer occupying the post. It's not necessary for them to be assigned to every flight in the squadron. In fact, given the short period ACE lieutenants are assigned to their first base, that rotation schedule might prove excessive and be detrimental to the officer and the unit. Two positions in different flights, or the equivalent, is a common middle ground.

- * Participation in additional duties, special projects or other operational taskings isn't contrary to the intent of the ACE program as long as the duties are within reason. Commanders must make

See ACE Page 11

Career program training puts people first

By **Marty Bullock**
*Communications and Information
Career Program
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Today's civilian personnel training focus is on building management and leadership skills, and preparing individuals for roles of greater responsibility.

Individuals alert us to their training requirements through career enhancement plans, requests for tuition assistance, and applications for competitive training programs. We then match requirements to available resources to provide the greatest number of opportunities for the entire communications and information community.

The career program attempts to satisfy indi-

vidual requirements, provided in the CEP, and to satisfy program priorities, provided by guidance from the professional development panel. The primary limiting factor each year is the level of funding received from the Air Force training budget. The career program delivers training to the CICP community in several ways, including courses in residence, on-site training, refresher courses and tuition assistance.

The career program provides management skills training through courses such as management of networking, protocols and standards; intermediate project management; and acquisition management refresher. These skills can be focused on managing people or managing programs or projects. Managerial skills can be provided by a

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ACE

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the call here on a case-by-case basis using their own best judgment. Group-level executive officer is a perfectly appropriate position for an ACE lieutenant, **as long as it isn't their sole job during their ACE tour.**

Continental United States assignments are for two years, and overseas assignments are for a normal tour length, based on their overseas return date, beginning when the lieutenant reports for duty in theater.

Moving lieutenants at the end of their ACE tour makes room for new accessions and provides officers for non-ACE unit requirements. Movement at the end of the tour also ensures officers have retainability to take another assignment. An officer must have two years' retainability for CONUS to CONUS, and CONUS to overseas moves, and one year's retainability for overseas to CONUS moves. Extensions and

curtailments are generally discouraged, but are addressed on a case-by-case basis by the Officer Assignment Team.

Basic Communications Officer Training at Keesler AFB, Miss., is provided to accession officers either en-route to their first duty station, or shortly after arrival. For fiscal reasons, priority for classes is given to accessions being assigned overseas. Requests to change BCOT class dates must be signed by group commanders and faxed to the Officer Assignment Team.

After serving their base-level ACE tour, lieutenants should generally expect their follow-on assignment to be to an intermediate-level organization, field operating agency or direct reporting unit. A follow-on to another base-level unit does not necessarily provide the required OPD progression for the officer. However, some ACE lieutenants may have back-to-back base-level tours. This is most appropriate when the lieutenant didn't serve as a group executive officer on their

initial tour, but receives a permanent assignment to another base to perform that duty.

The Communications and Information Officer Assignments Team determines how many and who return for another base-level squadron tour on a cycle-by-cycle basis by balancing the following factors:

- * Air Force requirements; manning shortages at agencies and centers take priority over back-to-back squadron-level tours

- * An officer's experience during the initial ACE tour

- * The commander's recommendations

Although it's too early to determine whether the ACE program has improved retention, we continually get positive feedback from officers and commanders. The ACE tour gives many young lieutenants an immediate understanding of our role at base level in supporting the Air Force mission.

Team sheds light on intermediate-level assignments

By Maj. Marty Schlacter

Communications-Information Officer

Assignments Team

Air Force Personnel Center

Randolph AFB, Texas

The Communications and Information Officer Assignments Team receives countless questions about intermediate-level assignments for graduating Aerospace Communications and Information Expertise lieutenants. Every question is primarily along the lines of, “Do you have a list of ‘intermediate-level’ organizations, what do they do, and where are they?” The fact we receive so many of these questions on a recurring basis is completely understandable. Everyone seems to have an inherent grasp of the other levels of assignment – such as squadron, major command and joint – but intermediate-level is, at best, hard to define.

Loosely, intermediate-level includes assignments above base-level, but not quite at MAJCOM or higher. While fairly accurate, this description doesn’t shed much light on the subject, so that’s the purpose of this article.

Intermediate-level organizations

As mentioned earlier, intermediate-level organizations include all of the organizations “in the middle” between base-level squadrons and MAJCOM staffs. Typically, these include:

- * Field operating agencies
- * Direct reporting units
- * Centers aligned under MAJCOMs
- * Computer systems squadrons typically aligned under MAJCOMs

FOAs are directly subordinate to a headquarters U.S. Air Force functional manager, and perform field activities beyond the scope of any MAJCOM. Activities are specialized, or associated with an Air Force-wide mission, and don’t include functions performed by a management headquarters, such as Air Mobility Command or Air Combat Command. Examples are Air Force Personnel Center and Air Force Office of Special Investigations. Specific to the communications and information career field are Air Force Communications Agency, Air Force Frequency Management Agency,

and Air Force Pentagon Communications Agency.

DRUs are directly subordinate to the Air Force chief of staff, and perform missions that don’t fit any of the MAJCOMs. DRUs have many of the same administrative and organizational responsibilities as a MAJCOM. Four organizations fit this category, including 11th Wing, Bolling AFB, D.C.; Air Force Doctrine Center, Maxwell AFB, Ala.; Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center, Kirtland AFB, N.M.; and U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado Springs, Colo.

While most FOAs and DRUs are agencies or centers, some centers are aligned under MAJCOMs. Examples include the Electronic Systems Center, Hanscom AFB, Mass.; and the Air Force Flight Test Center, Edwards AFB, Calif., which are part of Air Force Materiel Command.

Computer systems squadrons are typically aligned under a MAJCOM/SC staff. They’re

the only squadrons considered to be intermediate-level organizations, due to the scope of their mission. They perform a variety of MAJCOM-wide functions, but aren’t part of the MAJCOM staff. Conversely, they don’t perform the functions of a base-level communications squadron. A couple of examples are the 805th CSS, which supports the AMC Tanker Airlift Control Center, and the AETC CSS, home of AETC’s NOSC. It’s important to note the CSS is an exception, in that it’s appropriate for both initial and intermediate ACE follow-on tours. The CSS is an interesting and dynamic hybrid.

Intermediate-level jobs

Types of jobs at intermediate-level organizations vary widely. During your ACE follow-on tour, you’ll gain breadth of experience before becoming a junior captain and starting to build depth in positions such as flight commander. Some jobs will involve managing contracts, while others may require a lot of TDY to deploy new systems to the field. Jobs might also include 24x7 shift work as a crew commander for a MAJCOM NOSC, keeping networks operating and secure, or providing hands-on project management for systems and services



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Comm and info career program serves registrants

By Judy Adamcyk
*Communications and Information
Career Program Manager
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The Air Force Communications and Information Career Program supports more than 10,000 registrants in communications, computers, information management and visual information. We provide competitive job opportunities and professional development, and administer the Air Force CICIP Palace Acquire Program, or PAQ.

CICIP is designed to assist employees with career development. Performance objectives are to develop employees with strong professional, technical, managerial and administrative skills to satisfy current and future Air Force mission needs. This article describes how the program is structured and guided.

CICIP has a sound structure designed and operated by functional management with civilian personnel oversight. The structure is comprised of a policy council, career management panels, and a career management (Palace) team.

The policy council is chaired by the Air Force's deputy chief of staff for communications and information, and includes senior functional representatives selected by the policy council chair. The military and civilian membership establishes policies, goals and objectives for the career program and provides senior management oversight.

The policy council has three career management panels for professional development, position management, and Palace Acquire. Panel members serve at the request of the policy council chair, and provide specific policy and guidance for their areas of interest.

The professional development panel prepares an annual plan for training, tuition assistance and

development needs of the CICIP, including the acquisition work force. Along with approving the training budget, they recommend training courses and manage other professional developmental opportunities for registrants.

The position management panel proposes policy and guidance for positions centrally managed by the CICIP and establishes referral procedures. It reviews and approves promotion evaluation patterns, CICIP career broadening candidates, and provides developmental guidance and oversees application of the CICIP whole person score.

The Palace Acquire panel oversees recruitment of college graduates for the PAQ intern program. They provide policy guidance for allocation of intern authorizations to major commands for training, and monitoring the interns throughout their assignments and final placement at the target grade.

The Palace Team is made up of CICIP functional managers serving on career enhancement assignments, and performing personnel administration. Palace Team members serve as a communication link with functional managers and are keenly aware of needs and concerns of the communications and information community. Primary services they provide for registrants are:

- * Training and tuition assistance
- * Competitive job placement
- * PAQ recruiting and training
- * Career counseling

The Palace Team is augmented with a civilian personnel specialist who functions as an advisor, ensuring all actions conform to established personnel policies, guidelines and procedures.

CICIP is geared to serving the registrant. Anyone who has questions, or desires career counseling, is encouraged to contact us at DSN 665-3691, or e-mail cicp@afpc.randolph.af.mil.

Civilians get new job vacancy system

By **Michael J. Zimmerman**
*Communications and
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With initiation of the new Defense Civilian Personnel Data System, many employees have asked, "What does that mean to me in terms of career program job vacancies?" In short, rather than pre-registering using geographic codes, you self-nominate for positions you wish to be considered for. Since the system doesn't automatically refer you, you're no longer required to register in communications and information, or any other career program. However, self-nominees must still meet OPM qualification standards, as they did un-

der the old system. Vacancy announcements are open for a maximum of 10 days. If you don't self-nominate, you won't be considered.

Even though you no longer have to register in the CICIP for job consideration, we highly encourage you to do so. Why? As a CICIP registrant, you're afforded training and educational opportunities, which can translate to whole person score points from CICIP approved courses. WPS points are applied against each job vacancy in the new system. Now is a good time to review your records. If they're not accurate, contact your local civilian personnel flight to make corrections.

CICIP's goal is to ensure registrants have all the latest career information, from the new per-

sonnel system, to whole person score, to matters affecting our community as a whole. We provide information through SC updates, our Web site, and our most important avenue, the CICIP list server. The list server keeps registrants informed on upcoming events, short-notice courses and new job vacancies. If you're not registered on the list server, you can subscribe at our Web site: <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp/CICIP/default.htm>. Job vacancies will also be posted on USAJOBS.

As always, CICIP stands ready to serve the SC community and our registrant population. If you have any questions or comments, please contact us at DSN 665-3691 or e-mail cicp@randolph.af.mil.

Palace Acquire provides civilians opportunities

By **Bea Ramirez**
*Communications and Information
Career Program
Air Force Personnel Center
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Palace Acquire is the Air Force's premier civilian force renewal program, providing opportunities for employment, and for personal and professional growth. PAQ offers two to three years of formal and on-the-job training at Air Force organizations throughout the continental United States. CICIP provides 100 percent tuition assistance toward a master's degree, and yearly promotions, to entering GS-11s.

