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'em home**
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From the Top

By Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley
Commander, Air Force Reserve Command



The command's top priorities

For more than 16 years, the Air Force has been at war, and for 16 years the Air Force Reserve has been an integral part of our nation's combat capability. In spite of the sacrifices of families, employers and our Reservists themselves, we remain dedicated and committed to the same priorities as the regular Air Force: winning the Global War on Terror; developing and caring for Airmen; and recapitalizing and modernizing our aging aircraft and equipment.

Fight and Win the Long War

I am proud to say that our Air Force Reserve is playing a vital role in the GWOT. We have flown a total of 101,480 sorties logging 430,768 hours of flying time in most weapons systems, with crews both mobilized and performing volunteer man-days. As of last month, we had 14 C-130 crews on long-term military personnel appropriation orders. This is amazing considering that just last year these crews completed two years of mobilization.

Our strategic airlift wings have stepped up as well by providing 75 C-17 and 22 C-5 crews on long-term MPA orders. Additionally, we have 12 KC-10 crews on active-duty orders supporting the air bridge, Northeast Tanker Task Force and other aerial refueling requirements. Behind every crew there are numerous support folks working just as hard to enable mission success.

Having maximized the use of the 24-month mobilization authority in some of our critical skills (C-130, MC-130, B-52, HH-60, HC-130, E-3 and security forces), we rely more heavily on volunteerism than mobilization to meet continuing requirements. The operations tempo remains high and is not expected to decline significantly in the near future. Your continued willingness to volunteer is key to our success.

The key to increasing volunteerism and enabling us to bring more to the fight is flexibility and eliminating barriers to volunteerism. Developing policies that maximize Reservists' ability to volunteer provides more control for military members, their families, employers and commanders. Your continued service is vital because the Air Force cannot meet the requirements without you.

Develop Airmen

The backbone of the Air Force Reserve is you, our people.

Unlike our regular component counterparts, who have service commitments, our Reservists are volunteers every day they serve. Therefore, we must continue to care for and provide a relevant mission for your service.

The coming years will bring increased challenges for our Airmen. The implementation of Base Realignment and Closure, Total Force Integration and personnel reductions will all have an impact on many of you and your families. Approximately 8,000 people will be directly impacted by BRAC alone.

Recruiting may become more difficult, making it more critical than ever to retain our highly trained Airmen. It is imperative that we are granted additional legislative authorities that enable us to develop policies to better meet the needs of our Reservists affected by these challenges.

There is no pleasure in cutting positions and potentially taking away a person's opportunity to serve. I wish we didn't have to, but it is one of the many tough decisions facing the Air Force in order to transform us into a force that better meets the needs of our future. My staff and I are working hard to minimize the impact to those affected so everyone who wants to continue to serve may do so.

Recapitalize and Modernize

The Air Force Reserve stands in total support of the Air Force in its efforts to recapitalize and modernize its fleet of aircraft and space systems. Weapons systems such as the KC-X, CSAR-X, F-22A, F-35 and the next-generation bomber are critical to secure the advantage essential to combating future threats. The Air Force Reserve will directly benefit from this modernization since we fly the same aircraft.

Today, the average age of our fleet is 24 years old. That's up substantially from when I first joined the Air Force, when the average age of our aircraft was only 8 years old. Many of today's aircraft first came into service during the 1950s and 1960s and will continue to fly for another 30 years.

Today's budgetary constraints require us to take the painful steps mentioned above if the Air Force is to remain a dominant air and space power for the 21st century. As always, I thank you for your continued support to our Air Force and for helping us realize our vision of being the Air Force's unrivaled wingman. ★

Chief's View

By Chief Master Sgt. Troy J. McIntosh
Command Chief Master Sergeant, Air Force Reserve Command



Goals: Follow predecessors' path, take command to next level

It is such an honor to be your command chief! I do not take this responsibility lightly, and I stand committed to the path established by our previous command chiefs.

Chief Master Sgt. Jackson A. Winsett brought this command into the future and paved the path in creating the "unrivaled Airman," providing an endless potential for all Airmen. My goal is to take us to the next level by building new programs and repairing or replacing those that are no longer viable in our operational environment.

As we transition from a force in reserve to an operational force, the pace of change is fast. Often overlooked is maintaining a balance between operational requirements and the commitment of the Citizen Airman. I plan to bring some sense of balance to both.

Each day, new buzzwords enter our lives. Words like "Total Force Integration," "Program Budget Decision 720," "enlisted force development," "Air Force Smart Operations 21" and "continuum of service" all affect the enlisted force with new requirements, new responsibilities, and, most of all, a change in philosophy and how things are done.

Our current chief of staff and chief master sergeant of the Air Force recognized the need for information to flow to the lowest levels of supervision. Thus, a weekly update called "Roll Call" was created. I highly encourage people at all levels of supervision to read and share this valuable source of information. The saying, "Knowledge is power," is more true now than ever before. If we understand the "why," we are committed to the end result.

I will continually emphasize the endless possibilities available to all Reservists — the sky is the limit when it comes to your military career. With enlisted force development, we will make every effort to break down the barriers and/or obstacles to you, our future leaders. Opportunities will be

crystal clear to all Airmen!

The creation of "My EDP (Enlisted Development Plan)," located on the Air Force Portal, is a great tool to inform all Airmen of the requirements for their Air Force specialty code and future development. With minor changes, I plan to add items that specifically address Reserve issues and offer endless possibilities.

My expectation for the future is to create a more portable program within the Reserve that will allow all Reservists to have the same career opportunities. Who's to say that a

member of the Active Guard and Reserve cannot be a command chief or an air reserve technician a first sergeant or a traditional Reservist a recruiter? Barriers to career progression would be non-existent. As a result, the young Airman sitting next to you could be the next numbered air force command chief or even chief master sergeant of the Air Force!

As your new command chief, I would like to share a bit of career information about myself. I have more than 12 years of active-duty Air Force service and 15 years as an ART, AGR and TR working at the unit and headquarters levels. My recent assignment at the Pentagon in the Office of Air Force Reserve as the superintendent of policy integration and superintendent of AGR management was invaluable as it increased my knowledge of legislative actions, corporate processes and Department of Defense policies — all of which, I feel, will be vital in making a positive change for the enlisted force. Needless to say, I am a true product of Total Force Integration!

Once again, it is truly my honor to represent the most valuable asset to the Air Force Reserve — you! Together, we are the "unrivaled wingman" and true partners in the Total Force. I thank you for what you do every day, and I look forward to your input in keeping this Air Force Reserve one of a kind! ★

MY GOAL IS TO TAKE US TO THE
NEXT LEVEL BY BUILDING NEW PRO-
GRAMS AND REPAIRING OR REPLACING
THOSE THAT ARE NO LONGER VIABLE
IN OUR OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT.

Weld Done

Tech. Sgt. Brian Barbee of the 446th Airlift Wing, McChord Air Force Base, Wash., uses a gas metal arc welder to weld a maintenance stand in the metals technology shop at the base. The shop is responsible for welding, machining, heat treating, installing, repairing, demilling and fabricating parts for all aircraft and aircraft support equipment. In addition, the shop supports other Air Force and Army operations on and off base. (Abner Guzman)

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ARPC transforms service delivery

Front cover: (Top) F-22 Raptors, like the ones shown here, will soon be coming to Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, and Air Force Reserve Command will be playing a major role. See story on page 18. (Photo courtesy of Lockheed Martin). (Bottom left) Tech. Sgt. Doug Miles and other members of the 39th Rescue Squadron, Patrick AFB, Fla., have a strong relationship with their Canadian counterparts. See page 22 for the story. (Tech. Sgt. Bob Grande). (Bottom right) Reservists, like Master Sgt. Debra Leddy, shown here with Army Spec. Lorne Rizzoto, are helping bring wounded, injured and ill service members back home. See story on page 28. (Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb)

Gen. T. Michael Moseley *Chief of Staff, United States Air Force*

Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley *Commander, Air Force Reserve Command*

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Waiting for Takeoff

Staff Sgt. Angela Kotouch, a loadmaster with the 910th Airlift Wing, Youngstown-Warren Air Reserve Station, Ohio, along with paratroopers from the Army's 173rd Brigade Combat Team, Warner Barracks, Bamberg, Germany, wait to be briefed on the back of a C-130 Hercules prior to takeoff from Ramstein Air Base, Germany, recently. While deployed in support of Operation Joint Forge, Reservists from the 910th took part in a joint airborne/air transportability training mission involving more than 650 paratroopers. (Senior Airman Megan M. Carrico)



A Room for Phillip

Lt. Col. Doug Hetzel talks to Phillip Tracy-Curtis at the groundbreaking ceremony for Phillip's new room. Members of the 315th Airlift Wing's 300th Airlift Squadron, Charleston Air Force Base, S.C., and the local community built a new addition on the Tracy-Curtis family home to help Phillip, who has spina bifida. The nearly 500-square-foot room includes ample space for recovery following a major surgery Phillip underwent in January, a wheelchair accessible bathroom and an outdoor deck with a ramp. The 300th AS also made Phillip an honorary Airman and gave him a tour of the base. Colonel Hetzel is one of the squadron's pilots. (Staff Sgt. Jeff Kelly)



Round the Reserve

A brief look at what's happening throughout Air Force Reserve Command

Norfolk Squadron Bridges to Future of Joint Operations

Working as part of an "all-blue" force is rapidly becoming a thing of the past. Joint operations are the future of the military, and a joint assignment is a must for people who aspire to wear stars on their shoulders.

