

Citizen AIRMAN

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Air Force Reserve



T R I C A R E

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AIRMEN AT WAR

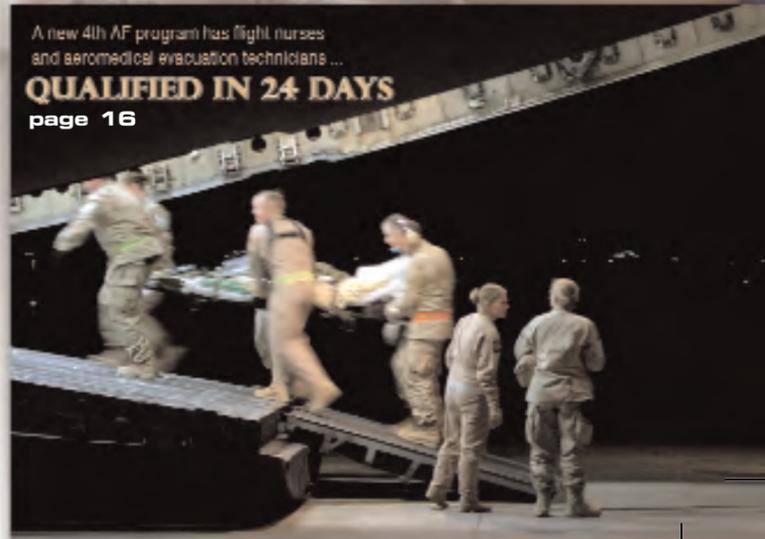
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A new 4th AF program has flight nurses
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QUALIFIED IN 24 DAYS

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From the Top

By Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr.
Commander, Air Force Reserve Command



Chief's View

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

Success of Air Force Reserve built on foundation of volunteerism

My overarching objective is to create and maintain an environment conducive to volunteerism. Volunteerism is the foundation of our Air Force Reserve. It gives Reservists flexibility over the time, place and duration of their service. It allows Reservists to balance their commitments to family, employers and the Air Force.

In particular, I would like to focus on the relationship between employer and Reservist and the influence this relationship exerts on the Reservist's willingness to volunteer. Nurtured properly, this relationship can become a powerful enabler. If ignored, it can be a decisive roadblock.

Reservists and employers alike must be aware of the importance volunteerism plays not only in the success of our efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, but in the continuing success of the entire Reserve enterprise. Senior leaders play an important role in improving awareness — they routinely speak to gatherings of Reservists and community leaders at forums such as commanders' calls, chamber of commerce meetings, open house events, air shows and boss days.

Each of these is an opportunity to not only thank Reservists for their hard work, but also to stress to both Reservists and employers the importance of volunteerism to the Air Force Reserve way of doing business.

I also would like to call attention to a couple of important organizations designed to help strengthen the relationship between Reservist and employer: the Small Business Administration and Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. Both offer programs geared to increase employer support for volunteerism and help employers cope with the absence of key workers when their Reservists are deployed.

The Small Business Administration recently updated the Military Reserve Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program. Through this program, the SBA offers direct, low-interest loans to Reservists who own a small business and to small businesses that employ Reservists when these Reservists are ordered to active duty during a period of military conflict.

If a small business can reasonably demonstrate that it will suffer economic injury in the absence of a Reservist, then the business is eligible to receive a low-interest loan. This could mean the difference between keeping and losing a business while that key Reservist is deployed.

Additionally, the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is a key organization that fosters volunteerism. ESGR accomplishes its important mission through a network of outreach committees that gain and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support through its various awards programs, increasing awareness of the law and resolving conflicts through mediation.

ESGR is able to reach out to employers through a database of information supplied by Reservists. Reservists can facilitate this process by completing or updating the Civilian Employer Information record directed by Department of Defense policy. Reservists can also thank their employers for their support by submitting them for one of the various ESGR recognition awards.

I urge you to read the expanded article on Page 18 that explains these SBA and ESGR programs in greater detail. Your awareness of these programs can lead to a greater understanding between you and your employer, improve your relationship, and help gain your employer's critical support for you in your role as a defender of our nation. ★

RESERVISTS AND EMPLOYERS ALIKE MUST BE AWARE OF THE IMPORTANCE VOLUNTEERISM PLAYS NOT ONLY IN THE SUCCESS OF OUR EFFORTS IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN, BUT IN THE CONTINUING SUCCESS OF THE ENTIRE RESERVE ENTERPRISE.

Thank you for your service and dedication to this great nation

It's hard to believe another year has passed! Our accomplishments have been many, and more are on the horizon. You have stepped up and volunteered for longer temporary duty assignments at home station and the area of responsibility, and for that I'm thankful.