Minimum eligibility requirements include a 3.45 overall grade point average; Air Force-wide mobility; and ability to obtain a security clearance. Current employees who have or will graduate with a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, and who meet the GPA requirement, should consider applying for the program.

The CICIP office markets career opportunities by attending job fairs and other recruiting events, and advertising on USAJOBS. Interns, or PAQs,

bring a broad range of knowledge and experience to the communications and information community in support of the Air Force information technology mission. Some have recently obtained bachelor's and master's degrees, while others have a combination of a bachelor's degree and private industry or military experience. Each PAQ brings new ideas and enthusiasm to the Air Force.

Last year CICIP hired 20 PAQ interns. This year's requirement grew to 38, and senior Air Force leaders plan to increase allocations through 2005, due in part to the rising number of employees nearing eligibility for retirement.

As Air Force employees, it's important for us to encourage individuals to join our civilian and military ranks, so that we can achieve our vision and maintain a strong and ready force. With projected hiring increases for CICIP PAQs in future years, we're asking for your assistance in recruiting and mentoring new employees. You can help by encouraging interested candidates to contact us at 1-800-847-0108, ext. 3045/3046; DSN 665-3691; e-mail us at cicppaq@randolph.af.mil; or on the Web at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp/cicp in the CICIP Palace Acquire section.

It pays to know long and short of overseas tours

By Maj. Marty Schlacter
*Communications-Information
Officer Assignments Team
Air Force Personnel Center
Randolph AFB, Texas*

Is an overseas tour short or long? To get the real answer, you need to consult Air Force Instruction 36-2110, Assignments. The “Terms” section in attachment 1 provides definitions.

Short overseas tour. For credit purposes, this is one for which:

* Table 3.1 in the AFI doesn’t authorize an accompanied tour; or

* The accompanied tour is 24 months, and the unaccompanied tour is less than 18 months.

Long overseas tour. For credit purposes, this is one for which:

* Table 3.1 authorizes an accompanied tour, and the unaccompanied tour is 18 months or more.

The tricky part is the “less than 18 months” requirement for unaccompanied short tours. Many overseas locations have an accompanied tour length of 24 months, and an unaccompanied tour length of 18 months. In that case, it’s not a short tour, because the unaccompanied tour length is not *less than* 18 months. Don’t make the mistake of thinking this is a short tour, when it’s actually a long tour.

For the official list of overseas locations, and their accompanied and unaccompanied tour lengths, see Table 3.1. Some of the more common short and long tour locations for 33S communications and information officers are given below. If a location isn’t listed and you see a position posted on the PRD, consult the table.

Some short tour examples are Ali Al Salem, Kuwait; Lajes Field, Portugal; Andersen AFB, Guam; Moron AB, Spain; Enrique Soto, Honduras; Thule AB, Greenland; Keflavik, Iceland; Incirlik AB, Turkey; Prince Sultan AB, Saudi Arabia; and Yongsan Army Garrison Kunsan AB, Korea.

Long tour examples are Brunssum City, Netherlands; Eielson AFB, Alaska; Camp Smith and Hickam AFB, Hawaii; Brussels City, Glons City, Belgium; Aviano, Ghedi, Italy; Kadena AB, Japan; various Royal Air Force bases in the United King-

dom; and several locations in Germany.

Home basing and follow-on assignments

If you’re interested in an unaccompanied overseas short tour, you should be aware of two programs: home basing and follow-on assignments. Their purpose is to reduce PCS costs and increase family stability, but they do it in different ways. The following information has been provided to explain the programs and help you decide whether to volunteer.

It’s important to remember these programs don’t guarantee an exact job on the distant end. The Communications and Information Officer Assignments Team will work to find you the best job for your officer professional development at that location, but ultimately we’re restricted to matching you to valid Air Force position requirements. In other words, we can’t double-book you or create an imaginary position number on the distant end just to get you to your location of preference.

Here’s some additional information on the programs.

Home basing assignment program.

This program is designed to reduce PCS costs and increase dependent family stability by having your family stay at your permanent duty location while you’re away on your short tour. After the tour, you return to the same base and rejoin your family.

To qualify for the home basing assignment program, you must meet the following criteria:

* Have been selected, or volunteered to serve, an overseas unaccompanied short tour of 15 months or less

* Not be currently serving an overseas tour, except on a long tour in Alaska or Hawaii

* Have, or be eligible for, PCS retainability for the assignment

* Not be en route to your first permanent duty station

* Have applied within 15 days of your initial PCS relocation briefing at your military personnel flight – your MPF will brief you about the program at that time

In exchange for advance assignment consideration back to your current duty location, you agree



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'Sky's the limit' for officer career broadening

By Maj. Bob Berger

*Communications-Information Officer
Assignments Team
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Randolph AFB, Texas*

Interested in becoming a PME instructor at Maxwell AFB, Ala., or an air attaché in Austria? Want to learn more about Air Force officer career broadening opportunities, but not sure how the process works or where to start? Look no further – this article will answer your questions and give you a better understanding of the process.

First you should know why Air Force officers are needed to fill career-broadening positions. Our officer corps is composed of individuals from a variety of functional disciplines, such as communications and information, personnel, pilot and navigator. Each officer and discipline brings a variety of skills to the table, which together enable the Air Force to remain the world leader in airpower. What you probably didn't know is the Air Force often calls upon these officers to step outside their core Air Force specialty code, normally for two or three years, to serve in a variety of career broadening positions.

Career broadening positions are important to the Air Force mission, and to your advancement as an officer. They often afford you greater breadth of experience than many of your peers, and depending on the position, help you develop your leadership, mentorship and training abilities. They're also important to the Air Force in filling critical vacancies that have no assigned core functional career field. For example, there are lots of 81T0, ROTC instructor, positions in the Air Force, but there are no officers who are "grown" as "core" 81T's for their entire career, as are for example 33Ss, communications and information officers.

Many officers with an established background in their current career field take positions in these career broadening areas to gain experience outside their specialty. The exception is the exchange officer program, where officers remain in their core specialty while serving with another country's Air Force.

Career broadening positions include:



Photos by Maj. Aaron T. Meadows

Maj. Bob Berger

- * Air Force Recruiter (86R0)
- * Aide-de-Camp (88A0)
- * Air Attaché (16P)
- * Air University Faculty (82A0)
- * Basic Military Training/Technical Training Commander (81C0)
- * Executive Officer (97EO, above wing level)
- * Foreign Area Officer (16F)
- * Inspector General (87G0)
- * PME Faculty (ACSC, AWC, SOS, ABC instructors—81T0)
- * Protocol (88P0)
- * ROTC (Training Squadron Commander, Professor of Aerospace Studies, Assistant Professor of Aerospace Studies Instructor – 81T0)
- * USAF Academy (Instructor, Commander Cadet Squadron, Academic Program Manager – 81T0 and 80C0)
- * USAF Honor Guard (85G0)
- * Operations Management/Command and Control (86M0 and 86P0)

Air Force Personnel Center's career broadening section manages these positions, and can advise whether you qualify for them. Visit their Web

site for further information and to see if you're eligible to be considered for a particular position: <http://afas.afpc.randolph.af.mil/careerbroad/career-broad.htm>

Now that you're familiar with career broadening positions, you need to understand the application process. Keep in mind some programs may require additional steps, but the following rules apply to most.

* Update the special duty section of your preference work sheet in the Air Force Assignment System. Annotate the AFSC or duty title of interest, including level and major command, by selecting options displayed in the pop-down menus. You only need to update your PW when you want to change job choices or other preferences.

Note, some positions, such as for ROTC or USAF Academy, require a formal application package, but the majority don't. Recommend you check with AFPC's career broadening section to see if you need to submit a package.

* After updating your PW, wait for AFPC to contact you. When an applicant is identified as a candidate for a position that requires a formal application package, AFPC will first inform the member's commander that the officer is being considered for a particular assignment. AFPC will then give the member instructions for submitting an application package.

Note, we recommend members interested in a USAFA position contact the academy at DSN 333-2810, after discussing their career path with their

commander. USAFA may request an application be on file in order to expedite the hiring process.

* ROTC assignments usually have summer report dates, and are worked in advance when possible. Interested officers need to update their PW about 14 months prior to the summer they wish to begin duty.

* Officers interested in air attaché or exchange positions should update their PW 12 months prior to the incumbent's DEROS or departure date.

Now here's the "biggie." The career broadening section will gather all potential candidates and attempt to seek release from the officer's assignment team here at AFPC. Note, a variety of AFSCs usually compete for these positions, not just communications and information officers. Once released, you'll compete with other candidates for the position you applied for. One word of caution: Not all who apply will be released to compete for a career broadening position. Volunteering for a position doesn't mean automatic release or selection. We review each candidate on an individual basis, looking at duty history, career progression, education level, and a variety of other factors to determine if this is a good time for you to compete. Selection may occur early in a candidate's career, later, or not at all. Since each person and situation is different, we have no blanket policies. Note, we frown on consecutive career broadening assignments, and filling more than one in a career.

* If you're selected, the career broadening section will process your orders and you'll be on your way. If you're not selected, you'll remain in your normal assignment cycle and will PCS to another 33SX assignment.

That's the process – fairly simple, but often misunderstood. If you're interested in filling one of these positions, consult your commander first. For more information, call DSN 665-4455, or visit the career broadening Web site.



Maj. Kenneth Gaines gives the Comm-Info Officer Assignments team authorization to release Summer '02 assignments. From left: Maj. Paula Gregory, Major Gaines, Maj. Brian Konkel, Maj. Marty Schlacter and Capt. Rick Black.

Officers seeking promotion need to know system

By Maj. Aaron Meadows
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 Officer Assignments Team
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 Randolph AFB, Texas

Besides assignments, the Air Force Personnel Center is most often associated with promotion boards. AFPC is tasked by the secretary of the Air

Force to hold central selection boards to determine who should be promoted to the next higher grade. The purpose of this article is to help educate communications and information officers on line of the Air Force central boards. However, for more detailed information, officers should refer to Air Force Instruction 36-2501, Air Force Pamphlet 36-2506 and the Promotions Branch (HQ AFPC/DPPPO) Web page.

Force to hold central selection boards to determine who should be promoted to the next higher grade. The purpose of this article is to help educate communications and information officers on line of the Air Force central boards. However, for more detailed information, officers should refer to Air Force Instruction 36-2501, Air Force Pamphlet 36-2506 and the Promotions Branch (HQ AFPC/DPPPO) Web page.