Serving a joint assignment is also a great opportunity for Airmen of any rank to learn more about their service brothers and sisters. One pathway available for Air Force Reservists to make that assignment happen is the 953rd Reserve Support Squadron in Norfolk, Va.

The 953rd RSPTS is the Air Force ele-

ment of the Joint Reserve Unit for U.S. Joint Forces Command. The JRU is responsible for integrating the reserve components of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard. The squadron is a gateway for Air Force Reservists to serve in a joint role under USJFCOM, the transformation leader of the U.S. military.

Upon assuming command of the 953rd RSPTS in April 2006, Air Force Reserve Col. Michael Pierce summed up the relationship between unit and squadron.

"We are a part of two great teams — the Air Force Reserve Command and U.S. Joint Forces Command — within the best military in the world," Colonel

Pierce said. "As a team, we will meet the challenges, mitigate uncertainties and be successful in our mission."

That mission is to fill the needs and requirements of USJFCOM, whether it's supporting exercises and contingencies or providing staff support to combatant commanders. Reservists work throughout USJFCOM in a variety of areas, from exercise planning and training to operations, communications and much more.

Many of the Reservists prefer the flexible work schedule the command offers rather than a strict one-weekend-a-month, two-weeks-a-year schedule, though there are mandatory drills in May and November.

New medal recognizes involvement in combat operations

To honor Airmen involved in combat operations, both on the ground and in the air, the Air Force has created a new medal.

The Air Force Combat Action Medal will be awarded for the first time this month. After the ceremony, the Air Force will begin processing additional applications for the award.

"We are a war-fighting Air Force," said Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. T. Michael Moseley. "Our Airmen are doing amazing things in combat operations every single day, both within their core competencies as Airmen, delivering those effects from the air, and now on the surface as part of the joint fight."

Prior to development of the medal, the Air Force didn't have a way to recognize Airmen for their involvement in combat operations, said Gen. Roger A. Brady, deputy chief of staff for manpower and personnel. The AFCAM solves this problem and provides appropriate recognition, he said.

To develop criteria for the award and to get a better understanding of what Airmen were looking for in combat recognition, the Air Force consulted with combat-experienced Airmen.

"We gathered feedback from Airmen; active duty, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve members who've been in combat (in the air and on the ground) — some who've received combat recognition from other services and some who haven't," said Maj. Randall Smith, chief of the Air Force Uniforms and Recognition Branch.

In order for an Airman to wear the AFCAM, a narrative



Air Force Combat Action Medal and Ribbon

explanation of the person's involvement in combat activities must be submitted by someone with first-hand knowledge of the incident. The application will be processed through the chain of command and eventually approved or disapproved by the commander of Air Force forces.

The AFCAM is for Airmen who have directly participated in active combat, either in the air or on the ground, as part of their official duty.

Airmen serving as C-130 crew members providing support to coalition forces or Airmen serving as convoy escorts who take fire, for instance, would be eligible to apply for the award.

The AFCAM will be the highest-level Air Force individual award to not earn points under the Weighted Airmen Promotion System, Major Smith said.

Airman will wear the AFCAM on the mess dress uniform. The ribbon for the AFCAM can be worn on the blue or service dress uniform. These uniforms are usually worn for ceremonies or other duties where it is appropriate to highlight individual achievements. There will be no patch or badge equivalent for wear on the utility uniforms worn for daily duties and deployments; the emphasis in these cases is better placed on the mission and the team, above self.

Airmen can apply for the award to recognize participation in combat activities dating back as far as Sept. 11, 2001. ★

(Information for this story taken from an article written by Staff Sgt. C. Todd Lopez, Air Force Print News, Washington, D.C.)

Pope's Puns



CARTOON BY MASTER SGT. W.C. POPE, WESTOVER AIR RESERVE BASE, MASS.

"Being flexible and working on some weekdays with our active-duty counterparts allows for a successful interface between the active and reserve components here," said Maj. Heidi Heinlein, a 953rd RSPTS member. "It's great to be part of an ongoing day-to-day mission and to feel like you are an integral part of the mission accomplishment."

Reservists have a lot to offer their active-duty counterparts, said Maj. Gen. William Rajczak, deputy director for the Joint Requirements and Integration Directorate at USJFCOM and the senior Air Force Reservist, currently recalled to active duty.

"Reservists bring a very varied and broad civilian skill set that active-duty members don't have available to them," General Rajczak said. "Reservists are doing civilian jobs that enhance their military skills and can provide wisdom, direction and training to their active-duty counterparts."

On the flip side, Reservists can derive a great amount of benefit from broad exposure to joint operations, General Rajczak said. Reserve duty in the joint world is almost entirely operational and involves very little training compared to a unit job. That means a Reservist's participation will be greater and more background work will have to be done individually to be ready to go and to benefit from an operational experience, he said.

For information on job opportunities, contact Lt. Col. Ed Wagon at 757-836-6797. (Maj. Lynelle Clark, Joint Public Affairs Support Element-Reserve, Norfolk, Va.)

Reserve Doubles Enlisted Promotion Cycle

Enlisted Air Force Reservists now have a better opportunity to move up in rank.

Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, Air Force Reserve Command commander, approved changing the promotion cycle from every other month to monthly. The change took effect Jan. 1.

"This is truly a 'good-news' story for our enlisted force," said Chief Master Sgt. Jackson Winsett, command chief master sergeant for AFRC. Chief Winsett retired in February, replaced by Chief Master Sgt. Troy McIntosh.

The change was made to align the

enlisted promotion process with the Air Force's Future Total Force concept and facilitate implementation of the Personnel Services Delivery and Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System.

General Bradley also approved a change that will allow retraining senior airmen and below to be promoted before completing their retraining and awarded a three level in their retraining Air Force specialty code.

"We're fortunate to have a commander who wants his enlisted force to be given every opportunity to succeed, and these actions support his desire," Chief Winsett said.

Air Force Instruction 36-2502, Airman Promotion Program, has more information about enlisted promotions. (Staff Sgt. Paul Flipse, AFRC public affairs, Robins AFB, Ga.)

Dover Group Reorganizes for New C-17 Mission

The 512th Maintenance Group at Dover Air Force Base, Del., is reorganizing to accommodate the C-17 Globemaster III mission and align itself

with a structure similar to the rest of the Air Force.

A ceremony Feb. 4 marked the end of a 30-year run of Dover's sole C-5 mission and the beginning of a new era as the base prepares for the arrival this summer of its first C-17. Eventually, Dover will receive a total of 13 C-17s.

Previously, the 512th MXG consisted of an aircraft maintenance squadron, equipment maintenance squadron, component maintenance squadron and maintenance operations flight. The group works side by side with its active-duty counterpart, the 436th MXG, to maintain the C-5.

The reorganization inactivated the 512th CMS, redesignated the 512th EMS as the 512th Maintenance Squadron and activated the 712th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, which will assume the C-17 maintenance mission.

The component maintenance squadron people and mission transferred to the newly named 512th MXS. Half of the people from the 512th AMXS, which fixes and repairs C-5s, were reassigned to the 712th.

The active-duty's 436th MXG inactivated its component maintenance squadron and merged it into its mainte-

nance squadron in June 2005. It will stand up a C-17 maintenance squadron, the 736th AMXS, this spring.

"Each aircraft in our U.S. Air Force's inventory requires highly skilled and disciplined men and women to fly them, to maintain them and to provide a wide variety of critical support to accomplish the mission," said Col. Willie W. Cooper II, 512th MXG commander.

The ceremony was a bittersweet moment for at least one maintainer. Senior Master Sgt. Donald Kimball, a C-5 mechanic and flight chief with the 512th AMXS, was one of 85 people who transferred from the C-5 maintenance unit to the newly activated 712th AMXS.

"The C-17 is the future of the Air Force, but all I know is the C-5," said Sergeant Kimball, who has been working on the C-5 since 1978. "It's an exciting change for the base. For the Airmen who get to work on them (the C-17s), it's going to broaden their careers, and they'll gain some valuable knowledge."

Staff Sgt. Kevin Flowers, a C-5 mechanic for eight years, recently completed a six-week C-17 technical school at Charleston AFB, S.C. He said he's enthusiastic about the new mission.

"I like change and look forward to it," Sergeant Flowers said. "There's a lot of new stuff to learn, and to be able to work on the C-17 and be part of a new squadron is a great opportunity." (1st Lt. Marnee A.C. Losurdo, 512th AW public affairs office, Dover AFB)

944th FW Bids Farewell to its Last Three F-16s

Members of the 944th Fighter Wing at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., bid farewell to the organization's last three F-16 Fighting Falcons Feb. 14.

The aircraft, which were part of the 302nd Fighter Squadron, were reassigned to other locations as a result of the latest Base Realignment and Closure Commission recommendations.