I'm proud of you and your service to our country. You are the epitome of this great land and inspire young Americans to follow in your footsteps. Each time I visit your wings, I'm left in awe. Your sense of dedication to the mission and balance of family and employment are nothing short of brilliant.

The coming year will prove to be one of many changes: changes in the political realm, changes in budgets and end strengths, changes in requirements, and changes in force development. All of these changes will affect us both personally and professionally.

But with all change comes growth. Some will find areas of new beginnings, and others will find themselves at the end.

Yes, we will ask for more. And, yes, you will deliver as you have done so faithfully in the past!

There is one thing I can guarantee you. I'm here for you and will do whatever it takes to ensure you have the tools to train and be ready for any job we give you.

Time is a scarce commodity, and the days of doing more with less are not over. We are always looking for ways to ensure you have more time for core Air Force specialty code training through seasoning training and better ways to perform ancillary training.

But this is not a letter of promise or a recap of the year. Instead, it's just a note to say thank you for what you have done and will continue to do in the future. As always, it's truly a pleasure and honor to serve as your command chief. ★



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Which Way is Up?

Ed Hamill flies the Air Force Reserve biplane upside down over the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. An Air Force Reserve lieutenant colonel who serves as an instructor pilot with the 944th Fighter Wing, Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., Colonel Hamill performs at air shows around the country, highlighting the history of air show flying while promoting the Air Force Reserve. (Photo courtesy of Ed Hamill)

On the front cover: (Top) With Tricare being one of the most important benefits available to Air Force Reservists and their immediate family members, it's important to understand how the system works and to keep up with frequent program changes. For the latest Tricare information, see the story on Page 12. (Bottom left) Air Force Reserve historians are taking part in a project to compile a comprehensive study of the Air Force's efforts in the Global War on Terrorism. See the story on page 20. (Bottom right) A new training program developed by 4th Air Force is greatly reducing the amount of time it takes nurses and technicians to become qualified as basic aeromedical evacuation air crew members. See story, Page 16.

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Gas and Go

A C-17A Globemaster III receives fuel from a KC-135R Stratotanker during a recent aerial refueling mission over the Southwest United States. Both aircraft are from the 452nd Air Mobility Wing, March Air Reserve Base, Calif., and were taking part in a media flight during the Air Force Week celebration in Los Angeles. (Master Sgt. Rick Sforza)

Round the Reserve

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

Yellow Ribbon Program Helps Reservists, Families

Air Force Reservists in the 507th Air Refueling Wing at Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., who return from long deployments are finding the welcome mat waiting for them.

A congressional directive in the 2007 Defense Authorization Act mandated that the reserve components provide their members and families with additional deployment support and reintegration programs.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program seeks to minimize the stresses of military service, specifically when a Reservist deploys and the family faces separation. Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command officials have directed that all of the command's wings enact this program.

The concept of reintegration was perhaps most noticeable as an organized,

structured process during the last days of the Vietnam War. Thirty-five years ago, military receptions and programs helped former prisoners of war resume normal, professional, family and community activities with minimal physical and emotional complications.

While returning POWs received support, most combat veterans did not. Officials now know more about stresses associated with military life and combat on service members and their families.

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program places particular emphasis on preparing service members and their families for the stresses associated with separation and deployment, educating members and families about resources available to assist them, and connecting members to service providers before and during deployments. In addition, the program calls for conducting reintegration activities after demobilization or the end of a deployment for all members who are mobilized or deployed for 90

days or more. Members will receive appropriate pay and allowances for attending these deployment support and reintegration activities.

The 507th ARW kicked off its Yellow Ribbon Program during July's redeployment of members of the 507th Security Forces Squadron from Kirkuk, Iraq. Since their return, Reservists from other squadrons in the wing have been met upon their return.

"We've met every redeployer, so far," said Lt. Col. Bonnie Tremblett, 507th ARW performance planner. She said returning members are immediately entered into the reintegration program.

More than 80 Reservists attended the first 30-day reintegration session. The three-hour session featured representatives from the chaplains' office, legal office, medical group and Veterans Administration; officials from the wing Airman and Family Readiness Program; and members of the Tinker AFB mental health office. Discussions ranged from employer support

issues to recognizing behavior that may occur after exposure to combat or a combat-supported deployment.

"I thought the meeting was very informative," said Tech. Sgt. Derek Wilson, a communications specialist from the 507th Communications Flight. "There were a lot of issues I wasn't aware of." (Lt. Col. Rich Curry, 507th ARW public affairs)

Rescue Unit Exceeds 300 Afghanistan Saves

Air Force Reservists with the 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., have saved more than 300 U.S. troops since deploying to Afghanistan in February 2008.