GRADE	IPZ OPPORTUNITY	BPZ OPPORTUNITY
First Lieutenant	100%	N/A
Captain	100%	N/A
Major	90%	N/A
Lieutenant Colonel	75%	10%
Colonel	55%	15%

Table 1

Force to hold central selection boards to determine who should be promoted to the next higher grade. The purpose of this article is to help educate communications and information officers on line of the Air Force central boards. However, for more detailed information, officers should refer to Air Force Instruction 36-2501, Air Force Pamphlet 36-2506 and the Promotions Branch (HQ AFPC/DPPPO) Web page.

Year group

The term “year group” is important to understand because promotion boards consider individuals for the next higher grade by particular year groups. Most of the time, your year group is the year you were com-

missioned. Technically, it’s the year of your date of rank to second lieutenant. In some instances, an officer is commissioned in one calendar year, but doesn’t actually come on active duty until the next year. In this case, the individual’s DOR is half way between the dates of commissioning and entry on active duty. For example, if you were commissioned Dec. 15, 2000, but didn’t come on active duty until Feb. 15, 2001, your DOR would be approximately Jan. 15, 2001. Your year group would be 2001. This scenario is most common for ROTC graduates.

Promotion zone

There are no zones for promotion to first lieutenant or captain, since these promotions are offered to 100 percent of eligible officers after serving two years time-in-grade. However, some may not be promoted due to disciplinary issues.

There are three zones for field grade promotions, including below, in, and above the promotion zone. Since 1999, officers no longer compete for promotion to major in the BPZ cat-

GRADE	IPZ DP QUOTA	BPZ DP QUOTA
Major	65%	N/A
Lieutenant Colonel	40%	10%
Colonel	25%	15%

Table 2

BOARD	PRF	BPZ	IPZ	APZ
Colonel (2000)	DP	22.7%	98.4%	80%
	P	.1%	25.5%	1.4%
Lieutenant Colonel (2000)	DP	26.6%	99.7%	95.3%
	P	.2%	42.9%	.1%
Major (2001)	DP	N/A	99.7%	93.8%
	P	N/A	67.6%	4.8%

Table 3

missioned, but only when they are IPZ or APZ. Officers do compete in the BPZ category for lieutenant colonel and colonel – both two years early, and then one year early. If not promoted IPZ, officers then compete in the APZ category until promoted or end of career.

Promotion opportunity rate

Table 1 outlines BPZ and IPZ promotion opportunities. The actual percentage of IPZ officers promoted is *less* than the adver-

tised opportunity, because some are BPZ and other APZ. These promotions come at the expense of the IPZ pool, and therefore reduce the IPZ percentage. There is no set opportunity or quota for APZ promotions.

The following example illustrates the difference between overall promotion opportunity and the true percentage of IPZ candidates selected for promotion:

Lt. Col. Central Selection Board

Eligibles: IPZ – 1,600
 APZ – 1,755
 BPZ – 4,343

1,600 Total IPZ eligibles
X.75 (promotion opportunity)
 1,200 Total promotions available

1,200 Total promotions available
X.10 (10% BPZ quota)
 120

1,200 Total promotions available
-120 BPZ promotions
 1,080 IPZ/APZ promotions available

- 40 APZ (no quota; realistic estimate)
 1,040 IPZ promotions

In the example above, of the 1,200 available promotions, only 1,040 went to IPZ eligibles, since 120 individuals were selected BPZ and 40 APZ.

‘Definitely promote’ allocations

Officers receive one of three ratings on their promotion recommendation form: Definitely promote; promote; or do not promote this board. While there are no quotas for promote, or do not promote recommendations, there is a strict quota for definitely promote recommendations. The following table summarizes DP allocation rates for IPZ and BPZ. Any DPs given to APZ candidates come at IPZ expense.

Year Group	O-6 Board	O-5 Board	O-4 Board	O-3 Board
'81	2002 (Nov)	1997	1992	84B, 85A
'82	2003	1998	1993	85B, 86A
'83	2004	1999A	1994	86B, 87A
'84	2005	1999B	1995	87B, 88A
'85	2006	2000	1996	88B, 89A
'86	2007	2001 (Nov)	1997	89B
'87	2008	2002 (Dec)	1998	1990
'88	2009	2003	1999	1991
'89	2010	2004	2000A	1992
'90	2011	2005	2000B	1993
'91	2012	2006	2001	1994
'92	2013	2007	2002A (Feb)	1995
'93	2014	2008	2002B (Oct)	1996
'94	2015	2009	2003	1997
'95	2016	2010	2004	1998
'96	2017	2011	2005	1999
'97	2018	2012	2006	2000
'98	2019	2013	2007	2001
'99	2020	2014	2008	2002 (Jun)
'00	2021	2015	2009	2003
'01	2022	2016	2010	2004

Table 4

Expectations

With differing promotion opportunities, DP allocation rates, and three different promotion zones, it can be difficult to know your true chances for promotion. Table 3 shows percentage selected for promotion, by zone and PRF recommendation. Data is from the 2000 colonel and lieutenant colonel boards, and the 2001 major board.

Timing and promotion board outlook

While these projections are always subject to change, Table 4 indicates current projections for officers to meet IPZ promotion boards.

For more information on promotion boards, see the officer promotions briefing on the promotions Web page at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/offprom/>

So you want to be a communications squadron commander ...

By Maj. Paula Gregory
*Communications-Information
Officer Assignments Team
Air Force Personnel Center
Randolph AFB, Texas*



Photo by Maj. Aaron T. Meadows
Maj. Paula Gregory

The calendar year 2002 Communications Squadron Commander Candidate Selection Board that met in October has compiled some observations on how to prepare to meet a board, what board members look for when scoring records, and what to expect if you make the list.

Prepare: Dot the i's, cross the t's

Before each board, Air Force Personnel Center releases an announcement message, identifying eligibility criteria and important timelines for the board. If you meet eligibility criteria, you'll receive a statement of intent from your senior rater or through personnel channels. The announcement message, SOI and nomination package can be viewed on the Communications and Information Officer Assignment Web page. Here's why the SOI is important:

* It tells you if you're eligible to meet the board. If you don't receive a SOI, and you believe you meet eligibility criteria, contact us and we'll look into it.

* It's **imperative** you **carefully consider** your options on whether to meet this board or not. Bottom line is we go with the senior rater's recommendation. If you want to compete, we still require your senior rater to nominate you. If he or she doesn't, for whatever reason, we won't board your record. If you decide to decline consideration, you should first discuss the implications with your senior rater.

* If you compete, you're considered a worldwide volunteer. Command selection is not like a normal assignment. It's a direct hire process and hiring authorities choose who best meets their mission needs, normally **without** consideration to where you want to be assigned.

* It's important to ensure your records at AFPC and your career brief are complete and up-to-date. We include points of contact to check these in the SOI. Also, as you review your career brief, ensure your phone number and e-mail address are current in the assignment management system, in

case we need to contact you for more information.

One major observation this year was many records were not current or complete. Fortunately, we were able to review more than 400 records and to help correct problems before the board met. However, we found more than 20 percent were missing one or more officer performance reports, and many more were missing decorations. It's important to remember your records are used for several purposes: promotion boards, professional military education boards, and some assignment actions. If your record is not complete, it **can** impact the outcome. Each year, and most especially before your record meets any board, contact the AFPC records section to review the contents. You can e-mail them at records.review@randolph.af.mil or call DSN 665-2371.

Looking for performance, depth, breadth

Unlike a promotion board, this board focuses narrowly on an officer's "fitness" for command. Is the timing right? Has the officer had the jobs necessary to prepare him or her for command, and succeeded in those jobs? The board will look for several things:

- * Consistently high levels of performance
- * Assignments in various major commands and

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not to use PCS entitlements to relocate your dependents or household goods. In short, you may move your family and household goods if you wish, but the government won't pay for it.

Follow-on assignment program. This program reduces PCS costs and increases family stability by giving you advance assignment consideration for another duty location when returning from an overseas short tour. You will be assigned to one of your preferred CONUS or overseas long tour duty locations based on position availability. In other words, you request the base for your follow-on location, and your family will either PCS there before you leave for your short tour, or go there with you after you return.

Qualification criteria are the same as for the home basing program, except for some important limitations involving selection of overseas duty locations as your follow-on location:

* If you're currently assigned to a base in the United States – including CONUS, Alaska or Hawaii – you may request a follow-on overseas duty assignment to a long-tour location. In short, if you're starting out in the United States, there are no restrictions – you may request any long-tour or CONUS location as your follow-on.

* If you're currently assigned to a base that's not in the United States, you may request any CONUS location as a follow-on, but may only request an overseas duty location for your follow-on as an exception to policy. The rationale is that status of forces agreements seldom cover dependents when a member departs a foreign country on PCS, or if dependents arrive in a foreign country in advance of the member's PCS arrival.

As with the home basing assignment program,

you agree to forego your PCS entitlements and to not move your dependents or household goods anywhere other than the follow-on location, except at your own expense.

When applying for follow-on consideration, provide as many location preferences as possible, in priority order. You may request up to eight CONUS locations and eight overseas locations. Overseas preferences will be considered ahead of CONUS preferences.

Single persons, single parents, and joint spouse military couples need to be aware of some policy exceptions not covered in this article. For more information, see attachment 5 of AFI 36-2110.

Tour adjustments

Your overseas duty selection date, and short tour return date, are adjusted to give you credit for overseas time if you are tasked to deploy overseas on temporary duty. The ODS and STRD are adjusted day-for-day when you deploy overseas from a CONUS location. If you're already overseas serving a long tour and you deploy from that location, then only your STRD is adjusted.

This means you get due credit for overseas time – whether on a short tour, long tour or deployment. Bear in mind that an overseas TDY deployment doesn't give you short or long tour credit, but the time you spent there is reflected in your record. In addition, from a practical perspective, it means that you're moved further down the non-volunteer vulnerability list for future overseas TDY deployments. A difference of 120 or 240 days can be significant. The communications and information officer assignments home page will help you estimate, based on ODS, where you stand on the non-volunteer vulnerability list.

For more information, contact us at DSN 665-2491 or consult our Web page at <http://afas.afpc.randolph.af.mil/afas/afas-main1.htm>.

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affecting a single base, a MAJCOM, or the entire Air Force.

In short, the breadth you gain from your intermediate-level tour will provide context and perspective for your subsequent tours as a captain. What you learn as a first lieutenant and junior captain at your interme-

mediate-level job will pay dividends many times over later in your career. These are essential tools to equip you for future flight commander and squadron commander positions.

Intermediate-level organizations

Rather than including a list of intermediate-level organizations and mission statements in this article, we encourage you to consult our Web site at

<http://afas.afpc.randolph.af.mil/com-comp/com-info.htm>. Organizations are grouped by size, with larger ones listed first. In order to realistically predict your most likely intermediate-level ACE follow-on assignment, you need to be familiar with each organization and its size.

For more information, contact the Communications-Information Officer Assignment Team at DSN 665-2491.