Two of the jets went to Nellis AFB, Nev., where they will become part of the aggressor squadron. The third jet went to Hill AFB, Utah, where it is undergoing maintenance before moving on to its new home with the Air National Guard in Tucson, Ariz.

Master Sgt. Bob Rydzynski, a 944th

Airmen deploying for AEF 7 and 8 cycle first to receive new battle uniform

Airmen who have deployment requirements as part of aerospace expeditionary forces 7 and 8 cycle will receive the new Airman battle uniform in the March/April timeframe.

Distribution of the new ABU will include active-duty Airmen as well as members of the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard.

Most Airmen will receive two ABU sets and two desert combat uniform sets for their deployment. The exceptions will be battlefield Airmen with Air Force specialty codes for combat rescue, special tactics, pararescue jumper, combat control and tactical air control; members of the special operations weather team; battlefield weather Airmen; and explosive ordnance disposal members, who will each receive four ABU sets.

Air Force Reserve locations identified in AEF 7 and 8 include Beale Air Force Base, Calif.; Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Carswell Field, Texas; Grissom Air Reserve Base, Ind.; Homestead ARB, Fla.; Keesler AFB, Miss.; Luke AFB, Ariz.; Selfridge Air National Guard Base, Mich.; and Youngstown-Warren Air Reserve Station, Ohio.

The next ABU distribution cycle will be with AEF 9 and 10 and is expected to begin in the July/August timeframe. In November and December, ABU distribution is expected for Airmen in AEF 1 and 2. Distribution will continue in 2008 with AEF 3 and 4 in March and April and AEF 5 and 6 in July and August.

Air Force officials said ABUs will be issued at the individual equipment uniform function at bases with AEF requirements.

The mandatory wear date for the ABU is October 2011. However, by June of this year, officials said, the uniform is expected to be available for purchase at Army and Air Force Exchange Service military clothing sales stores worldwide.

The uniform, pants and coat will cost about \$81. Additional items, such as socks, T-shirts, belts and ABU-style hats, will also need to be purchased. Airmen are authorized to wear DCU-style boots



The new Airman battle uniform boasts 236 different options in both male and female sizes.

with the ABU until the newly designed green boots become readily available. The green boots are priced at \$100.

Clothing allowances for enlisted Airmen will increase to accommodate increased expenses beginning in October.

The ABU boasts 236 different options in both male and female sizes. Additionally, its permanent press finish means the uniform cannot be starched, pressed or dry-cleaned. Airmen will be able to pull the ABU from the clothes dryer and wear it without further treatment. Any ironing could degrade the effectiveness of the uniform. ★

(Information for this story taken from an Air Force message, Initial Airman Battle Uniform (ABU) Wear and Distribution, dated Dec. 4, and an Air Force Print News article, "Battle uniform available to deploying Airmen this spring.")

Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, worked on the F-16s ever since they arrived at Luke from the factory in 1987.

"Today is an emotional day," Sergeant Rydzynski said. "On one hand, I have a great feeling of pride seeing my jet fly, but at the same time, I know it's not coming back."

The 302nd FW, which traces its roots to the Tuskegee Airmen, will be inactivated at Luke AFB but will return to Air Force Reserve Command when it stands up as an F-22 associate unit at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska.

The 944th FW will continue its mission of training F-16 pilots. (Staff Sgt. Susan Stout, 944th FW public affairs, Luke AFB)

Dobbins Wing Increases Training Opportunities

A new flight training device at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga., is expected to significantly increase training opportunities and reduce training shortfalls for Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard C-130-H2 pilots.

The Eastern Regional Flight Simulator facility at Dobbins serves as the Guard and Reserve's only C-130-H2 schoolhouse. Until arrival of the new flight training device, students were completing all of their simulator training on the facility's more advanced weapons system trainer. The situation created serious scheduling problems, which resulted in some refresher training being waived.

With the addition of the new training device, "we now have the potential to train twice as many students," said Lt. Col. Kevin Gootee, chief of training for the 94th Operations Support Squadron at Dobbins.

"Now that we're moving half of the weapons system training over to the flight training device, Air Force Reserve Command and Air National Guard crews will be able to conduct more of the annual refresher training, reducing the amount of training shortfalls we've had in the past," said Lt. Col. Michael Matthews, 94th OSS operations officer.

Getting the flight training device online was the culmination of years of hard work by a team of Air Force members and contractors at Dobbins and Randolph Air Force Base, Texas.

With no windows and no capability for movement, the device is a perfect environment for conducting flight instrument training. Two large computer towers send flight data into the pilots, where it is displayed on numerous gauges. The computers also record the pilots' reactions to the data for later review.

It's Your Money

By Lt. Col. Ralph Lunt

'Am I OK?'

I recently attended the Reserve Officers Association mid-winter conference in Washington D.C., where "young" was under 50, and the money question I was asked most often was, "So, what do you think? Am I going to be OK?" Being a highly experienced professional financial planner, my definitive answer was, "It depends."

When it comes to money, everything depends on your perspective and your objective. My point? The folks I met at the ROA convention didn't ask me for an investment tip or whether or not they should be in the Thrift Savings Plan. They were all over that. What the "I'll be 60 in a few years crowd" really wanted to know was, "Will I be able to pay my bills, take a vacation, buy that Harley my wife always wanted and shower my grandchildren with birthday presents once I stop working?"

Pitching a tent in Florida costs about \$400 a week. Hanging out at the Marriott Doral Golf Resort and Spa will set you back about \$4,000. The Harley motorcycle, about \$25,000. A Harley T-shirt, \$20.

These types of decisions are all part of that wants vs. needs arm wrestling exercise we have when we look at something like retirement that costs "a lot."

Planning for retirement is tricky business. The time to start is yesterday, but today is better than never! No one has too much money in retirement. Many people don't have enough.

This is my 15th year in the financial planning business, and I'll tell you this. No matter whose fault it is, not having enough income/money in retirement stinks. What do you do about it?

Here's how my wife and I have gone about it. We sat on our patio and talked about our vision of a "comfortable retirement" and how much that would cost in today's dollars, before inflation. Then we talked about our expected "defined benefit" income — in other words, money from our pensions and Social Security. We both agreed that we would not include Social Security as an income source.

Using this information, we identified a monthly income shortfall, in the thousands, to be filled by income from our different investments: TSP, 401(k), individual retirement account and mutual funds. I proceeded to bore her with such things as historical rates of return and market risk/fluctuation. Then I crunched the numbers.

How much we save, where we save it and when we can retire are all based upon this discussion. We review this information every year or so, knowing that we'll retire not necessarily when we reach a certain age, but when we're "OK."

What about you? Are you OK? ★

(Editor's note: This feature is designed to provide financial advice of a general nature. Individuals should conduct their own research and consult a financial adviser before making any financial decisions. Based in Cleveland, Ohio, Colonel Lunt is the reserve forces director for the Great Lakes region of the Civil Air Patrol advisers program. He is also a certified financial planner and vice president of a financial planning and consulting firm.)



Ideally, students are introduced to concepts during a panel-and-instrument session in the flight training device before moving over to the full-motion, full-visibility weapons system trainer to reinforce those concepts.

Having two functional training devices at Dobbins is important because the Air Force is moving away from conducting training missions in actual aircraft to simulator training, Colonel Gootee said.

"It's virtual, but it moves so perfectly with what you are doing that you get caught up in it," he said. "It's safer and more cost effective to train in a simulator. We can simulate fires, loss of engines and other emergencies without putting the crew in danger." (Senior Airman Micah Garbarino, 94th Airlift Wing public affairs, Dobbins ARB)

Alamo Wing Steps Up C-5 Schoolhouse Operations

The Air Force Reserve's 433rd Airlift Wing at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, gained two new squadrons Feb. 6. The wing is home to the Air Force's C-5 Galaxy schoolhouse.

At a formal ceremony, the 356th Airlift Squadron and 733rd Training Squadron joined the Alamo Wing. The wing, which flies from adjacent Kelly Field, is now the service's C-5 formal training unit.

The two units started operating at the base in November, and Air Force officials activated them Jan. 6. They operated as detachments while they built up their capabilities.

The C-5 schoolhouse, which used to be at Altus AFB, Okla., is in session even as workers put the finishing touches on several buildings, according to a wing spokesperson.

"What we want to build here is a true C-5 Galaxy University, to match and exceed the standard (set at Altus)," said Col. Del Lewis, 433rd Operations Group commander.

The airlift squadron once trained C-141 Starlifter aircrews at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. The Air Force reactivated the unit, which transferred its unit flag and patch to the Alamo Wing. At Lackland, the unit is responsible for conducting several C-5 training courses.

Currently, students and instructors use a flight simulator housed in another building. However, wing officials are installing a new C-5 full-motion simula-

tor. Once that equipment is up and running, available training time will double, the spokesperson said. (Master Sgt. Collen McGee, 433rd AW public affairs)

Videographer Receives Purple Heart

A videographer assigned to the 4th Combat Camera Squadron, March Air Reserve Base, Calif., received a Purple Heart Feb. 11 for wounds she received from small arms fire.