The Air Force Reserve Command unit is flying HH-60 helicopter missions in support of the U.S. Army medical evacuation operation.

As of Dec. 22, Airmen from the wing and its sister units in Arizona and Oregon had flown 1,181 sorties and saved 313 people, according to a wing intelligence report.

A "save" refers to a situation where, without immediate medical evacuation, a person would die, lose a limb or go blind. In addition, wing Airmen had recorded 342 assists, which are defined as evacuations where life, limb or eyesight were not in immediate danger.

The wing's primary wartime job is combat search and rescue. CSAR missions involve locating and rescuing service members isolated in combat, such as pilots shot down behind enemy lines.

The wing's medical evacuation deployment, called a joint expeditionary tasking, marks the first time the 920th RQW has undertaken this particular role for the Army.

In addition to combat search and rescue, the wing also performs civil search and rescue missions, provides humanitarian relief, and supports all NASA space shuttle and rocket launches. (Tech. Sgt. Paul Flipse, 920th RQW public affairs)

Some Reservists Qualify for Travel Reimbursements

Certain Reservists who travel 150 miles or more from their homes to perform monthly drills may be eligible for round-trip travel reimbursements.

Pope's Puns



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

Qualifying Reservists include those displaced by base realignment and closure actions and programmatic changes or those serving in critical Air Force specialties. They could receive up to \$300 for each round trip taken after Aug. 14, 2008.

"Taking care of our Citizen Airmen is a top priority," said Earnest Sowell, Air Force Reserve Command Personnel Division deputy director. "With today's volatile economy, authorizing travel reimbursement for our drilling Reservists is an attempt to ease the burden of traveling extensive distances to serve their country."

A memorandum signed Aug. 14, 2008, by Assistant Secretary of the Air Force Craig W. Duehring established the Air Force policy for inactive duty training travel entitlements outside of normal commuting distance for eligible members.

Only Reservists who receive inactive duty for training drill pay are eligible for the pay under the following conditions:

- They are qualified in a skill designated as a critically manned career field. Officer career fields include, but are not limited to, rated operations staff officers (16G), civil engineers (32E) and clinical social workers (42S). Enlisted career fields include aviation resource management (1C0), operations intelligence (1N0) and safety (1S0).

- They are assigned to an Air Force Reserve unit with a critical manpower

shortage or in a pay grade with a critical manpower shortage. Officer career fields include operations commanders (10C), bomber pilots (11B), test pilots (11E) and fighter pilots (11F). Enlisted career fields include flight engineer (1A1), aircraft loadmaster (1A2), and airborne battle management (1A4).

- They are assigned to a unit or position that is disestablished or relocated as a result of BRAC or another force structure reallocation.

Under this policy, eligible Reservists can be reimbursed for all travel expenses for each round-trip travel up to \$300, not to exceed 12 IDT travel trips per calendar year.

Actual costs of lodging, transportation and meals may be reimbursed. Receipts are required for lodging expenses claimed and any expenses of \$75 or more.

Reservists serving on military personnel appropriation and Reserve personnel appropriation man-day tours are not eligible to be reimbursed for their expenses.

The legislation governing IDT travel reimbursement expires Dec. 31, 2010.

For more information, unit Reservists can contact their local Reserve military personnel flight. IMAs can contact their respective program manager or base individual mobilization augmentee administrator. Local Reserve finance

Have a Complimentary Summer Adventure on Us!

AFR/ANG Teens!
Are you between ages 15-18?

The 2009 Teen Summits are shaping up to be fantastic summer adventures! The mountains are majestic and the ocean is awesome - from white water rafting and high ropes adventures at Wahsega to sea kayaking and island exploring around Jekyll and more!

Join us! For information & application (Due by 6 April 2009):
July 13-17 @ Wahsega - July 27-31 @ Jekyll Island
www.georgia4h.org/AFRANGTeenSummit

SUMMIT
AIR FORCE RESERVE NATIONAL GUARD
Teen Leadership

offices also have information about the travel reimbursement. (Maj. Mikki Christina Gilloon, AFRC public affairs, Robins Air Force Base, Ga.)

Thrift Savings Plan Contribution Limits Increase

Civilian employees and military members who participate in the Thrift Savings Plan can put more money into their retirement investments thanks to an increase in the 2009 elective deferral limit for regular TSP contributions.

The new limit is \$16,500, up from \$15,500 for 2008.