Airman Assignments puts 'faces into spaces'

By Col. Jim Hegarty
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Randolph AFB, Texas

The objective of the enlisted assignments process is to put "faces into spaces." You got where you are now through the enlisted assignments system, filling an Air Force requirement. If you don't understand the enlisted assignments process, you should, because the more you know, the better you can participate in the process. Remember, this is your assignments system.

Even after draw-down actions, there are almost 300,000 enlisted personnel in the U.S. Air Force. That means the 97 men and women of Air Force Personnel Center's Airman Assignments Division are busy folks – making approximately 110,000 assignments annually, while handling more than 450,000 phone calls, 650,000 e-mails and normal message traffic. Whether you choose telephone or computer, your patience and advanced planning can help in communicating with us. We strive to provide each Air Force enlisted member the best possible service – accurate, thorough, polite, professional and straightforward. While we work hard to meet individual needs and desires, we also support supervisors, first sergeants and commanders around the world in all levels and types of organizations. We do this while staying focused on our primary goal of meeting enlisted manning needs.

It's important to note permanent change of station funds play a significant role in the assignments process. With limited funds, we have fewer movement options. When we have sufficient funds, we try to relax some restrictions. Of course, many PCS rules are tied to congressional legislation, or

established by DOD for all services. But within the budget, we strive to meet worldwide mission requirements by equally distributing available enlisted resources. Unfortunately, although missions seem to be expanding, and operations tempo is high, neither PCS monies nor human resources are plentiful. Finding a balance is our never-ending challenge. To be successful, we first fill our priority units, including overseas and special category activities. We then distribute remaining people equally among stateside major commands,

which align people to fill their top priorities. Bottom line: Overseas and special category requirements drive most PCS assignment actions.

While you may not realize it, most assignments are computer generated, but each is manually screened by an experienced assignment NCO or functional manager to ensure validity and equity.

Integrity in the system is very important – you won't find any smoke, mirrors, dartboard or "secret handshake." To help you understand your assignment system, we built some general information sites, and add new ones as required. I encourage you to read them all, or at least those that currently pertain to you. You'll be better educated in the process, and able to help subordinates, peers and co-workers with the assignment process. The more you understand the system, and the guidelines we use, the more the system can do for you.

The articles in this special section of *intercom* provide some basic information. For more details, visit your local military personnel flight or commander's support staff. If you don't find answers there, or from the topics available at our Web site, at <http://afas.afpc.randolph.af.mil/enlisted/enlisted.htm>, you can send us an e-mail at dpaad3@afpc.randolph.af.mil.



Voluntary stabilized tour offers benefits

By **Airman Assignments Branch**

Air Force Personnel Center

Randolph AFB, Texas

The voluntary base stabilized assignment program offers enlisted members the option to volunteer for CONUS bases with a high turnover rate. Volunteers benefit by receiving a stabilized tour of either four or five years, depending on location. Eligible bases are Cannon AFB, N.M.; Grand Forks and Minot AFBs, N.D.; Los Angeles AFS and Fort MacArthur, Calif.; and Limestone, Maine. Members selected for Grand Forks or Minot serve five years, while volunteers for the other bases serve four years.

Eligibility criteria

The program is open to airmen and enlisted couples. A requirement must exist for each individual. Applicants must meet quality control standards and, if in the continental United States, have

at least two years, five months on station to apply for VSBAP. If a request is approved, the individual can't move before having 36 months on station.

Overseas airmen apply during their date-eligible-for-return-from-overseas forecast process (eight to 12 months prior to DEROS). Airmen need at least 24 months' retainability before departing their current base. Airmen aren't eligible for this program if they already have an assignment, or have another assignment application pending.

Applying for VSBAP

Anyone desiring a VSBAP assignment should contact their military personnel flight for assistance. They'll provide application information and update your record in the personnel data system. AFPC approval will depend on projected manning at the desired location. Requests for consecutive in-place VSBAP tours are not authorized.

For more information, contact your military personnel flight.

Base of preference enhanced for airmen

By **Airman Assignments Branch**

Air Force Personnel Center

Randolph AFB, Texas

An enhanced base of preference program benefits first-term and career airmen. The new provision allows first-term airmen to apply for a CONUS-to-CONUS BOP, or an overseas-to-CONUS BOP, in addition to an in-place BOP. Career airmen may now apply for a CONUS-to-CONUS BOP, in addition to an IPBOP.

Individuals not authorized to request consideration include FTA who have already re-enlisted, have an assignment selection date, or have already forecasted from the overseas area.

FTA must submit BOP requests prior to reenlistment. The earliest an application may be submitted is in conjunction with applying for a career job reservation.

There's no minimum time-on-station for FTA applying for an IPBOP. However, FTA who wish to move PCS under this program must complete 12 months TOS before departure date. Individuals approved for a BOP are authorized a two-year assignment deferment.

First-term airmen serving overseas may request BOP consideration after they receive their date-eligible-for-return-from-overseas election option report on individual personnel or forecast notification RIP. Members must obtain the minimum PCS retainability for CONUS PCS in order to apply for overseas-to-CONUS BOP consideration. Airmen may list up to eight CONUS bases for both the CONUS-to-CONUS and overseas-to-CONUS BOP. The preferences will be considered in the exact order listed. Members requesting overseas-to-CONUS BOPs will be re-

assigned through the normal overseas returnee process if BOP is disapproved.

FTA have the option to apply for a BOP in conjunction with retraining.

Career airmen may apply for either an IPBOP or CONUS-to-CONUS BOP. Airmen must have 41 months TOS at time of application and at least four years TOS before PCS departure. Career airmen must not be selected for PCS or have an ASD. In addition, airmen must not be overseas volunteers or have any other voluntary applications pending. Applicants must be eligible for PCS without waivers.

Consecutive BOPs in any combination are not authorized. Individuals approved for a BOP will appreciate a two-year assignment deferment.

For more information, see AFI 36-2110, or contact your military personnel flight.

Make the most of assignment preference worksheets

By Maj. Aaron Meadows
and Capt. Karen Sanders
Air Force Personnel Center
Randolph AFB, Texas

Since the assignment preference worksheet plays an integral role in determining an officer's career progression, the individuals concerned and their commanders need to keep some tips in mind for getting the most benefit from the worksheet. The bottom line is we read PWs carefully.

Tips for officers

- * Complete the worksheet early for each cycle:
- * Summer: NLT Dec. 31

- * Fall: NLT March 31
- * Winter: NLT June 30
- * Spring: NLT Sept. 30
- * Make us aware of unique family or personal circumstances
- * Consider officer professional development first
- * Volunteer for an overseas short tour
- * Realize there are few long-tour overseas assignments
- * Outline specific skills in comments
- * Remember that ACE lieutenants move

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COMMANDER

From Page 20

at different organizational levels

- * Demonstrated leadership
- * PME completion through correspondence within two years of pin-on

* Consistent "pushes," or recommendations, for command in OPRs

- * Relevant advanced degree
- * Special awards, such as distinguished graduate, communications and information professional, or Lt. Gen. Leo Marquez Award

Some things will *not* help you compete well:

- * Homesteading
- * Poorly written OPRs, with too much technical or program-specific jargon
- * Leaving "mainstream comm" for too long; for example, six consecutive years in jobs with non-33S DAFSCs; or eight consecutive years in a master's or doctoral program, or in an instructor position

* Failure to complete a master's degree

* Failure to complete PME within two years of pin-on to current grade

- * Failure to ensure records

are accurate and complete before the board meets

After the board: Wait

Once we publicly release the candidate list, hiring authorities work with their major command directorates of communications and information to determine the best fit for their particular unit. After they identify the officer or officers they want to hire, they submit a "bid" to us. All the while, we're working with the MAJCOMs to deconflict the bids, but if we can't reach a resolution, the Air Force deputy chief of staff for communications and information makes the final decision, generally at the annual Scope Warrior meeting.

Once the hiring process is complete, and officers are selected and notified of their selection, we release a message announcing the final matches. This completes the initial round of hiring.

Officers who remain on the list are still eligible for "pop-up" command opportunities throughout the remainder of the calendar year. Other functional areas can also consider our candidates for command opportunities, such as training squadron command, or services command.

Overall, we had no surprises this year regarding who the board selected. The key to success is performance. Keep moving, learning different parts of the Air Force, and bloom where you're planted. Start your master's early and your PME as soon as you're eligible. Always ensure your career brief is current and your records are complete. Then let the board members and senior leadership do the rest.

Monitor our Web page for information on the CY '03 Communications Squadron Commander Candidate Selection Board, which is expected to convene in July. It will consider officers in the following year groups for O-4 and O-5 command billets:

* O-4 command billets: '88, '89, '90, '91 year group, with O-4 date of rank from Aug. 1, 1999, to Sept. 1, 2002

* O-5 command billets: '82, '83, '84, '85 year group, with O-5 DOR from Oct. 1, 1998, to March 1, 2002; and the '86, '87 year group, with O-4 DOR from Oct. 1, 1997 to July 1, 1999

If you follow this advice, you'll optimize your chances of being selected as a communications squadron commander.

TRAINING

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technical application course, when the intent is to provide individuals with the understanding of the risks, impacts and constraints that a particular technology will have on a program or project.

Preparatory training courses are also available, such as basic management techniques; digital imaging for managers; and challenge of leadership. These courses are designed to prepare individuals for positions of greater responsibility, and to provide refresher training for more experienced personnel. CICP sponsored courses may be previewed at the CICIP Web page: <https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp/guide/programs/cicp.htm>

We provide on-site training at various bases to meet managerial and preparatory training requirements. These classes are designed to provide general knowledge in management and leadership for CICIP registrants. Most of the courses have points assigned for use in calculating your whole person score.

Check out the following Web site for today's on-site training opportunities: <https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp/CICP/On-Site.htm>

Another method of providing preparatory training is through tuition assistance to individuals pursuing baccalaureate and master degrees. The amount depends on availability of funds, and is generally limited to 75 percent of tuition and registration fees, with a maximum based on type of credit hours taken. See the career program TA Web site for more information: https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp/guide/sec_2.htm

As resources become available, the career program provides mid-level and high-grade management training at various locations. Examples are

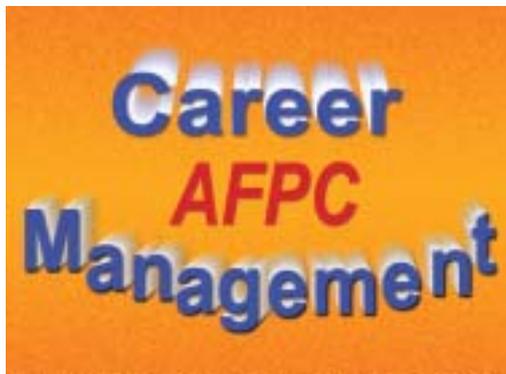
courses at OPM management development centers, National Defense University, and professional seminars. Candidates are selected based on requirements expressed in CEPs.