Staff Sgt. Kathryn Robinson was shot once in the left forearm and on the tip of her right thumb while on a mission with U.S. and Iraqi army soldiers near Baqubah, Iraq.

She received field aid care and was soon transported in an armored fighting vehicle before being flown by helicopter to the Air Force theater hospital at Balad Air Base. Once there, she underwent surgery and partial amputation of her right thumb.

Within an hour of waking up after the surgery, she received the medal.

Sergeant Robinson had been deployed to Iraq since Jan. 18, documenting the joint operations involving the U.S. military transition teams and the Iraqi army. ★

Keesler's Flying Jennies receive final C-130J-30

By Airman First Class Tabitha Spinks

A crew from Air Force Reserve Command's 815th Airlift Squadron delivered the squadron's final C-130J-30 aircraft to Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., Jan. 9 after accepting it from the manufacturer at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga.

Maj. Gen. Hanford "Rusty" J. Moen Jr. piloted the aircraft from Georgia to Mississippi. General Moen is the director of intelligence, air, space and information operations at Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command, Robins AFB, Ga.

Delivery of the aircraft was the last step in the unit's conversion to the J-model. The conversion began Oct. 12, 1999.

The 815th AS, also known as the Flying Jennies, has been instrumental in getting the J-model qualified for combat. The unit has participated in testing and evaluation of this new weapon system since 1998.

Most recently, unit Reservists deployed to Central and South America to assist U.S. Southern Command with drug interdiction efforts. In the past, they have deployed an aircraft and aircrews to Southwest Asia in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

Their participation in the Air Force's first combat deployment of the new C-130J-30, a "stretched" version of the aircraft, proved it can travel faster, farther and higher than older



The 815th Airlift Squadron's final C-130J-30 aircraft arrives at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., Jan. 9, marking the last step in the unit's conversion to the J-model.

Hercules while carrying more troops and equipment.

In addition to eight C-130J-30s, the squadron's 403rd Wing also flies 10 WC-130J's. ★

(Airman Spinks is assigned to the 403rd Wing public affairs office at Keesler AFB.)

New DOD Policy

Mobilization changes not expected to have impact on AFRC

By Master Sgt. Chance C. Babin

Changes to the Pentagon's mobilization policy for members of the reserve components aren't likely to have much impact on Air Force Reserve Command's day-to-day operations, according to senior personnel management officials.

On Jan. 11, Department of Defense officials announced several changes designed to make deployments more predictable for members of the guard and reserve and their families. The new policies only apply in situations where there are insufficient numbers of volunteers and involuntary activations are necessary. Since the Air Force Reserve meets the vast majority of its operational requirements using volunteers, which means involuntary activations are not needed, the changes should not have much of an effect on AFRC.

"As long as there are sufficient volunteers, this policy will have minimum impact," said David Holly, chief of the Personnel Readiness Operations Branch at AFRC headquarters, Robins Air Force Base, Ga. "However, even though the impact may not be great, we still have to plan as if the changes could impact us later down the road. We plan to implement the instructions we've received from the secretary of defense. If we don't have to use them, so much the better."

Although the new policies apply to all of the reserve components, Air Force officials said their main purpose is to give the Army better access to its Reserve and National Guard troops.

"Most of what you read about in the newspapers regarding issues with the guard and reserve do not relate to us," said Lt. Gen. Roger A. Brady, Air Force deputy chief of staff for manpower and personnel. "First of all, on any given day, we have twice as many people who are volunteers as people who are mobilized. So it's not much of an issue for us."

Reservists fit into the Air Force's air expeditionary force structure for deployments, typically performing 120-day rota-

tions, although some tours are for 179 or 365 days. Some locations even allow the 120-day tour to be split. These reasonably short tours are one of the reasons AFRC hasn't had a problem getting volunteers. The biggest change to the mobilization policy involves the amount of time people can be called to active duty. Prior to the Jan. 11 DOD announcement, the policy, which was established after the terrorist attacks on 9/11, was members of the reserve components could not be called up to active duty for more than 24 months cumulatively during any single declared emergency, such as the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The new policy eliminates the 24-month limitation during an emergency. The new standard is to involuntarily activate members of the reserve components one year out of every six. Pentagon officials acknowledge that this is only a goal and that call-ups may be more frequent to meet mission requirements. The 12-month activation period does not include any spin-up training time or leave.

"People will only be mobilized for 12 months at one time," Mr. Holly said. "Once that's done, they are going into what is being called a 'dwell time' — a period covering five years when they are not to be mobilized."

One of the provisions of the policy states the needs of the services will take precedence over this policy.

"If an individual's AFSC (Air Force specialty code) is critically needed to fulfill mission requirements, then that person could be recalled within the five-year dwell time," Mr. Holly said.

Activation of someone during the dwell time is not going to be done on a whim, Mr. Holly said.

"It must be fully justified and approved at the highest level," he said.

At the Jan. 11 press conference, Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said he recognized that today's global demands will require a number of select guard and reserve units to be remobi-

lized sooner than this standard.

"Our intention is that such exceptions be temporary," Secretary Gates said.

In the event a unit is required to extend a deployment beyond 12 months, the Department of Defense is planning to compensate the people who are affected.

Secretary Gates said a program will be put in place to "compensate individuals in both active and reserve components who are required to mobilize or deploy early or extend beyond the established rotation policy goals."

"Right now we have not seen the final compensation package," Mr. Holly said.

Another change in the policy calls for members of the reserve components to be mobilized as part of a unit rather than on an individual basis.

"This change will allow us to achieve greater unit cohesion and predictability in how reserve units train and deploy," Secretary Gates said.

Air Force Reservists are already used to this mobilization strategy.

"In the past, we have mobilized IMAs (individual mobilization augmentees) as individuals, but unit personnel have mobilized as UTCs (unit type codes)," Mr. Holly said. UTCs are packages or groupings of people organized to provide a specific combat capability. "We would expect unit mobilization will apply to other services, and we will continue, with approval of the secretary of defense, to mobilize based on UTCs."

Although this new policy will not immediately impact a great number of Reservists, there will be some who will be affected by the change. For these people, Mr. Holly pointed out some advantages.

"I think the positive side to this policy is people will have an understanding of when they will be mobilized for future operations," Mr. Holly said. "They know that unless there is an emergency situation, they have five years when they won't be mobilized again, so they can do things like family planning with much more confidence and certainty." ★

Flexible Participation

By Senior Airman Erik Hofmeyer

(Editor's note: This is the third in a series of seven articles on the Air Force Reserve's new vision document, "One Air Force, Same Fight ... An Unrivaled Wingman." The subject of this article is Flexible Participation, one of the six aimpoints contained in the vision document that are designed to establish markers to gauge the direction the Reserve is headed in the future. It is these aimpoints that make members of the Air Force Reserve unrivaled wingmen.)

The scope and nature of America's 21st-century global responsibilities and security challenges require Air Force Reservists to execute operational war-fighting missions on a day-to-day basis alongside their regular Air Force and Air National Guard counterparts.

Maintaining an effective presence across the full spectrum of Air Force operations requires organizational and participation flexibility. Flexibility in organization and participation is a hallmark of Reserve service. It is one of the major reasons the Air Force Reserve can continue meeting the myriad of requirements and missions it supports in today's high operations-tempo environment. It enables the Reserve to be an unrivaled wingman.

Participation flexibility is important not only at the command level but also at the unit level. A Reservist may desire or need to transition from one form of Reserve participation to another to accommodate his or her availability, civilian job changes or professional development opportunities in the course of a career.

By maintaining flexibility to match the way Airmen can serve, the Reserve maximizes the number of trained people it can bring to the fight, said Col. Gary Crone, chief of the Air Force Reserve Strategy Division at the Pentagon and chief vision architect.

One unit taking full advantage of its flexible participation

options to maintain readiness and get the mission accomplished is the 711th Special Operations Squadron, part of the 919th Special Operations Wing, at Duke Field, Fla.

"It's really important to know your people and make sure their needs are taken care of," said Lt. Col. Jon Weeks, 711th SOS commander. "If a guy can only fly on Fridays, we make that work."

This flexibility would not be possible without the full-time support personnel putting in the extra effort on top of mounting administrative challenges, Colonel Weeks said. And the wing's entire command staff keeps morale high and makes people want to come out through innovative training and scheduling, he said.

Lt. Col. Thomas Miller, 711th SOS operations officer, works out times and locations for training that are conducive to Reservists' schedules and strives to make training fun, whenever possible. For example, he turned squadron water survival training into a Saturday at the beach with family members.

"It's great for morale, and we get to spend time with our families," Colonel Miller said. "We also try to cram as much training as we can into temporary duty assignments and work with Reservists on different TDY lengths."

"You have to do whatever you can to make the three relationship areas — family, civilian career and Reservist obligations — work."

Colonel Weeks said the success the 711th has enjoyed in organizing participation options to maximize combat readiness is based on Reservists' passion for and focus on the special operations mission.

"The most important thing is to remain focused on the Global War on Terror," he said. "We can't allow distractions."