In addition, contributions for the TSP catch-up plan increased to \$5,500, up from

the \$5,000 limit set for the last three years.

"TSP is a long-term retirement savings plan, which everyone should consider," said Fran Campbell, a human resources specialist at the Air Force Personnel Center at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas. "It's a great supplement to military and civilian retirement plans."

The plan gives investors the opportunity to lower their taxes each year they contribute. The taxes are deferred until the employee withdraws from the account after retirement.

"Investment money is deposited directly from each paycheck, so you never have to think about it. That makes it easy to 'pay yourself first' while only investing what you deem appropriate,"

Ms. Campbell said.

She also said that investing in TSP is not limited to just stocks.

"People can choose safer government securities or invest in the lifecycle funds," Ms. Campbell said.

Catch-up contributions are additional tax-deferred contributions and are separate from regular TSP contributions. For those who are eligible, catch-up contributions provide a way for individuals to secure their retirement if they began investing later in their careers.

To be eligible for catch-up contributions, civilian and military employees must be age 50 or older in the year in which the first deduction from pay occurs. They must also be in a pay status

and be able to certify they will make, or have made, the maximum "regular" employee contributions of \$16,500 to a TSP or other eligible account by the end of 2009. Other eligible accounts include uniformed services TSP accounts or other eligible employer plans, such as 401Ks. To be eligible, employees cannot be in the six-month, non-contribution period following a financial hardship in-service withdrawal.

Catch-up contributions automatically stop with the last pay date in the calendar year or when the maximum catch-up dollar limit for the year is reached, whichever comes first. Eligible employees must submit a new election for each year they wish to participate.

Regular TSP contributions stop when an employee's contributions reach the annual maximum limit and then automatically resume the next calendar year.

Additional information about TSP, both regular and catch-up, is available on the TSP Web site at <http://www.tsp.gov>. See "Summary of the Thrift Savings Plan" located under civilian or uniformed services TSP Forms and Publications. (Air Force Print News)

Web Network Aids Wounded Warriors, Families

The Departments of Defense, Labor and Veterans Affairs are collaborating on a new Web-based network of care coordinators, providers and support partners available to provide resources for wounded, ill and injured service members, veterans and their families, along with families of the fallen and those who support them.

Called the National Resource Directory, the network was launched Nov. 17 and is available at <http://www.nationalresourcedirectory.org>.

"The directory is the visible demonstration of our national will and commitment to make the journey from 'survive to thrive' a reality for those who have given so much," said Lynda C. Davis, deputy undersecretary of defense for military community and family policy. "As new links are added each day by providers and partners, coverage from coast to coast will grow even greater, ensuring that no part of that journey will ever be made alone."

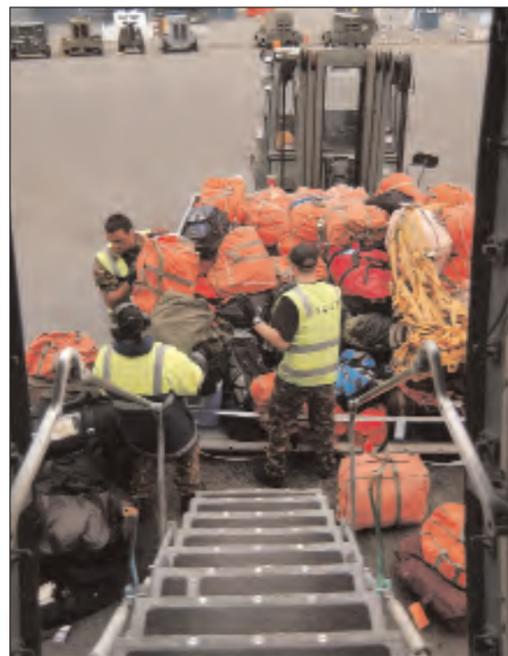
The directory offers more than 10,000 medical and non-medical services and resources to help service members and veterans achieve personal and professional goals along their journey from recovery through rehabilitation to community reintegration.