More information on training opportunities is available at <https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp/guide/start.htm>. For CICIP-specific training, see these two sites: <https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp/guide/programs/cicp.htm>; and https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cp/cicp/wps_guide.htm. The first is a list of short-term training sponsored by CICIP, the second provides information on courses that earn whole person score points. Each site provides information you need to complete your CEP.

There are two initiatives available to the CICIP community to enhance training opportunities. First, you can sign up for the short-notice list maintained by the training office to fill last-minute cancellations. If you have a flexible schedule and your supervisor's pre-approval to attend classes on short notice, send an e-mail to cicpta@afpc.randolph.af.mil to add your name to the list.

The second initiative is to sign up on the CICIP list server – a quick and easy procedure. You sign up by accessing <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/lists.htm>. Then CICIP information, including training opportunities, is passed on to you by e-mail. It's a good way to receive information about early warning or short-notice programs, such as announcements for applications for DLAMP and EWI, new on-site training courses, or availability of training quotas at an activity. The list server is a tool to ensure you stay aware, and can take advantage of all available career program opportunities.

If you have any questions about training, don't hesitate – call Susan Krudwig or Linda Elms at DSN 665-3691.



PERFORMANCE

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quickly at the two-year point

- * Provide information on prior-enlisted experience
- * Let us know about PME and master's degree
- * Include information on re-

newal of security clearance

- * Notify us of any PW changes after reviewer approval
- * Expect to move to different jobs during a given tour

Tips for PW reviewers

- * Read and understand PW tips for officers
- * Provide an honest assess-

ment and stratification

- * Provide the best OPD recommendation possible
- * Recommend a realistic job
- * Take an Air Force-level perspective
- * Let us know about "special handling" issues

EQUAL advertises airman assignments

By Airman Assignments Branch
Air Force Personnel Center
Randolph AFB, Texas

The Enlisted Quarterly Assignment List ing advertises most overseas and continental United States returnee assignments. They're advertised and matched eight times a year (four cycles each, for people going to and from overseas). The listing advises what's available, by Air Force specialty code, grade and location. It allows individuals to align preferences to Air Force needs. EQUAL may be viewed through your military personnel flight, commander's support staff, or Air Force Personnel Center's Web site.

CONUS members are eligible for overseas reassignment after completing required time on station. The normal TOS requirement for overseas assignment is 12 months for first-term airmen, and 24 months for career airmen. Members must also meet quality control criteria for reassignment (such as, not involved with Article 15 punishment, control roster, drug or alcohol rehabilitation, or rating of 2 or lower on latest enlisted performance report). They must also have required retainability for the assignment being sought. For example, a married technical sergeant nearing high year of tenure, with only 36 months of retainability (36 months after return-not-later-than date of the advertised requirement, before retiring), sees a requirement for Yokota AB, Japan, on EQUAL for his AFSC and grade. He knows if he volunteers for an extended tour, he'll receive higher priority than a standard tour volunteer. But guess what? He can't be an extended tour volunteer, because he can't obtain 48 months of retainability, so the computer won't select him. To be properly considered for the Yokota tour, he'd need to volunteer for the standard tour length of 36 months.

Overseas members with an indefinite "date eligible for return from overseas" may be considered for a consecutive overseas tour. Individuals with an established DEROS can also be considered, but can only volunteer for advertised requirements with a reporting

date equal to their DEROS month or the following two months. For example, if the member's DEROS is January, he's eligible to compete for assignments with a January, February or March report date. He must meet eligibility requirements in AFI 36-2110.

If a member isn't selected for a COT, or doesn't volunteer because he wants to return to CONUS, he'll compete for a CONUS assignment during his overseas return cycle. He must have 12 months' retainability after DEROS to be considered for a return assignment. He only needs 7-12 months, if he's on a short tour where an accompanied tour isn't authorized, and high year of tenure restricts him from getting the full 12 months. If he doesn't have or obtain required retainability by the specified date, his DEROS will be involuntarily extended to match his DOS. For more information on retainability issues, contact your local MPF or commander's support staff.

Military personnel married to military personnel **don't** use the overseas returnee EQUAL. Air Force couples **do** use the overseas EQUAL to apply for overseas assignments, including COTs. More information is available through the Join Spouse Program.

EQUAL-Plus

This program is available through MPF customer service, commander's support staff, or on the Assignment Management System Web page at <http://afas.afpc.randolph.af.mil/enlisted/eplu1.htm>. EQUAL-Plus listings are updated weekly, and arranged by grade and AFSC. The program supplements EQUAL by advertising special assignments, such as joint and departmental service requirements, special duties, 1AXXX assignments, and all chief master sergeant assignments. EQUAL-Plus gives upcoming requirements, any needed special qualifications, available locations, reporting instructions, and points of contact for additional information.

EQUAL-Plus also advertises major command and AFPC controlled special duties – such as instructor, recruiter, postal, the Thunderbirds, Air Staff and MAJCOM positions, and defense attaché duties around the world – and short-notice overseas assignments.

ACC commander gives IA perspectives

'Securing Air Force Operations' essential for combat effectiveness

By Gen. Hal M.
Hornburg
*Commander, Air
Combat Command
Langley AFB, Va.*



General Hornburg

Air Combat Command's theme for this month of Air Force Information Assurance Campaign 2002 is "Securing Air Force Operations"

and is essential to the combat effectiveness of our fighting forces. Information Assurance plays a central role in our vision of the Air Force's command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR) capability and in future concepts of operations such as Global Strike Task Force.

As we see daily in Operations Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle, secure and assured information is an integral part of our C4ISR capability for predictive battlespace awareness, intelligence preparation of the battlespace, and for U.S. combat forces' ability to conduct time-critical targeting. ISR provides actionable, fused, decision-quality information to fight the battle in near-real time, and communications and computers provide the tools commanders use to turn data into action. ISR, communications, and computers are woven together to enable the science of control, allowing commanders to apply the art of command. However, our ability to perform C4ISR is only effective

if we secure our operational information from our adversaries. This is even more important today as we further define the role of the GSTF.

The GSTF overcomes range and time barriers to allow our combat forces to "kick down the door" of what used to be denied battlespace.

This concept of operations will allow us to engage high-value assets during the opening hours of conflict, to set the stage for subsequent overwhelming attack by follow-on forces from air, land and sea, and to sustain the fight to conclusion. While GSTF depends on precision weapons and stealth, command and control is centered on the aerospace operations center weapon system. Information Assurance is crucial to processes used in the AOC to provide decision-quality information directly to the joint force air commander and supporting units.

Information Assurance is the centerpiece of successful air and space operations, and essential to GSTF. It leverages the tenets of highly skilled airmen, and secure and reliable systems and processes, to provide an unsurpassed information operations environment for combat. We have a responsibility to inculcate Information Assurance into our Air Force culture – our warfighters depend on it.

*You're
the key to
securing
Air Force
operations*

By Master Sgt.
Carl Kennedy
*Information Assurance
Branch
Air Combat Command
Langley AFB, Va.*

The Air Force must conduct operations for Operations Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle securely to ensure our success hour-by-hour, day-by-day.

Warfighters require a robust and reliable information operations environment for command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance to support time-critical intelligence collection and assessment, and delivery of time-sensitive targeting information.

Information Assurance ensures this critical information flows swiftly to its intended destination by secure data transfer, defends information systems from hacker and virus attacks that could exploit, compromise, alter, or destroy critical information, and delivers reliable, long-term in-

See **KEY** Page 31

Human element can be strong or weak link in operations security

By Patrick J. Fox
*OPSEC Program Manager
Air Combat Command
Langley AFB, Va.*

Air Force personnel sometimes underestimate requirements for securing operational information. Maintaining operations security takes more than simply assigning a classification to activities, plans or other documents, and then relying on enforcement of security clearance and need-to-know criteria. Our Air Force cultural background, and desire to excel by getting bombs on target, can cause us to subordinate the need for OPSEC. In regard to applying OPSEC, we often find ourselves revisiting the same lessons learned, because in the heat of battle, it was either overlooked or deemed too late for application when finally considered. We promise ourselves to do better the next time, but then it doesn't happen. There are many reasons – some good, most not so good – why we become stuck in this cycle. The Sept. 11 terrorist attacks renewed national interest in improving security in all its forms, at all levels of government. They also gave us an unprecedented frame of reference to justify return to a serious OPSEC posture.

While Air Force OPSEC culture overall is in need of a positive change, the rest of this article attempts to identify considerations for applying OPSEC to Information Assurance. With a bit more attention to OPSEC by all of us who use communications systems in our day-to-day operations, the efforts of those who are responsible for IA will pay off for all blue-suiters.

Since IA is comprised of measures to protect information and information systems, it makes sense that we who use and rely on official information and information systems would want to ensure the utmost accuracy and reliability of that information and its associated systems. It's the proverbial "garbage in/garbage out;" i.e., put in, or allow input of, inaccurate or corrupted data, and the system will return equally poor information. In the past, as our early cyber networks and asso-

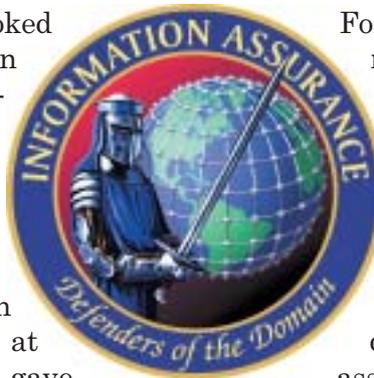
ciated information systems first came on line, much of their data was openly exploitable by anyone with the desire and capability. Emergence of IA discipline brought the realization constant vigilance is required to ensure all future data and system additions are as accurate and reliable as possible. Although the current state of IA is not directly attributable to past poor OPSEC practices, IA would be much farther along had our Air Force culture paid closer attention to OPSEC as the cyber world was emerging. Whether that inadequate attention was due to lack of individual OPSEC awareness, lack of OPSEC training across the Air Force, or lack of leadership emphasis on OPSEC is inconsequential. The fact is OPSEC, if applied correctly

and consistently across the spectrum of Air Force IA operations, starting **now**, will make a difference in our ability to achieve our ultimate mission – to defend the United States through control and exploitation of air and space.

When we consider variables in the IA equation, they shouldn't be limited to computers, telephones, radio components, and other technical assets. Much has been accomplished in the realm of developing secure communications systems. However, no matter how secure these systems become, the most important variable is the human operator. If insufficiently educated, aware, or concerned, the human operator is the greatest threat to system security. Users must deliberately adjust their frame of mind every time they touch information systems or use information obtained from them. Here are some things users must do, as a minimum.

- * Think about your immediate surroundings – such as sensitive classified information facility, open office area or cubicle – to determine the facility's level of sensitivity. This is important in raising your awareness to the need-to-know of people in the area.