Volunteerism

Volunteerism is the hallmark of the Air Force Reserve. Reserve leadership, with the publication of the vision document and subsequent policies, has made volunteer participation the No. 1 option for meeting current and projected active-duty requirements.

"We will continue to meet our mission obligations through volunteers first," Colonel Crone said. "Involuntary mobilization will be a tool of last resort. We can do this because our members continue to volunteer to serve beyond their annual training requirements."

The Air Force Reserve leadership lauds the sustained level of voluntary participation above and beyond the minimum training required.

"In the future, you may see policies and legislation that will enhance the benefits and rewards for volunteering for additional active-duty time," Colonel Crone said. "Some of the barriers that have limited Reserve participation in the past have already been removed."

"For example, in the fiscal year 2005 defense budget, a change to the law requiring Reservists who were on active duty for more than 179 days to be counted against active duty end strength was revamped to allow up to three years of participation in a four-year period before end-strength numbers are impacted."

Organizational Flexibility

Going hand in hand with flexible participation options is organizational flexibility.

"When we refer to the Air Force Reserve as having organizational flexibility, we are referring to the way the command is allowed to present its forces to meet mission requirements," Colonel Crone said.

"In the Air Force Reserve, we have a variety of organizational constructs that allow us to maximize capabilities resident in both the regular Air Force and Reserve components," he said. "These include Reserve units that own their equipment (unit equipped); associate units, where the regular component owns the iron and the Reserve provides crews to operate and maintain the equipment and a higher ops tempo than could normally be achieved by one unit alone; and units where the reserve component owns the iron and the regular component provides the increased crews. We are also looking at 'Reserve associate' unit constructs, where one reserve component owns the iron and another reserve component provides the additional crews."

"The bottom line is that since the Air Force Reserve shares the same Title 10 missions as the regular component, the Reserve and regular component are able to organize and act as a unified operational force — bringing maximum war-fighting capabilities to the Air Force and its joint partners."

The Air Force Reserve also provides the regular component with increased flexibility through the individual mobilization augmentee program.

"IMAs provide a trained and ready resource to meet a variety of Air Force and joint war-fighter requirements and extend the organizational flexibility of the Air Force Reserve by matching requirements at an individual level," Colonel Crone said. "These Reservists are attached directly to a regular component unit or command staff and train to meet that unit's mission requirements when mobilized. Like many of their Reserve unit counterparts, they also volunteer to serve beyond their annual participation requirements."

The Air Force continues to look for ways to expand participation options and maximize the number of volunteer Airmen it brings to the fight. For example, Colonel Crone said, the Air Force Reserve is developing avenues for increased active-duty participation within the Individual Ready Reserve.

"Traditionally, the IRR consisted primarily of individuals with service obligations who were not required to train or be active in the Reserve," he said. "The IRR is a subcomponent of the Ready Reserve and consists of individuals who can perform active duty in support of operational requirements but who are not assigned to a validated and funded billet and are not required to perform active duty for training. We are actively seeking ways to leverage some of these folks who want to participate in order to maximize the support the Air Force Reserve

brings to the Air Force and its joint partners.

"As we move forward with executing and implementing General Bradley's (Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, AFRC commander), vision for the Air Force Reserve, it is the flexibility in how we organize that will ensure we continue to bring the optimum level of expertise and participation to the fight."

★
(Airman Hofmeyer is a traditional Reservist assigned to the 919th SOW public affairs office at Duke Field. He wrote this article while on special assignment with Citizen Airman.)



Reserve and PACAF teaming up for groundbreaking F-22 unit in Alaska

Ready for the Raptor

By Bo Joyner

Officials from Pacific Air Forces and Air Force Reserve Command are working together to establish PACAF's first F-22 Raptor unit at Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska — a groundbreaking Total Force organization designed to maximize the capabilities of the Air Force's newest fighter aircraft.

The first of 36 operational F-22 aircraft is expected to be delivered to Elmendorf in August, ushering in a new era of Total Force Integration within the fighter community.

"Total Force Integration is definitely the wave of the future," said Lt. Col. Mike Popovich, AFRC's F-22 integration team leader, "and we are partnering with PACAF to make TFI a reality at Elmendorf."

F-22s, like the ones shown here, will soon be coming to Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, where they will be flown and maintained by a Total Force team of Reservists and active-duty Airmen.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LOCKHEED MARTIN



PHOTO COURTESY OF LOCKHEED MARTIN

Lockheed Martin rolls out the first combat-capable F-22 Raptor stealth fighter destined for operations in the Pacific theater. It will be assigned to Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska.

The base will be home to two active-duty Raptor units — the 90th and 525th Fighter Squadrons — as well as a Reserve associate squadron, the 302nd FS. Under the associate relationship, PACAF's 3rd Wing at Elmendorf will have operational direction of all Reservists, while AFRC will maintain administrative control.

"This is not the traditional stand-alone associate squadron; it will be a classic associate with a high level of functional integration," Colonel Popovich said. "Our pilots and maintainers will be integrated with the active-duty unit, working side by side with their active-duty counterparts. There will be situations where active-duty members may supervise Reservists and where Reservists may supervise active-duty members. The combination of Reserve and active duty here will be as seamless as possible."

In years to come, PACAF will be pushing the F-22 TFI envelope even further at Hickam AFB, Hawaii, where the Air

National Guard's 199th FS will fly the Raptor, and the active-duty 531st FS will be an associate squadron to it.

"I'm looking forward to leveraging all three components of our Total Force — active duty, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve — to squeeze every ounce of capability out of these great fighters," said Gen. Paul V. Hester, PACAF commander, in a recent Air Force Print News story. "Our Total Force is critical in today's challenging environments, and I couldn't be more pleased that all three elements are going to be fully engaged in the Raptor business."

Maj. Brian Silkey, picked to be AFRC's first operational F-22 pilot, is scheduled to begin Raptor training at Tyndall AFB, Fla., this month. He will be assigned to Elmendorf's 302nd FS when it stands up in October. The command's first F-22 pilot, Maj. Randy Cason, is assigned to the 43rd Fighter Training Squadron at Tyndall, where he is an instructor pilot.

Eventually, the 302nd will be home to

18 F-22 pilots — eight air reserve technicians and 10 traditional Reservists. The Reserve's 477th Maintenance Squadron at Elmendorf will comprise about 265 maintainers — about 100 ARTs and 165 traditional Reservists. Counting support personnel, the Reserve's 477th Fighter Group at Elmendorf will eventually be home to about 425 people.

"At full strength, Reservists will make up 25 percent of the F-22 operations and maintenance manpower at Elmendorf," Colonel Popovich said.

Reserve pilots will train at Tyndall and possibly flow through Langley AFB, Va., home of two F-22 squadrons assigned to the 1st Fighter Wing. Maintenance training is planned to take place primarily at Elmendorf. The Reserve is funding the building of three new facilities on the base — a Reserve squadron operations facility, an aircraft maintenance squadron facility and a group headquarters building.

Three members of the Reserve team are already in place in Alaska. Lt. Col.

Hubie Hegtvedt is commander of the Reserve's F-22 program integration office; Lt. Col. Michael Wood is the maintenance officer in charge; and Chief Master Sgt. Wade Shaw is the maintenance superintendent.

In addition, Col. Eric Overturf has been announced as the first commander of the 477th FG and is working tactical-level command, planning and execution issues with the 3rd WG headquarters at Elmendorf, and Col. Stephen Moore is in charge of operational planning and implementation at AFRC's 10th Air Force headquarters, Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Carswell Field, Texas.

Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, AFRC commander, has said on several occasions that the F-22 integration program at Elmendorf is one of the command's top priorities. He personally interviewed all of the key players on the Reserve F-22 team and is working in close conjunction with top PACAF leaders to ensure the program is a success.

"We're looking forward to being a part of this Total Force endeavor at Elmendorf," General Bradley said.

While PACAF's first Raptor has yet to be delivered to Elmendorf, the F-22 made a strong first impression in Alaska last year during Northern Edge 2006, a two-week joint service exercise.

"Throughout the exercise, we were able to see just how effective this jet can be integrating with multiple joint assets for a number of different missions," said

Lt. Col. Wade Tolliver, commander of the 27th FS at Langley. The 27th FS deployed 12 Raptors, 18 pilots and 174 maintainers to Elmendorf for the exercise.

Code One, an airpower magazine produced by Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Co. — manufacturer of the F-22 — reported that the aerial victory record for the Raptor in the first week of the exercise alone was an incredible 144-0. In addition, working with ground-based forward air controllers, the F-22s dropped 26 Joint Direct Attack Munitions, and all 26 were direct hits. The exercise marked the first time Raptor pilots had dropped munitions while working with forward air controllers in a close air support role.

"The F-22 is an incredible fighter," Colonel Popovich said. "It can't be matched by any known fighter in the world, and it makes all of our legacy aircraft more effective."

The Raptor has the ability to integrate with Air Force legacy aircraft such as the A-10, F-16 and F-15 through datalink.

"It takes all that technology, sucks in all that data from the battlefield, and passes that data to other legacy systems that do not have the stealth characteristics and do not have supercruise characteristics," General Hester said. "It positions them better, alerts them to danger better. ... and allows them to be more successful on the battlefield."