"The VA is extremely proud to be a partner in this innovative resource," said Dr. Karen S. Guice, executive director, federal recovery care coordination program at the Department of Veterans Affairs. "This combination of federal, state and community-based resources will serve as a tremendous asset for all service members, veterans, their families and those who care for them. The community is essential to the successful reintegration of our veterans, and these groups greatly enhance the directory's scope." (DOD news release) ★



COL. JEFFREY STEPHENSON

MCCHORD AIRMEN FUEL OPERATION DEEP FREEZE -- (Above) A C-17 Globemaster III from McChord Air Force Base, Wash., sits on the Pegasus ice runway Dec. 1 near McMurdo Station, Antarctica. Airmen from the Air Force Reserve's 446th Airlift Wing and regular Air Force's 62nd AW delivered 30 bundles of fuel and other supplies to a scientific camp in the Antarctic Gamburtsev Mountain Province, one of the most remote locations on Earth. Each year, from August through February, members of the National Science Foundation travel to Antarctica to conduct global climate research. The effort to provide logistical support for the research effort is called Operation Deep Freeze. "The success of this (resupply) mission was a full total force partnership," said Chief Master Sgt. James Masura of the 446th AW. "We combined experts from the active duty, Reserve, civilians, contractors, National Science Foundation and the New Zealand Defence Force. This small team worked extremely hard to ensure we put the cargo on the surface to ensure completion of this ground-breaking science project." In just three hours, Airmen delivered what would take days or weeks to accomplish through any other means, said Capt. Joe O'Rourke, a 7th Airlift Squadron pilot deployed to Operation Deep Freeze. (Right) Members of the New Zealand Defence Force prepare to load baggage on a C-17 prior to an Operation Deep Freeze mission.



STAFF SGT. ERIC BURKS

It's Your Money

By **Ralph Lunt**

How it happens ...

Psst. I heard about this investment guy. He's brilliant. My buddy invests with him and swears he's the real deal. Trick is you gotta know someone for him to take you on as a client. My buddy says he can get us in. Interested?

What do I know about him? What's to know, except that we'd be among the lucky ones if we could get him to invest our money for us. He's been managing money for years and kicking everyone's tail. Besides, lots of famous people invest with him, which means he's got to be good.

What do you mean it sounds too good to be true? Hello! That's why everybody invests with this guy! Due diligence? Are you asking if I researched his firm and performance? Hey, if you don't want in, that's fine. But I know a good deal when I see one. Besides, who says that only the rich and famous are entitled to the best investments? I'm all in!

Fellow warriors, if this scenario sounds familiar, it should. Essentially, it describes an unfortunate story still unfolding that involves allegations of a \$50 billion ponzi scheme. In this case, individuals and financial advisers gave an investment firm money thinking it would be managed by Mr. "Smarter Than Your Average Investment Guy."

Sadly, no money was ever invested. For 20 years, what wasn't stolen by the adviser was used to pay dividends and redemptions. Investors, courtesy of a laser printer and some imagination, got falsified statements indicating above-average investment performance. This scam worked great until the stock market mess of 2008.

No doubt, the bulk of the blame goes to the investment manager who lied and stole people's money. Next in line would be our financial services industry that continually tries to "manufacture" new products so complex nobody can really understand them. Finally, some of the blame goes to the investors who wanted something more, something special and something glamorous!

I can tell you this. I've been in the investment business for 16 years, and the most glamorous thing I've seen are the brochures! All together now: If it's too good to be true ... ★

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

TRICARE



What every Reservist needs to know

(Editor's note: Tricare is one of the most important benefits available to Air Force Reservists and their immediate family members, but understanding how the Tricare system works and keeping up with frequent program changes can be difficult. In fact, there's a notice on the Tricare Web page that reads, "It is important to remember that Tricare policies and benefits are governed by public law. Changes to Tricare programs are continually made as public law is amended. For the most recent information, contact your Tricare regional contractor." As Air Force Reserve Command's health benefits manager, Lt. Col. Alexander Alex keeps track of all the changes in the Tricare program and is constantly looking for ways to get the word out about Tricare to Reservists. Colonel Alex provided the information in this article to let Reservists know about some recent Tricare changes and remind them of some other basic Tricare information.)

A couple of Tricare program changes may have an impact on Air Force Reservists. One involves monthly premium rates for Tricare Reserve Select, and the other involves respite for caregivers of severely injured service members.

TRS Premiums Reduced

The Tricare Management Activity, the agency responsible for administering health benefits within the Department of Defense, has reduced the monthly premium rates for the Tricare Reserve Select benefit. The new rates, directed by the 2009 National Defense Authorization Act, became effective Jan. 1 and decrease from \$81 to \$47.51 for member-only coverage and from \$253 to \$180.17 for member-and-family coverage.

"This is an excellent time for select Reservists in both Category A and B to examine the benefits of TRS and evaluate if TRS is right for them," Colonel Alex said. "TRS may represent a lower-cost alternative to your existing health-coverage plan."

TRS, which is available to all drilling Reservists, offers Tricare Standard and Tricare Extra health coverage and carries an annual deductible and cost-share. For more information on TRS, Reservists should go to <https://wwwmil.sg.afrc.mil/SGS/tricare.htm> and click on the TRS link.