- * Protect passwords used to access your systems. Don't leave them on, under or next to your



See **ELEMENT** Page 31

System certification and accreditation vital to information protection

By **Paul Woeppel, 2nd Lt. Christopher Betz**
and **2nd Lt. Kimberly Evans**
Air Intelligence Agency
Lackland AFB, Texas

Information Assurance is often viewed as a hurdle to overcome, rather than an integral part of the system or mission. But the news relates instances of persons being arrested for spying and stealing government information. The “insider threat” of spies is real, as evidenced by the arrest of Robert Hanssen, of the FBI, and Ana Belen Montes, from the Defense Intelligence Agency.

These individuals were properly cleared and had access to secure working areas or sensitive compartmented information facilities and classified information. It makes you wonder, “How secure are our information systems?” and “How well protected is our data?”

As the military entered its new mission to help eradicate world terrorism, its intelligence gathering has become reliant on sensitive compartmented information systems. So who does the Air Force count on to ensure these classified systems are set up, maintained and operated securely?

Actually, two organizations are responsible for this program. The 690th Intelligence Support Squadron’s Information Protection Flight manages accreditation of information systems for the Air Intelligence Agency on behalf of the National Security Agency. The Air Force Service Certifying Organization, which is aligned under AC2ISRC/A-26, is tasked with certifying and accrediting SCI systems for Air Force and Air Force supported joint commands on behalf of the DIA. This includes all Air Force-unique SCI systems, and numerous migration systems for which the Air Force is executive agent.

The 690th ISS/PIA and AFSCO ensure all SCI information systems comply with Director of Central Intelligence Directive 6/3. This document outlines requirements for ensuring confidentiality, integrity and availability of these systems to process SCI information without compromising security. They also ensure systems are configured with the best security safeguards and mechanisms. This includes incorporating new technology vulnerability and assessment tools into their computer security

test and evaluations.

Government and contractor personnel who develop classified systems must understand security requirements and implement them correctly before getting approval to operate. The idea of a mission system without security creates a scary picture. Just imagine someone gaining access to your information, without you ever knowing it. One way to prevent major security incidents is to involve the appropriate certification and accreditation office. Currently, both 690th ISS/PIA and AFSCO are located at Lackland AFB. They work hand-in-hand to ensure there’s one focal point for all certification and accreditation issues for SCI systems.

You might wonder, “Why do we need C&A?” Driving is a good analogy – first we must be licensed by the state to operate a vehicle. Obtaining a driver’s license equates to being certified to operate an information system.

Additionally, we must have license plates and a state inspection for the vehicle we plan to drive.

Similarly, the information system certification process ensures the system meets the security architecture of the network on which it will reside.

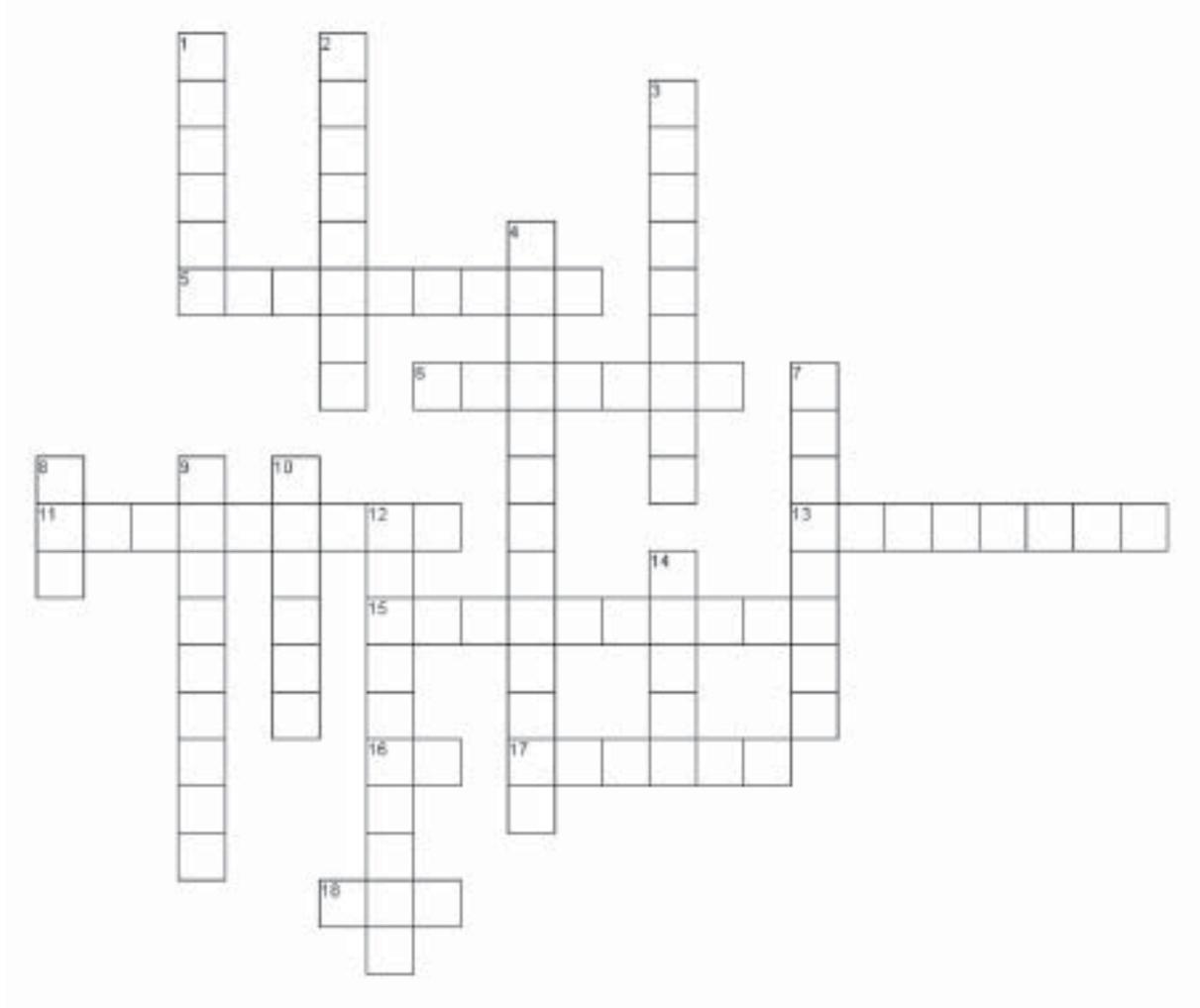
An individual needs to understand driving laws to pass the test for a license. The certification process has a similar requirement. People involved must know rules and requirements for developing an information system, apply them, and then test the system to ensure it complies. This is accomplished by verifying the latest security patches and service packs are applied, turning off network services that aren’t needed, and closing ports that don’t need to be used.

After the license, or certification, is obtained, appropriate plates and state inspection, or accreditation, authorize it to be driven on the road. The accreditation process provides similar authorization for information systems to operate on networks. During the accreditation process, the system is reviewed to ensure it has appropriate documentation, security testing, and network authorization to operate.

The overall goal of C&A is to ensure systems developed and ultimately connected to the network

See **C&A** Page 32

Portable Electronic Devices



Across

- 5. Anti-virus Software Protects Against _____ Logic
- 6. Maintain Positive _____ of PEDs
- 11. Information _____ Campaign
- 13. Required to Gain Information System/Network Access
- 15. Personal Digital _____
- 16. Information Assurance (Acronym)
- 17. Defeating Global _____ ... Demands Effective Information Assurance (Hint: 2002 IAC Theme)
- 18. Portable Electronic Device (Acronym)

Down

- 1. _____ Security Authorization Agreement
- 2. Information System _____ Officer
- 3. Cellular _____
- 4. Information System Weakness
- 7. Unit _____ Manager
- 8. The _____ Accredits ALL Information Systems Under Their Authority Prior to System Operation
- 9. Designated Approving _____
- 10. Portable Computer
- 12. _____ Message Incident
- 14. Text _____

PED answer key

Across

- 5. Malicious
- 6. Control
- 11. Assurance
- 13. Password
- 15. Assistants

- 16. IA
- 17. Terror
- 18. PED

Down

- 1. System

- 2. Security
- 3. Telephone
- 4. Vulnerability
- 7. COMPUSEC
- 8. DAA

- 9. Authority
- 10. Laptop
- 12. Classified
- 14. Pager

KEY

From Page 27

formation storage and retrieval. Protection of IS begins with individual participation in two straightforward IA vehicles: sound network user practices and time compliance network orders (TCNO).

Sound network user practices ensure IS operations remain widely available, reliable and secure for Air Force operations. In fact, at any given moment, tens of thousands of users are entrusted with significant access to the Air Force's IOE and sensitive information. In light of this, the requirement for individuals to comply with network user training principles and guidelines becomes profoundly clear. This re-

quirement is met by licensing all airmen, DOD civilians, and government contractors on essential IA issues before granting access to operate on the network. We can draw a realistic comparison between drivers' licenses and network user licenses. When we operate a car, we can potentially harm other drivers, the environment, and ourselves. Similarly, when we operate on the network, our actions can potentially impact other network users and the IOE used to command and control our aerospace forces. When we understand the impacts an individual network user can have on the IOE, we can see the importance of network user licensing.

The IOE starts with our desktop PC and ends with powerful

networking components of industrial scale. Every IS component must rapidly adapt to emerging threats and vulnerabilities. To respond to and defend against these threats, evolving IS configurations are issued as TCNOs. By configuring every IS to TCNO standards, network users and professionals take necessary steps to secure our complex network and eliminate potential enemy avenues of attack.

Successful aerospace operations rely upon advanced C4ISR capabilities. Robust IA practices to license network users and comply with TCNO directives are critical to our C4ISR capabilities, and make you key to securing Air Force operations.

ELEMENT

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desk or equipment, or in other "secret" hiding places where intruders can find them. Follow established procedures for building your password each time you change it. The more difficult you make it for intruders to learn your password, the more likely they'll give up trying.

* When talking about information systems, either in person or through non-secure means such as NIPRNET or non-secure telephone, be careful about the infrastructure information you divulge. Open discussion of information system vulnerabilities could give adversaries what they need to exploit them. Remember, the more you say or write, the easier it will be for an expert intruder to manipulate your system.

* If your duties include information systems acquisition, be cautious about telling vendors why you need a particular equipment configuration. You could be providing a key to open the door to your unit's information infrastructure.

* When discussing operational information, regardless of classification, think twice before including more information than necessary to accomplish the task at hand. Operational information involves every aspect of your Air Force job. Whether you're director of an air operations cen-

ter making decisions about combat activities, or an information specialist assigned to the military personnel flight, it's your responsibility to think about potential sensitivity of information you deal with, vulnerabilities of your communications or computer system, and the receiver's need-to-know.

