

Moving Forward

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LANGLEY AIR FORCE BASE, Va. — Communications is a top priority when preparing for a deployed location, and it plays a vital role in allowing the military to maintain global connectivity.

Ensuring technology is leveraged and teams are trained, Langley has developed a Reachback SATCOM team. The team's goal is to make sure deployable teams have all the tools needed to establish communications quickly and accurately.

Reachback SATCOM offers the opportunity for teams to assess their skills and equipment before they deploy. SATCOM offers a venue for people to train and test communications equipment so when it's time to deploy, communications are ready to go. The Reachback SATCOM provides connectivity through super high frequency systems, and the Secure Mobile Anti-Jam Reliable Tactical Terminal. This equipment can receive, transmit and process robust multi-channel secure and non-secure voice and data worldwide.

Reachback SATCOM assists customers throughout the Air Force with versatility in providing the users with what they require.

During the last year, SATCOM has

teamed with 18 customers including Global Hawk, Predator, Defense Communications and Army Transmission Systems and supported 38 missions including Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. They also trained more than 300 personnel from three different combat communications squadrons in preparation for Air Expeditionary Force deployments.

The Langley SATCOM team not only prepares units for deployment, it also supports missions that test new SATCOM equipment for the military. As the Air Force progresses with the development of tactical satellite systems, the need to verify tactical suitability and capability is a high priority.

The SATCOM team is supporting the acceptance test plan for equipment, providing text and secure voice orderwire for operational use by the Defense Satellite Communications System Operations Manager, Defense Information Systems Agency and United States Army Space Command. The satellite network consists of one network controller and one or more network terminals.

The collected test data provided will determine if the system can provide continuous, reliable capabilities for effective management and control

of tactical satellite missions.

Another key mission for the future involves different vendors competing for the next generation technology SATCOM terminal. Reachback SATCOM allowed the vendors the opportunity to exercise their wares in an operationally realistic configuration with services provided by Langley as a distant-end user. The result is discovering the right equipment while maintaining an interoperable communications infrastructure.

Whether preparing Airmen to set up a tactical satellite communications link in the field or providing real world test scenarios for future satellite terminals, the SATCOM team stands ready to support the mission around the globe. In an ever-changing threat environment, the Reachback SATCOM team will ensure tactical training and equipment is provided to Air Force units and enable communications for the warfighter to move forward.



Reachback SATCOM

Langley's Reachback SATCOM team
prepares communicators, equipment for front lines