Respite for Caregivers

Tricare now offers primary caregivers of active-duty service

members much-needed rest, relief and reprieve thanks to section 1633 of the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act. The respite benefit specifically helps homebound active-duty service members who need frequent help from their primary caregiver. The benefit applies to Air Force Reservists who were severely injured while serving on active duty.

"Homebound" members are service members whose conditions or injuries make them unable to leave home without taxing effort. "Frequent" means that service members need more than two interventions during the eight-hour period each day the primary caregiver would normally be sleeping.

To provide the best possible help and respite for caregivers, this benefit provides a maximum of eight hours of respite per day, five days per week.

"What this benefit does is provide caregivers the opportunity to rest," said Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, deputy director of the Tricare Management Activity. "We know homebound patients have special needs that take a real toll on the caregiver. And, if a caregiver is overworked, the wounded, ill or injured service member may suffer physically or mentally.

"Tricare knows that life doesn't stop when a service member is injured. Most of the time, it just speeds up. Tricare wants to help the caregivers who help our service members. That's why this benefit is retroactive to Jan. 1, 2008, and has no cost-shares or co-pays."

Active-duty service members or their legal representatives can submit receipts for reimbursement of respite care services that were provided after Jan. 1, 2008, by a Tricare-authorized home health agency.

The reduction in monthly premium rates for Tricare Reserve Select and respite for caregivers of severely injured service members are two recent changes to Tricare. Following is some basic information about Tricare that every Reservist should know. This information is not all-inclusive. For more complete information, Reservists should contact their regional contractor or visit www.tricare.mil. Included in this article is a chart with contact information for all regional contractors.

Tricare choices for Reservists

Committed to helping sustain the health of National Guard and Reserve members and their families before, during and

Health and Dental Options During the Activation/Deactivation Cycle

Sponsor's Status	Potential Coverage	Coverage for You (Sponsor)	Coverage for Your Family Members
Not Activated (includes members on active duty orders for 30 days or less)	Line-of-Duty Care	Any injury, illness or disease incurred or aggravated in the line of duty is covered.	Line-of-duty care does not apply to family members.
	TRS (premium-based)	Qualified members may purchase TRS member-only or TRS member-and-family coverage during this period.	Family members are covered if you purchase TRS member-and-family coverage.
Delayed-Effective-Date Activation Orders Received)	TDP	You may purchase the TDP during this period. Note: Your enrollment in the TDP is separate from any family member enrollments.	Family members may purchase the TDP during this period at the National Guard and Reserve family member rate.
	Pre-Activation Benefit*	You may qualify for active duty health and dental benefits for up to 90 days before active duty begins. Your National Guard or Reserve personnel office will notify you of your eligibility.	If you qualify for pre-activation benefits, your eligible family members are also covered by pre-activation benefits.
Activated (on active duty orders for more than 30 consecutive days)	Health Coverage	When activated, you are covered by Tricare (without premiums) - the same as any other active duty service member. If enrolled in TRS at the time of activation, TRS is automatically terminated. Once you reach your final duty station, you will enroll in one of the Tricare Prime options (Tricare Prime, Tricare Prime Remote, Tricare Prime Overseas or Tricare Global Remote Overseas).	When you're activated, eligible family members are also covered by Tricare (without premiums). If enrolled in TRS at the time of activation, TRS coverage is terminated. Family members are automatically covered by Tricare Standard and Tricare Extra, but must enroll to be covered by a Tricare Prime option.
	Dental Coverage	When activated, you are covered by active duty dental benefits. You are automatically disenrolled from the TDP (if enrolled).	If already enrolled in the TDP, coverage continues at a reduced premium rate. Or, if not already enrolled, family members may purchase the TDP now at the reduced premium rate.
	Transitional Assistance Management Program (TAMP)*	Offers transitional Tricare coverage for 180 days with the same costs as active duty family members. You may enroll (or re-enroll) in Tricare Prime, if available, or use Tricare Standard and Tricare Extra. Note: Tricare Prime Remote is not available during the TAMP period.	Eligible family members are also covered during the TAMP period.
Deactivated (released from a period of activation)	Continued Health Care Benefit Program (CHCBP) (premium-based)	A temporary, premium-based health plan available for purchase by qualified members after Tricare coverage or TAMP ends, whichever is later. Provides up to 18 months of coverage.	Eligible family members are also eligible for CHCBP coverage.
	TRS (premium-based)	If you qualify, you may purchase TRS after active duty benefits or TAMP coverage ends. You must have your TRS Request Form (DD Form 2896-1) in the mail and postmarked within 60 days of the last day of your previous Tricare coverage (e.g., active duty benefits, TAMP), to receive continuous benefits.	If you purchase TRS member-and-family coverage, your family members are covered by TRS.
	TDP	If you were enrolled in the TDP before you were activated, you will be automatically re-enrolled upon deactivation.	Family members will remain enrolled in the TDP, but the premium rate will increase to the National Guard and Reserve family member rate. If not already enrolled, they can enroll.