* Know the OPSEC point of contact for your unit and ask for assistance in developing OPSEC critical information lists that include IA elements. This is important because desktop or laptop computers exist virtually everywhere in the Air Force. Post OPSEC critical information lists next to computer terminals for easy reference and to increase awareness.

* Preach OPSEC awareness in your office area. Don't look the other way if you notice someone practicing poor OPSEC in discussing or handling operational information. Setting the example and providing reminders on OPSEC awareness is contagious to your fellow workers. All will benefit from your perseverance.

Remember, OPSEC is a 24/7 responsibility for each of us, including military members, civilian employees and contractors. We must all follow established procedures to protect our information systems and the data they hold. Our conscientiousness in practicing OPSEC will no doubt be measurable in the degree of our successes in future military operations.

**By Brig. Gen.
Chip Utterback**

*Former Commander
366th Air*

*Expeditionary Wing
Operation Enduring Freedom*

I saw an e-mail that one of our warriors sent to his family and friends recently. I didn't spy on the guy; I simply read the private e-mail to his family in a nationally syndicated newspaper column.

From that e-mail and some Web sites several of our folks have established to keep family members updated — to find them, just search for the base's name — I learned a lot that the bad guys can learn, too.

In 20 minutes I learned how many people are here, exactly where our base is located,

what time we eat and how many people are in what tent at a given time. I learned what kind of airplanes we have, much about our mission, and a lot about our security — I can go on and on.

We have rules on communications for a reason. Your innocent letter, e-mail or Web site can end up on the front page. You might make us an easy target and our families won't appreciate it. Our friends and family don't understand operational security and communications security the way we do — or should.

We are at war, we have been attacked — people want to hurt us. Let's not give the bad guys a how-to manual. *(Courtesy Air Combat Command News Service)*



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael Nixon

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM -- Staff Sgt. Cynthia Chagnon, an engineering and installation technician from the 366th Air Expeditionary Group, digs a conduit trench, as Master Sgt. Kris Lewis looks on at an OEF location.

C&A

From Page 29

are as secure as possible. Operating without this process would be like inviting hackers and spies to find back doors into our systems, and to steal personal or critical mission information that might have life threatening impacts. Also, networks may slow down or come to a halt if a system uses more bandwidth than the network can support. These are some possible consequences of operating an information system that's not certified and accredited. The C&A process protects networks from these problems and ensures safe operation on the network.

Within the SCI community, the information systems security manager and information systems security officer are responsible to the senior intelligence officer or the commander for verifying proper configuration of information systems security, and maintaining appropriate documentation for certification and accreditation. Since these responsibilities are usually an additional duty, it's

imperative for the SIO and commander to support individuals performing this mission.

Now more than ever, there's tremendous pressure to get things done — and rightfully so. But even in responding to urgent mission requirements, we must continue to ensure security of our vital information systems. Certification and accreditation of SCI systems isn't intended to interfere or hamper the operational mission. It's designed to prevent enemies from obtaining classified information that could harm U.S. personnel.

Given the current operations tempo, the IA and operational communities must be smart about accomplishing essential certifications and accreditations.

For a systems security checklist, or more information, please contact the 690th Intelligence Support Squadron Information Protection Flight, or Air Force Service Certifying Organization, at DSN 969-3396 or (210) 977-3396, or <https://aiaweb.aia.af.mil/homepages/690iss/pi/pihome.html>.

CBT keeps force proficient via non-traditional means

By Senior Master Sgt. Donald McKenzie
AFCA Training Management Branch
Scott AFB, Ill.

The cornerstone of any military force is the well-trained and well-rounded individual. Today's Air Force requires us – whether we are crew chiefs, maintainers, logisticians, administrative, or computer personnel – to be well versed in the world of information technology. As we move deeper into the realm of information assurance/information dominance, it is imperative that the workforce understands and applies information technology concepts. More areas today are affected by information technology than ever before. Staying on top of technology is tantamount if we are to maintain a well-rounded force. Despite fiscal restraints, it is possible to remain technically savvy in this era of information dominance via the Air Force Computer Based Training system.

The technological advances of the last few years have led to a magnitude of changes in the way we do business. Information technology is present in virtually all aspects of the Air Force today, whether it is the computer system used for administrative work or another used to order supplies. More functions today, than ever before, are being automated.



To remain proficient, we need to keep up with these changes. The Air Force CBT System provides an avenue to do just that.

“Using technology to teach technology.” Those are the words of Lt. Gen. William Donahue (ret.) in describing the Air Force's CBT program. The program presents an excellent opportunity for individuals to further their development. The CBT program can provide you with the tools you need to meet the increasing demands of the mission.

The CBT library consists of more than 1,400 courses to include specialized technical skills, basic business applications, software programming, and office automation programs. The CBTs are an excellent way to brush up on your skills – whether they be Word, PowerPoint, and Excel skills – or add to them by taking courses encompassing all aspects of the computer system, from the desktop PC to the local server you are working on. These courses are offered at no cost and can be taken anytime whether it is at work, on temporary duty, or at home. The site (<http://afcbt.den.disa.mil>) is there to meet the needs of Air Force members.

For more information contact the AFCA Training Management Branch at DSN 779-5698 or afca.cbt@scott.af.mil.

Air Force marks 50 years of computing

Fifty years ago Feb. 1, the Air Force became the second government agency to get a Universal Automatic Computer, or UNIVAC, from Remington Rand, Inc. It was installed in the basement of the Pentagon where the Air Force Comptroller operated it until 1958. The UNIVAC was a close sibling to its predecessor, the Electronic Numerator, Integrator, Analyzer, and Computer, or ENIAC. Both were designed by Dr. John Mauchly, a physicist, and John Presper Eckert Jr., an engineer. The UNIVAC I was delivered to its first customer, the U.S. Census Bureau, in 1951. The third computer went to the Army in 1952.



Burke Horton, UNIVAC Vice President of Engineering, right, looks at the UNIVAC I computer installed in the Pentagon in 1952.

Scope Eagle: Capstone course designed for communications and information leaders

By 1st Lt. Robert A. Whited
333rd Training Squadron
Keesler AFB, Miss.

Scope Eagle is a Headquarters Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Communications and Information forum managed by Air Education and Training Command, and is designed specifically for colonels, select lieutenant colonels and civilian equivalents. The forum creates an environment where senior field grade communications and information officers can discuss policies of corporate concern, refresh themselves technologically, and prepare to manage the future by interacting with top-level comm and info leadership in key joint, Air Force and industry positions.

Scope Eagle has been around for years. Almost 20 years ago, the communications and information career field merger was being planned. One concern was that it could result in senior leaders who were experienced and technically astute in their former specialty, but would have little knowledge of the additional duties and responsibilities that the merger would place on them. Air Staff saw a need and developed a forum where expanded responsibilities could be presented in a non-threatening environment, and each attendee's expertise could benefit the other attendees. Thus, the predecessor to the current Scope Eagle forum, Bold Stroke, was created in 1985. Over the next four years, colonels, colonel selects, lieutenant colonels in key management positions, and civilian equivalents, were brought together from both sides of the new career field to discuss current policies, issues, programs and perspectives with top speakers in the field. By 1989, the course had met its objectives, and nearly all eligible members had attended the course.

The course evolved further to a forum where senior comm and info leaders periodically meet to discuss issues and get technical updates in a dynamic career field. The guest speakers keep this course very up-to-date and eligible officers are ex-



Lt. Gen. John L. 'Jack' Woodward Jr. speaks at a Scope Eagle session.

pected to attend every three to five years. In 1996, the information management and visual information career fields were incorporated, and the course was renamed "Scope Eagle."

Today, Scope Eagle continues to accomplish its mission by hosting five forums per year. Each forum, packed with interaction between students and key comm and info leaders, is five days long, culminating with a "Charge for the Future" from the Air Force's senior comm and info leader, Lt. Gen. John L. "Jack" Woodward Jr.

"Scope Eagle is essential," said Brig. Gen. Michael W. Peterson, ACC/A-6. "Our community is so diverse, that it's one of the very few forums available to 'spread the word.' It's also a terrific opportunity to provide feedback. Most of the senior leadership in our business speaks to at least one class per year, and many try to hit every one of them—the students talk, and we listen. If you haven't attended in the past several years, get a quota today."

Each class of 20 students is selected by Air Staff. The nomination process is simple. Commanders simply submit the names of eligible individuals through their respective command representative.

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1st Combat Communications Squadron proves its scalable initiative

By 2nd Lt.
Steven Brummitt
*1st Combat
Communications
Squadron
Ramstein AB,
Germany*

The 1st Combat Communications Squadron re-emphasized the value of rapidly deployable, scalable communications systems by sending its TTC-39E renovated transit case theater air control communications module to the British Indian Ocean Territory of Diego Garcia. The TACCM and its crew provided communications support for 28th Air Expeditionary Wing and 60th Air Expeditionary Group for the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom, with secure voice services for KC-10 refueling missions, and B-52 and B-1 combat sorties.

Until recently, this legacy communications system would have required 11 pallet positions for airlift transport. Driven by squadron commander Lt. Col. Jim Appleyard's initiative to reduce the deployed communications footprint, Staff Sgt. William Quinn and Staff Sgt. Paul Pohnert devised a way to relocate system components from a mobile shelter into six much smaller transit cases, requiring only three pallet positions for airlift. The smaller equipment package also reduced manpower requirements from 16 to 10.

Prior to the January 2001 transit case upgrade, the TACCM's primary emphasis was on mobility. Mounted on a highly-mobile, multi-wheeled vehicle, the system could literally be driven off the aircraft and into the battlespace. Unfortunately, this emphasis on mobility made the 11 pallet TACCM an all-or-nothing unit type code, with no



Photo by Master Sgt. William Gaspar

Master Sgt. Brent W. Hewitt and Staff Sgt. Dominic G. Laufenberg, 1st Combat Communications Squadron, perform post deployment inspections on the transit case TTC-39E.

room to tailor the equipment capabilities, and thus airlift requirements, to the needs of the mission. In its new configuration, the TTC-39E's primary emphasis is on functional scalability. The transit case can be scaled to provide 12 telephones to support a diplomatic mission, and up to 300 telephones to support a fully operational air operations center.

According to facility chief Master Sgt. Brent Hewitt after bringing his crew and the equipment home from their deployment to Diego Garcia, the transit case TTC-39E performed flawlessly. "We had the telephone switch fully operational 20 minutes after we began setup, and maintained a 100 percent uptime rate throughout the four-month deployment," he said.

The 1st Combat Communications Squadron continues its efforts to provide lighter, leaner, more capable communications packages for battlefield commanders.

C2B's Master Air Attack Plan Toolkit

Initiative increases planning speed and efficiency

By Maj. Kris O'Brien

Command and Control Battlelab

Hurlburt Field, Fla.