"And as it does those things for legacy systems inside the Air Force, it does those same things for legacy systems in

other parts of our services, in our Harriers, in our F-18s and in the airplanes other services fly."

Supercruise is a term that refers to the capability of an aircraft to fly faster than the speed of sound without the use of afterburners. In addition to this capability, the Raptor has a radar signature the size of a small bird. In combat, the F-22 excels at both air-to-air and air-to-ground combat and is capable of performing the two missions at the same time better and faster than any of the current Air Force legacy platforms.

Langley received the last of its 40 F-22s in January, 20 months after receiving its first Raptor. In February, Raptors from the Virginia base deployed under the air expeditionary force cycle for the first time. Elmendorf will be the second base to receive operational Raptors; however, some of the F-22 aircraft will flow through Langley as the 3rd WG prepares for F-22 operations.

"Through a concept known as Ready Elmendorf, Alaska's aircraft and pilots will initially operate at Langley Air Force Base and take advantage of the 1st Fighter Wing's F-22 operations and maintenance experience," said Lt. Col. Robert J. Craven, chief of PACAF's F-22 Program Integration Office, in an Air Force Print News story. Once Elmendorf's F-22s begin the transfer from Langley to Alaska, the PACAF pilots and maintainers will transfer as well. ★



SENIOR AIRMAN AUSTIN KNOX

F-22 Raptors sit on the ramp at Langley Air Force Base, Va. Under a concept known as Ready Elmendorf, Alaska's aircraft and pilots will initially operate at Langley to take advantage of the 1st Fighter Wing's operations and maintenance experience.

Tech. Sgt. Doug Miles, a loadmaster with the 39th Rescue Squadron, Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., searches the Gulf of Mexico for a life raft during the maritime rescue portion of SAREX '07.

TECH. SGT. ROB GRANDE

Rescue Without Borders

Florida Reservists partner with Canadian counterparts to improve joint training

By Master Sgt. Chance C. Babin

In today's military, joint operations are more than a possibility; they are a fact of life. And if Air Force Reservists are going to successfully work side by side with members of their sister services and coalition forces to fight the Global War on Terror, they're going to have to take advantage of opportunities to train together.

The people of the 39th Rescue Squadron at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., understand this reality and have forged a relationship with the Royal Canadian air force's 435th Transportation and Rescue Squadron to conduct joint training operations twice a year: once in Florida and once in Canada.

The most recent training event, dubbed SAREX '07, took place in Key West, Fla., January 4-7 and included 63 Reservists and 18 Canadians. The 39th RQS is scheduled to visit Calgary, Alberta, in May. The key theme during every training session is to train hard while still forming a sense of camaraderie.

"I think esprit de corps and camaraderie are the most important ingredients in the cohesion of any fighting unit," said Lt. Col. Dan Byers, HC-130 P/N navigator and SAREX '07 coordinator. "Units that have a high degree of camaraderie function better at the local training level and then do so in the theater, which is ultimately why we train."

The SAREX training that takes place in Florida is primarily maritime in nature, while the training in Canada, which takes place in the summer, focuses on search and rescue in a mountainous environment.

"We started this in the summer of 2004," Colonel Byers said. "We sort of stumbled onto the 435th. We went on an exercise with them and forged a good relationship that continues today. We are doing more with less these days, and joint operations are becoming a focus. We are able to get good ideas and learn



Pilot Maj. Doug Nemschick, co-pilot Lt. Col. Mike Egan and flight engineer Tech. Sgt. Paul Randel, all assigned to the 39th RQS, have all eyes on the water. During the maritime rescue exercise, they searched a 320-nautical-mile area to find survivors of a simulated aircraft accident.

TECH. SGT. ROB GRANDE

Pararescuemen from Patrick's 308th RQS and search and rescue technicians from the 435th Transportation and Rescue Squadron, Royal Canadian air force, take part in a joint high-altitude jump over Cape Canaveral Air Station, Fla.



MASTER SGT. CHANCE C. BABIN

different techniques from one another while forming unit cohesion."

"The training goes a long way toward improving the relationship between the two countries," said Maj. Jean Bernier, 435th TRS search and rescue operations officer. "In addition, it gives us an opportunity to learn from each other."

After flying a mission with the 39th RQS, Major Bernier said it's amazing to see the minor differences between the two units and how they accomplish the mission.

"In the end, you have the same goal, and the job gets done," he said. "The exchange that goes on is great."

January's training in Florida was broken down into two parts: a maritime rescue and a rodeo-style skills competition.

For the maritime rescue scenario, two Air Force fighters were involved in a mid-air collision during air-to-air operations. Both pilots ejected successfully, but no contact had been made with either one since they ejected from their aircraft.

"We launched three HC-130s to find and recover the two pilots," Colonel Byers said. "They were each in a one-man life raft but had no signaling device. We gave the HC-130s a 320-nautical-mile search area to find the survivors."

Additionally, two boats helped coordinate the search. Once the rafts were found, the crews deployed survival kits and other equipment to the survivors.

For the skills competition, the three HC-130 crews left Key West Naval Air Station for Cape Canaveral Air Station to perform multiple high-altitude jumps with Canadian search and rescue technicians called SARTECHs and Air Force Reserve pararescuemen or PJs. Additionally, the crews competed in



Loadmasters from the 39th RQS prepare to drop an MA-1 survival kit during the maritime rescue scenario.

TECH. SGT. ROB GRANDE

skills competitions to include landing and airdrop accuracy.

"Each year we raise the bar," Colonel Byers said. "The scenarios become more difficult; therefore, the skill level needed is increased for the crews to meet the challenge."

Colonel Byers said the exercise was 100 percent successful, and all events went off as planned.

When all the points were tallied, the 435th TRS won the skills competition.

For Major Bernier, this was his first SAREX in Florida, but if it's up to him, it won't be his last.

"I loved the experience here," he said. "We definitely need to carry on the exchange." ★

(Sergeant Babin is assigned to the 920th RQW public affairs office at Patrick AFB.)

Lt. Col. Clay Griswold from the 39th RQS judges a spot landing by a 435th Transportation and Rescue Squadron crew. In addition to landing accuracy, the crews competed in airdrop accuracy.



TECH. SGT. ROB GRANDE

Pararescuemen from the 304th Rescue Squadron, Portland International Airport, Ore., team up with members of Portland's Special Emergency Reaction Team during a joint exercise in the Columbia River. Over the next year or so, the Reserve's presence at Portland will dwindle from nearly 1,100 Airmen to about 100, all members of the rescue squadron.

The Last 100



RUBY ZARZYCZNY

PJs survive closure to continue presence in Portland

By Master Sgt. Chance C. Babin

For the last 50 years, the Air Force has maintained a rescue presence in Portland, Ore. That streak was in serious jeopardy for members of the 304th Rescue Squadron during the most recent Base Realignment and Closure actions.

The BRAC commission targeted the squadron's host unit, the 939th Air Refueling Wing, for closure. However, the 304th managed to survive. Over the next year or so, the Reserve's presence at Portland will dwindle from nearly 1,100 Airmen to about 100, all members of the rescue squadron.

It appears that the 304th is destined to remain in Portland. The BRAC closure marked the second time in three years that the rescue Airmen had managed to survive a drastic change. In 2003, the 939th, then a rescue wing, converted to KC-135 tanker aircraft and became an air refueling wing. Though the wing changed missions, the 304th RQS remained in place, becoming a part of the 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla.

"It's very much like a family, especial-

ly since rescue folks have been here since 1957," said Chief Master Sgt. Richard Konopka, 304th RQS chief enlisted manager. "So, the closure is very hard on everyone. All the people in finance, the military personnel flight and the clinic are the same friends we've always had, so it's very difficult losing them."

Even positive events for the 304th RQS, like moving into a new building, come with negative consequences.

"Coming here to our new building (a facility previously used for maintenance) was difficult. It's like we're vultures," said Master Sgt. Patrick Tillmann, NCO in charge of aircrew life support. "I told my guys to be very polite. They've been very supportive of us."

"These people are our friends. They're going away, moving their families, and we're staying. We still have a mission and are busy while they're here without aircraft."

Although the 939th ARW is going away, some members were able to secure positions within the 304th.

"We've been able to pick up a few peo-

ple from the support side of the house, and that's a good thing," Chief Konopka said. "It was like rescuing our own family from what was going on across the street."

While the BRAC commission decided Portland could do without a refueling mission, the rescue mission was deemed more essential. The decision to keep this mission in Portland was based, in large part, on the unit's level of experienced pararescuemen, also known as PJs. The unit has approximately 50 pararescuemen, 11 combat rescue officers and 48 support people.

"For the Air Force (as a whole) we provide the largest pool of seven-level trained PJs — period," Chief Konopka said. "This is a very good recruiting area for the type of people who are motivated to be in rescue. Currently, we have the highest percentage of new recruits in pararescue in Air Force Reserve Command."

By the time a PJ gets through all the training to attain his three-level, Chief Konopka said, it takes an average of 30 months.