* Active duty must be in support of a contingency operation to qualify for pre-activation or TAMP coverage. Examples of contingency operations include Operations Enduring Freedom, Noble Eagle and Iraqi Freedom.

after activation, Tricare offers two voluntary, premium-based plans for health and dental service:

• **Tricare Reserve Select** is available for purchase by qualified members of the Selected Reserve when they are not on active duty. TRS coverage is similar to Tricare Standard and Tricare Extra, and deductibles and cost-shares apply. For more information about qualifying for and purchasing TRS, visit www.tricare.mil/reserve/ReserveSelect.

• **Tricare Dental Program** is available when a Reservist is not covered by active-duty dental benefits. When a Reservist is activated, his or her family members already enrolled in the TDP pay reduced premiums. For more information about enrolling in the TDP, call United Concordia at 1-800-866-8499 or visit www.tricaredentalprogram.com.

To verify their eligibility for Tricare and determine if they qualify for coverage under TRS or the TDP, Reservists should visit the Guard and Reserve Web portal at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/trs/index.jsp>. Those who qualify may purchase TRS when they are not on active-duty orders. They may purchase the TDP for their family members at any time.

"Reservists need to know that registration in DEERS (the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System) is required before family members can become eligible for any Tricare coverage," Colonel Alex said. "Reservists should register all of their eligible family members in DEERS now so they are ready if they are activated."

To register in DEERS, Reservists should visit www.tricare.mil/deers; call 1-800-538-9552 Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. EST; or visit a uniformed services identification card-issuing facility. Registering in DEERS is not the same as enrolling in Tricare Prime, Tricare Reserve Select or the Tricare Dental Program.

A Reservist's coverage varies depending on his or her military status: not activated, activated or deactivated. The table on the previous page summarizes the changes Reservists and their family members can anticipate.

Tricare Provider Types

• **Tricare network providers** are Tricare-authorized civilian providers who have a contractual relationship with a regional contractor to provide services. Tricare network providers agree to accept a negotiated rate as the total charge for their services and to file claims for members. The cost for members is lower when they see a network provider.

• **Non-network providers** are Tricare-authorized civilian providers who have not established a contractual relationship with a regional contractor. Non-network providers may determine whether they are "participating" with Tricare or "nonparticipating" on a claim-by-claim basis. Prior to receiving care, members should ask whether or not the provider participates in Tricare.

Participating providers agree to accept the Tricare-allowable charge as the full fee for services rendered. They also agree to file Tricare claims on members' behalf.

Nonparticipating providers do not agree to accept the Tricare-allowable charge as payment in full or to file claims on members' behalf. They may charge up to 15 percent above the Tricare-allowable charge. Members are responsible for that amount in addition to any co-payments, cost-shares or deductibles.

• **Host-nation providers** are overseas providers. Members who live or travel overseas and see a host-nation provider must pay for services then file a claim with Tricare for reimbursement.

Tricare for Life

Tricare for Life serves as Medicare wraparound coverage for all Tricare beneficiaries entitled to Medicare Part A and who have Medicare Part B coverage. Beneficiaries entitled to premium-free Medicare Part A, regardless of their age, must have Medicare Part B coverage to remain eligible for Tricare benefits.

"To enroll in Medicare Part B, contact the Social Security Administration," Colonel Alex said. "Once you have Medicare Part A and Medicare Part B coverage and it is confirmed in DEERS, your DEERS record should show you as 'Tricare for Life-eligible.'"

Basically, here is how Tricare for Life and Medicare work in the United States and its territories: Providers bill Medicare first, and Medicare then forwards the claim to Tricare for Life for payment. The accompanying chart shows what Medicare pays and what Tricare pays.

"If you have other health insurance, Medicare forwards your claim to your other insurance. You must then file a paper claim with your Tricare for Life contractor," Colonel Alex said.

Medicare does not pay for services received overseas. For overseas care, Tricare is the primary payer, and the member is responsible for the Tricare Standard annual deductible and cost-shares, unless the member has other health insurance.