Imagine you are an Air Force planner deployed to the Joint Air Operations Center during a contingency. You are assigned to the Master Air Attack Plan team and will assist in developing the MAAP. You begin your shift by studying a large paper chart of the area of operations, covered with manually plotted targets and "yellow stickies" used to match weapons to the targets. This information will be used by the MAAP cell to develop mission planning worksheets, and this mission planning data will later be typed into the Theater Air Planner application within Theater Battle Management Core System. Amazingly, this process is completely manual. Is this really the 21st century? There must be a better way!

Recognizing the importance of quicker decision-making and improved efficiency, the USAF Command and Control Battlelab is conducting an initiative, the MAAP Toolkit, to automate most of the MAAP process and help the planner visualize and build the air battle plan in a more intuitive and timely manner.

Maj. Doug Combs, the MAAP Toolkit's program manager, explains, "The purpose of the initiative is to complete the target weapon pairing process in a paperless environment." Currently, the J/CAOC process for matching resources to targets for development of the Air Tasking Order is largely a manual, time, and manpower intensive process of gathering target, threat, unit resource, environmental, battlespace, and friendly intentions information. Joint Pub 3.56.1, Command and Control for Joint Operations, states, "the MAAP is a keen element of the concept of joint air operations."

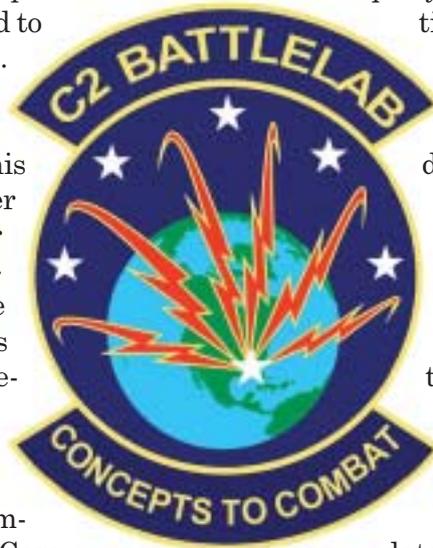
Yet, it is one of the only manual processes remaining within the AOC.

Web-enabled Temporal Analysis System (WebTAS), an Air Force Research Lab government off-the-shelf software, enables the MAAP Toolkit to provide the AOC with an automated capability to gather all MAAP planning information into a single application.

The MAAP Toolkit leverages several machine-to-machine interfaces, to include initially querying the Joint Integrated Prioritized Target List from the Modernized Integrated Database to input approved targets. Once the Toolkit has collected target data, planners, using "drag and drop" features, will be able to swiftly match targets, weapons and weapon platforms. The attack plan will then be imported directly into TAP, eliminating the current requirement for manual entry. The import will initially be accomplished via a flat file, with the long-term goal of completely automating the data exchange. Although several TAP operators will be required for quality control, the eventual goal is to replace the 19 personnel needed to accomplish data input during Joint Expeditionary Force Experiment 00.

The C2B scoped the MAAP Toolkit at a warfighter analysis workshop held at Hurlburt Field in July. According to Major Combs, "the WAW provided a starting point for requirements." Attended by subject matter experts from Air Combat Command, United States Air Forces in Europe, and the Navy and Marine Corps, the workshop successfully validated warfighter needs and gained support. Based on SME input, the C2B finalized requirements and began initiative development.

Selected as a Category 1 initiative for JEFX 02, the MAAP Toolkit held a technical interchange meeting in December in preparation for





JEFX Spiral 1. “The TIM,” said Major Combs, “was an opportunity for the warfighter to see what the C2B had developed and to identify any shortcomings.”

During the technical interchange, SMEs first evaluated the MAAP Toolkit’s current capabilities and then used it to build an actual master air attack plan. One of the participants, Louie Jordan, Aerospace Command, Control, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance Center Operations Directorate, was very impressed with the toolkit’s functionality. “In all my years, this is the first thing I’ve seen that can reduce manpower requirements.”

Murry Cox, the MAAP Toolkit’s Deputy Program Manager, was also extremely pleased with the TIM. “We captured warfighter desires that will improve the tool, and participants seemed very pleased with what they saw.”

Based on inputs compiled from the TIM, the

MAAP Toolkit is actually ahead of schedule for JEFX Spiral 1. According to Major Combs, “Upon completion of Spiral 2, the C2B’s goal is a solution suitable for folks out in the Air Operations Centers with an immediate need.” Upon completion in September 2002, the C2B will coordinate with the AC2ISRC to formally transition it to the warfighter.

The C2B’s mission is to rapidly identify and prove the worth of innovative ideas for command and control, which improve the ability of the USAF to execute its core competencies to support joint warfighting. Consequently, developing capabilities such as the MAAP Toolkit to improve JAOC planning and execution is exactly what the C2B strives to accomplish.

If you have an innovative idea to improve C2 for the warfighter, please contact the C2B through our Web page at www.c2b.hurlburt.af.mil.

KYRGYZSTAN

From Page 3

Kelly said.

“There was nothing here and I’ve never set up a post office before,” Airman Risban said. “I just pitched in and did what I could. Help arrived about two weeks later.”

“J.J. Risban has been one of the great stories of Ganci Air Base,” General Kelly said. “He immediately volunteered to do all kinds of things while he waited for some expertise and equipment to get here. He and the rest of the team have done great work.”

It has been quite an experience setting up this post office from scratch, Airman Risban said.

“I like doing what I do,” he said. “Getting mail is fun for the troops. I love watching everybody come in and get a big smile on their face when they receive a letter or package from their loved ones or friends.”

It takes planning for equipment, personnel and the most updated supplies to start a post office, said Tech. Sgt. Cedric Palmore, 376th AEW postmaster.

“I like what I do because it stays busy,” he said. “You’ll never find a postal person out there that has nothing to do. Plus, we keep every-



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jack Braden

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM -- A newly established post office at an operating location in support of the U.S. Central Command execution of OEF is a welcome morale boost for military people who had gone more than a month without mail service.

body happy. We play an important role in keeping morale up.”

General Kelly said the post office is that human touch that you get from back home.

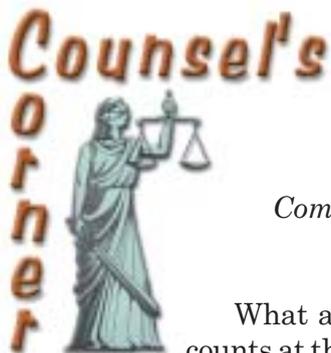
“What famous war movie doesn’t have the scene of mail call in it?” General Kelly asked. “This is war, and young men and women want to be in touch back home and there’s nothing like a letter from a loved one to make you feel like you’ve got a little piece of what’s natural and normal.” (U.S. Air Forces in Europe News Service)

PAY INCREASE

From Page 3

The postal special duty was formed nearly 25 years ago when administrative specialists, AFSC 702X0 (now 3A0X1), serving in Air Force overseas postal activities were converted to the 99604 postal special duty identifier (now 8M000). Today 8M000 personnel come from many Air Force walks of life, including aircrew life support, supply systems analysts, air transportation, munitions systems, services, personnel, and health services management, to name just a few.

The Air Force has more than 600 postal specialists serving in 123 air post offices, 13 aerial mail terminals and mail control activities, and five joint military postal activities around the globe supporting the military postal service. In a typical year they serve nearly 1 million patrons — 200,000 of whom are deployed — and receive, process and dispatch more than 200 million pounds of mail; and conduct more than \$35 million in financial transactions. (Courtesy Air Force Postal Policy Element)



Who's minding the company store?

By **Joe Hinds**

Legal Office

Air Force

Communications Agency

Scott AFB, Ill.

What a deal! I can get deep discounts at the computer company store simply because I'm attending the vendor's symposium – and people say federal employees don't get benefits anymore! Well, let's see, with a 30 percent markdown, this kind of deal doesn't come along often, so maybe this is also a good time to buy some Christmas presents for the family.

So at that price, I'll get two ... no, make it three computers.

But have you stopped to consider whether you, as a federal employee, may accept such a good deal? Whether the discount can be accepted or not depends on the facts of each case, making it difficult to generalize a one-size-fits-all answer. However, if the discount is offered to all federal employees or all military, the employee usually may accept the discount. The joint ethics regulation doesn't consider a discount a gift if it's available to the public, or all government employees, or all military personnel. For example, if a resort offered a 30 percent discount to all military, this typically could be accepted. But if the resort offered the discount only to officers, the reduced rate would be a gift subject to prohibitions under JER.

The answer to this type of question is very fact-specific. Change the facts, and you change the result. First, you need to know who's "minding the company store," since different rules apply to pro-

hibited sources. For federal personnel, a prohibited source is a person or organization that's seeking official federal action, doing or seeking to do business, or conducting activities regulated by, the person's agency.

For example, if Acme Corporation, a federal contractor and prohibited source, offers all military information technology specialists a reduced fee for admission to its company store, this would probably be a prohibited gift. For the offer to be acceptable, Acme would have to make it available to all military, not just military IT specialists.

If Acme Corporation isn't a prohibited source and offers the reduced fee to all military IT specialists, this may be acceptable. However, if Acme delivers the invitations only to officers, or restricts the offer based on factors other than professional qualifications, then the gift may not be accepted.

But if Acme Corporation is a prohibited source offering discounted General Service Administration IT products to all federal employees, this isn't a problem since the offer is available to all federal employees. Even though the discount is restricted to IT products, it's still open to all employees.

In another scenario, Acme Corporation is a prohibited source and offers "training" for Air Force employees, sending out special invitations to Air Force IT managers to take advantage of its company store discounts. This may be a problem under JER, since even though it's a "training" event, it's still subject to the rule against accepting discounts when not offered to all federal employees or military.

As these examples illustrate, this is a very tricky area. Your best bet is to check with your base legal office in every case.

EAGLE

From Page 34

Recent Scope Eagle students had this to say about their experience:

"I thought I was current on many issues and programs until I heard many of the briefings."

"Gives me the right information to know where my focus should be."

"Great opportunity to meet my peers and talk to the folks tasked with 'making it happen' from the top."

"Seize the opportunity – attend Scope Eagle!"

For more information on Scope Eagle, contact their office at DSN 597-8767 or commercial (228) 377-8767 or visit their Web page at <https://wwwmil.keesler.af.mil/ACOT/se.html>.

Back cover

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM -- Senior Airman Angelita Boerm (kneeling) shoots video footage of Chief Master Sgt. Terry Arnold (left), Master Sgt. Chuck Anderson (middle) and Staff Sgt. Jason Wolfe as they pull cable through a system of pipelines. All four people were deployed to the 366th Communications Squadron in support of OEF.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Michael R. Nixon

*Operation
Enduring
Freedom*