In addition to being highly trained,

members of the 304th RQS have a lot of very important deployment experience, having spent time in Kosovo, the Horn of Africa, Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, they deployed in support of relief efforts after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

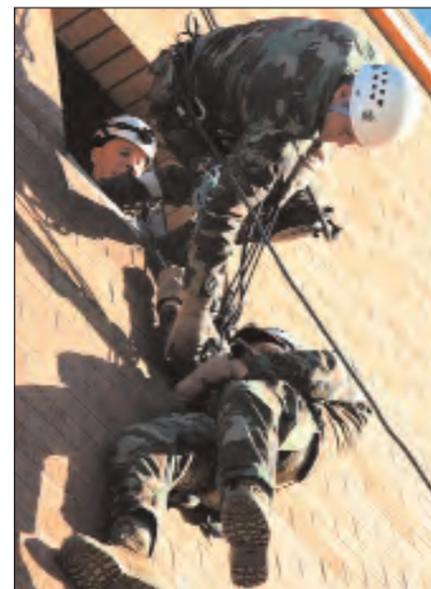
"We have a tremendous amount of wartime, deployment, and civilian search and rescue experience," said Capt. Chris Bernard, 304th RQS combat rescue officer.

In addition to a valuable pool of trained resources and a good recruiting base, another advantage of maintaining a rescue presence in Portland is the availability of various training environments within a few hours of the base.

"The area here is conducive to training," Captain Bernard said. "All major environments are represented here in Oregon. Within two hours you can be at the ocean, major rivers, forests, mountains, glaciers or the desert. You have any environment you want in which to train."

With the upcoming departure of the 939th ARW, finding a way to continue supporting the 304th is a priority.

"As the 939th goes away, our concern is that the Reservists who stay get the adequate support they need," said Lt. Col. Paul Dechirico, performance manager with the 920th RQW at Patrick AFB. "The good news is that we have some breathing room because the 939th is not leaving right away."



RUBY ZARZYCZNY

Senior Master Sgt. Jim Eddings, 304th RQS pararescueman, rappels down a four-story tower to transfer fellow pararescueman Senior Master Sgt. David Armstrong to his rope system as part of a recent training exercise.

Command accelerates wing realignment

A second reduction in force at Portland International Airport, Ore., will accelerate the closure of the Air Force Reserve's 939th Air Refueling Wing.

The RIF, which moves up the scheduled closure of the wing from September 2010 to June 2008, allows about 244 traditional Reservists, 47 air reserve technicians and 48 civilian employees to evaluate incentive benefits and use job placement support now.

ARTs are civilian civil service employees who also serve in the Air Force Reserve as Reservists.

"Our goal is to speed up this transition so we can take better care of our people," said Maj. Gen. Allan R. Poulin, AFRC vice commander, Robins Air Force Base, Ga. "We're working to help all our Reservists and civilians transition to new jobs as our Air Force is going through many significant changes in the next few years. The 939th Air Refueling Wing has an outstanding performance record but is being realigned so the Air Force can consolidate to be more efficient and effective."

In 2006, the 939th relocated all eight of its KC-135 refueling aircraft, sending four to March Air Reserve Base, Calif., and the other four to Tinker AFB, Okla. The move was directed by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission in November 2005.

The Reserve will continue to operate the 304th Rescue Squadron at the Portland airport. The reduction of Reserve people at Portland is expected to be offset by growth in the Oregon Air National Guard mission.

"Air Force Reservists and civilians assigned to the unit will be eligible for full-time personnel benefits under civil service placement programs," said Steve Mann, AFRC director of manpower and personnel, Robins AFB. "The Portland Reservists may now enter the AFRC clearinghouse database to help them find new federal jobs. Also, some people may volunteer for special early retirement programs or separation pay options."

Reservists and civil servants can learn more about the job-placement clearinghouse and other special separation programs by accessing the following Web site from a military computer: <https://wwwmil.a1.afrc.af.mil/brac>. This virtual job fair takes into account personal career and location preferences and works to match displaced people with new opportunities. ★

(Air Force Reserve Command News Service)

Colonel Dechirico was part of a site activation task force that studied the future manpower needs required for the 304th RQS. He said AFRC is working closely with the host Air National Guard unit at Portland to provide many of the support requirements.

"As things begin to go away, such as support functions, it just gets a little bit more difficult, but it's not insurmountable by any stretch of the imagination. It's just the new reality," Chief Konopka said. "We have good relationships with other assets, both locally and regionally."

"We have no problem getting Air Force Reserve or Guard aircraft in here," Captain Bernard said. "They like to come up and train here. We also train with the Army and Coast Guard. By doing so, they get to sign off on some of their training. This (the BRAC closure) has actually forced us to become more

focused on joint operations.

"One of the advantages working with our sister agencies is taking some of the good things they have to offer and implementing them to what we do," the captain said. "I know working with the Coast Guard, those guys are the experts at water rescue. So we've definitely learned some good things from them and adapted them to our training."

While current members of the squadron are going to have to adapt to being the Reserve's lone presence at Portland, this situation is really nothing new in the big scheme of things.

"We were a geographically separated unit from 1957 until 1985," Chief Konopka said. "So, in a sense, we are going back to our roots." ★

(Sergeant Babin is a traditional Reservist assigned to the 920th RQW public affairs office at Patrick AFB.)

Bringing 'Em Home

Reserve crews carry patients to their local care facility

Story and photos by Lt. Col. Jerry Lobb

Since September 2006, Air Force Reserve nurses and medical technicians, usually flying on Air Force Reserve Command aircraft with AFRC flight crews, have assumed primary responsibility for transporting wounded, injured and ill service members from overseas back to the states.

Operating from three hubs — Andrews Air Force Base, Md.; Scott AFB, Ill.; and Travis AFB, Calif. — members of the 775th Expeditionary Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron care for service members transported to medical facilities near their home or permanent duty station.

"The 775th stood up Sept. 21, and we started flying missions that day," said the unit's commander, Col. Allen Gilbar. An

active-duty unit, the 375th AES Provisional, handled the duties prior to September when AFRC took over responsibility for the mission and the unit was redesignated.

The provisional squadron stood up in March 2003 at the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The 775th is aligned under the 375th Operations Group and is headquartered at Scott AFB, with one detachment at Andrews AFB and another at Travis.

"We are providing the patients we're transporting the best care available anywhere with some of the best nurses, medical technicians and support staff our nation has to offer," said Colonel Gilbar, who hails from the 445th Airlift Wing at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. "The over-

all experience level of our nurses and medical technicians is very high. Many of our nurses have 20-plus years of experience. Some were working in high-level trauma centers the week before reporting to us. Their attitudes are fantastic since they volunteered and are doing a job they very much wanted to do."

Performing this mission with volunteers is in keeping with the command's new vision.

"As General Bradley (Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, AFRC commander) says, 'We are no longer a strategic reserve; we are now an operational command, filling our requirements with volunteerism instead of mobilization,'" Colonel Gilbar said. "This operation supports that concept. We are staffing an active-duty squadron on a rota-

tional basis, with one active-duty crew assigned to us. The benefits of Reserve management of the squadron and mission are that we provide the flexibility and predictability to make things work for Reservists and their civilian employers."

Approximately 80 people are assigned to the 775th. About 75 of those are Reservists, representing units from across the command, including the 315th AW, Charleston AFB, S.C.; 439th AW, Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass.; 514th AW, McGuire AFB, N.J.; 908th AW, Maxwell AFB, Ala.; 445th AW, Wright-Patterson; 433rd AW, Lackland AFB, Texas; and 349th AW, Travis AFB. The volunteers are on duty for a year, rotating every 60 days between Andrews, Scott or Travis and their home units.

Many of the same units also support the mission with aircraft and crews. One such person is Maj. Ron Baumgardner, a navigator with the 908th AW's 357th Airlift Squadron.

"There is no better feeling than flying medevac and humanitarian missions that directly impact my fellow compatriots in a positive manner," Major Baumgardner said.

Maj. Kim Coleman, a flight nurse with the 908th AW, was one of several people who voiced similar sentiments.

"I left active duty after 8 1/2 years to get back into aeromedical evacuation because there is not a better, more satisfying job in the Air Force," she said.

Another 908th AW flight nurse, Lt. Col. Sharon Andrews, also said she finds her position rewarding, enough so that she commutes more than 700 miles each Reserve weekend from her home in Illinois to perform her Reserve duties at Maxwell AFB.

"I feel a real sense of purpose in my mission as an aeromedical technician," said 908th AW member Master Sgt. Tom Haney. "What greater honor is there than taking care of our heroes and bringing them home?"

Maj. John Crotty, officer in charge of the 775th EAES detachment at Andrews AFB, explained that the aeromedical crews were formed to create the best blend of clinical and aircrew experience.

"Each crew is a mix of people from different units, with different primary aircraft, C-17s or C-130s, so no matter which platform they fly on, they have at least one



Capt. Richard Foote, a flight nurse with the 908th Airlift Wing at Maxwell AFB, Ala., gets a high five from Army Pvt. Amber Zeunen during her flight home aboard a C-130. Private Zeunen was injured while serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Since September, Captain Foote and other Reservists have been assisting with transporting wounded and injured service members from Andrews AFB to medical facilities near their home or permanent duty station.

expert on that system," Major Crotty said. "At first, the crews from each of the bases wanted to fly together and resisted the 'NFL draft' as they called our system of making crew assignments. However, as the first group entered into their second 60-day rotation, they wanted to fly with their 'drafted' crews. They've learned a lot from each other as to how things are done at Maxwell, Westover, Charleston, etc., and they can take that fusion of experience back to their home stations."

Approximately 60 percent of the Air Force's aeromedical evacuation capability resides within AFRC, command officials said. The Air National Guard provides about 35 percent, and the remaining 5 percent comes from the active-duty force. This setup was determined to be the most cost-effective method of offering wartime capability with minimum peacetime cost. ★

(Colonel Lobb is chief of public affairs for the 908th AW at Maxwell AFB.)



Army Spec. Lorne Rizzoto celebrates arriving in his home state of North Carolina with Master Sgt. Debra Leddy, an aeromedical technician who cared for him during a flight from Andrews Air Force Base Md., to Pope AFB N.C. Rizzoto became ill while deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom. Sergeant Leddy is a Reservist currently serving with the 775th Expeditionary Aeromedical Staging Squadron at Andrews. She is assigned to the 514th Airlift Wing at McGuire AFB, N.J.

Recovering from Injury

Progressive training plans help prepare for fitness test

By Lt. Col. (Dr.) Ashley B. Benjamin

The annual fitness test is looming; however, recent injuries or illness may have hampered your training. If you are unsure how to best prepare for the upcoming assessment this spring, here are two regimens to get you through with minimal discomfort. The key is steady, slow progress from walking to running just fast enough to pass the test without reinjuring yourself.

Program 1

This routine is built around two running sessions a week, preferably on a track. Although more varied terrains are an option, a track is less hazardous than trails or other uneven surfaces and softer than concrete, which should help prevent reinjury. In addition, training on a track will allow you to mentally prepare for the six-lap foray this spring. If a track is not available, find an asphalt path or a very even grass area.

The goal is to intersperse some easy jogging with walking while building up endurance to cover the 1.5-mile distance. The value of this method is it prevents you from running too hard. In addition, the walking breaks provide a short physical and psychological respite, as fears of reinjury can be very real.

This program can be expanded if you have more time or you need longer to adapt to each stage. If you have less than six weeks, eliminate weeks prior to the last week. Physiologic adaptation from any training takes a minimum of three weeks. If you want to do a third workout a week, attempt a cross-training session such as biking or swimming, as two running workouts are enough to help you without the risk of reinjury.

Air Force Fitness Test Training

	Jog	Walk	Continue
Week 1	50 meter	50 meter	4 laps or 1 mile
Alternate Plan	15 seconds	15 seconds	1 mile or 16 minutes
Week 2	100 meter	100 meter	4 laps or 1 mile
Alternate Plan	30 seconds	30 seconds	1 mile or 16 minutes
Week 3	150 meter	50 meter	4 laps or 1 mile
Alternate Plan	45 seconds	15 seconds	4 laps or 1 mile
Week 4	150 meter	50 meter	5 laps or 1.25 miles
Alternate Plan	45 seconds	15 seconds	5 laps or 1.25 miles
Week 5	150 meter	50 meter	6 laps or 1.5 miles
Alternate Plan	45 seconds	15 seconds	6 laps or 1.5 miles
Week 6	Workout 1: Run 1 mile at 10 seconds faster pace than goal pace for 1.5 miles Workout 2: 1.5-mile fitness run test		

Step-Wise Running Guide

	Walk	Run	Repetitions	Total Time
Step 1	5 minutes	1 minute	5 times	30 minutes
Step 2	4 minutes	2 minutes	5 times	30 minutes
Step 3	3 minutes	3 minutes	5 times	30 minutes
Step 4	2 minutes	4 minutes	5 times	30 minutes
Step 5	1 minute	5 minutes	5 times	30 minutes
Step 6	Run every other day with a goal of 30 straight minutes. When you are able to run for 30 straight minutes, you can start increasing your speed.			

* After you accomplish the numbers in a step, advance to the next step for your next exercise bout.
 * If you cannot complete the running minutes during a step, drop back to the numbers in the previous step for the rest of the workout.
 * This program pulls you forward and will reward your efforts each time out.

Also, options for distance, measured in meters, or time have been provided (see chart below) for flexibility or personal preference. Using yards instead of meters will work just fine. If you don't have any good markings, remember that one-half of a straightaway or a curve on the track is about 55 yards or 50 meters.

Program 2

An alternate training regimen, the "Step-Wise Running Guide," is available for those who can fit 30 minutes of aerobic exercise into a single session. Developed by orthopedist and fitness expert Lt. Col. (Dr.) Daniel Kulund, this six-step guide (see the above chart) has successfully helped thousands of people regain a baseline level of aerobic fitness without injury.

As always, obtain clearance from your primary care physician or your specialist prior to initiating a fitness program. You should be able to walk 15 to 20 minutes and jog without discomfort prior to starting. Thus, the bottom line is you should be injury free. ★

(Dr. Benjamin is an individual mobilization augmentee assigned to the 72nd Medical Group at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla. In civilian life, the doctor serves as a staff psychiatrist at the Oklahoma City Veterans Affairs Medical Center and a clinical assistant professor with the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. Also, he served as a

Changing Times

Personnel center transforming customer-service methods

By Master Sgt. William Huntington

"The times, they are a-changing" may say it best for the Air Reserve Personnel Center, based in Denver, as it implements a massive effort to overhaul the way the organization delivers or provides personnel services to its customers worldwide.

Department of Defense and Air Force leadership mandated the change to centralize personnel functions through Web-based applications. Their bottom line was to have the Web replace most in-person contacts with a Military Personnel Flight and thereby realize the advantages of accuracy, expanded capability and cost savings.

According to ARPC figures, 10 percent of personnel transactions now occur online with 5 percent of transactions handled by phone and 85 percent handled face to face at unit MPF customer service desks. The goal is to nearly reverse those figures with 85 percent of the services being conducted online, 10 percent by phone and five percent in person.

"It's a way of re-thinking the manner in which Air Force members receive their personnel services," said Senior Master Sgt. Cesar Ortiz, 442nd Military Personnel Flight superintendent.

The most visible and utilitarian means to accomplish the personnel service delivery goals, the virtual Personnel Center-Guard and Reserve portal, known as vPC-GR, is slowly but surely taking on a life of its own.

With the first capability brought to life in March 2006, vPC-GR (<https://arpc.afrc.af.mil/vPC-GR/>) is being rolled out in phases with each successive phase adding more capability to the system.

In vPC-GR's first months, Reservists could correct duty history online. As the system matured in capability, members could, among other things, find out and correct current points, obtain a 20-year letter re-issue, choose a Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan and sign up for Tricare Reserve Select.

An awards and decoration request page is the latest feature added to the site, and, on the horizon, functions for separations, re-enlistments, promotions, retraining and more are slated to be added.

"It's an evolving process," said Tech. Sgt. J.C. Woodring, ARPC public affairs. "It never (remains static) because we are always trying to make it easier for the users."

Help, if needed, is available. Sergeant Woodring encourages users to review the site as it is a convenient, first-line tool for solving problems.

The human element has not been removed from the system, and members experiencing difficulties can call the vPC-GR Contact Center at (880) 525-0102 or DSN 926-6528 from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. (MST) Monday through Friday and 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

(MST) on the first Saturday and Sunday of each month to talk with customer service counselors.

According to Sergeant Woodring, members shouldn't worry about their inquiries getting lost if the matter can't be quickly resolved as the information received at the Contact Center goes into a database that can be accessed by all of the center's counselors.

"(All of the representatives) should know what steps have been taken to try to resolve the problem," Sergeant Woodring said of the

database. "They'll also be able to see the status of an unresolved issue."

Another step in the PSD process is transferring records to an electronic format and scanning the Unit Personnel Records Group. It's a process that began for active-duty Airmen in October and is slated to start for Guard and Reserve members in April 2008.

Sergeant Woodring said that while the process of converting the records is substantial, it is being done with an eye toward accuracy.

"It's not going to happen overnight," he said. "The records section scans in the records and then looks at them to see if they are correct before certifying that they are now an electronic version."

At the end of the electronic transition, vPC-GR will be merged into the Defense Military Integrated Human Resource System, which, according to Sergeant Woodring, will eventually centralize all pay and personnel issues. ★

(Sergeant Huntington is assigned to the 442nd FW public affairs office at Whiteman AFB.)



One of the services currently available on the Air Reserve Personnel Center's virtual Personnel Center-Guard and Reserve portal is the electronic processing of requests for awards and decorations.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MAJ. DAVE KURIE

KEEPING CURRENT

A maintenance crew awaits as Col. Randy Falcon, commander of the 482nd Fighter Wing, Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., (left) chats with Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, commander of Air Force Reserve Command, prior to General Bradley's recent F-16 training flight at Homestead. A command pilot with 6,900 flight hours, including 337 combat missions, General Bradley still conducts periodic proficiency flights to remain current in this weapon system. (Master Sgt. Chance C. Babin)