For more on Tricare for Life, visit www.tricare.mil/mybenefit and enter your profile, or refer to the Tricare for Life Handbook available at www.tricare.mil/tricaresmart. For Tricare for Life cost

How Tricare for Life and Medicare Work			
Type of Service	What Medicare Pays	What Tricare Pays	What You Pay
Covered by Tricare and Medicare	Medicare's authorized amount	Remaining amount	Nothing
Covered by Medicare but not Tricare	Medicare's authorized amount	Nothing	Medicare deductible and cost-share
Covered by Tricare but not Medicare	Nothing	Tricare's authorized amount	Medicare deductible and cost-share
Not covered by Tricare or Medicare	Nothing	Nothing	Total amount charged

details, visit www.tricare.mil/tricarecost and enter your profile.

Transitional Assistance Management Program

TAMP provides 180 days of transitional health-care benefits to help certain uniformed services members and their families transition to civilian life. National Guard or Reserve members separating from a period of active duty that was more than 30 consecutive days in support of a contingency operation may be covered for health benefits under TAMP.

For those who qualify, the 180-day TAMP period begins the day after their date of separation from active duty.

"When you become eligible for TAMP, you and your family members are covered under Tricare Standard and Tricare Extra," Colonel Alex said. "If you live overseas, you receive the

same coverage under Tricare Overseas Program Standard.

"Reservists who qualify for Tricare Reserve Select may purchase TRS after their TAMP coverage ends. Your TRS request form (DD Form 2896-1) must be postmarked or received by the regional contractor within 60 days of the last day of TAMP to maintain continuous Tricare benefits."

Colonel Alex believes it's important for all Reservists to stay current on the ever-changing Tricare program.

"What we've covered in this article is really just the tip of the iceberg," he said. "I would encourage Reservists to visit the Tricare Web page regularly and let me know if they have any questions or request guidance."

Colonel Alex's e-mail address is Alexander.Alex@afrc.af.mil. His phone number is DSN 497-0270. Colonel Alex's column, "From the Tricare Advisor," runs periodically in *Citizen Airman* magazine. ★

For Information and Assistance		
Tricare North Region Health Net Federal Services, LLC 1-877-TRICARE (1-877-874-2273) www.healthnetfederalservices.com	Tricare South Region Humana Military Healthcare Services, Inc. 1-800-444-5445 www.humana-military.com	Tricare West Region TriWest Healthcare Alliance Corp. 1-888-TRIWEST (1-888-874-9378) www.triwest.com
Tricare Area Office: Europe 1-888-777-8343, option 1 Comm.: 011-49-6302-67-7433 DSN 496-7433 www.tricare.mil/europe	Tricare Area Office: Latin America and Canada 1-888-777-8343, option 3 Comm.: 1-706-787-2424 DSN 773-2424 www.tricare.mil/tlac	Tricare Area Office: Pacific 1-888-777-8343, option 4 Comm.: 011-81-6117-43-2036 DSN: 643-2036 www.tricare.mil/pacific
Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS)—Update Information Phone: 1-800-538-9552 Fax: 1-831-655-8317 www.tricare.mil/DEERS	Tricare Mail Order Pharmacy 1-866-DOD-TMOP (1-866-363-8667) Member Choice Center (convert retail prescriptions to mail-order): 1-877-363-1433 www.tricare.mil/pharmacy	Tricare Retail Network Pharmacy 1-866-DOD-TRRX (1-866-363-8779) www.tricare.mil/pharmacy
Tricare for Life (TFL) Contractor Wisconsin Physicians Service 1-866-773-0404 1-866-773-0405 (TTY/TDD) www.TRICARE4u.com	Social Security Administration 1-800-772-1213 1-800-325-0778 (TTY/TDD) www.ssa.gov www.ssa.gov/foreign (overseas)	Medicare 1-800-633-4227 www.medicare.gov
Tricare Web Site www.tricare.mil	Military Health System (MHS) Web Site www.health.mil	Locate an ID Card-Issuing Facility www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsi

It used to take aeromedical evacuation technicians and flight nurses up to six months to complete initial qualification training. Now, a new 4th AF program has them ...

QUALIFIED IN 24 DAYS

With the development of the Aircrew Initial Qualification course, Air Force Reserve Command aeromedical evacuation crew members have improved the way the command initially trains its flight nurses and aeromedical evacuation technicians, greatly reducing the amount of time it takes nurses and technicians to become qualified as basic air crew members.

"Basically, we have built a program to train flight nurses and aeromedical evacuation technicians to become qualified

in approximately 24 days," said Col. John Starzyk, 4th Air Force chief of aeromedical evacuation operations, March Air Reserve Base, Calif. "Before this course, initial qualification training was accomplished at home station and normally took anywhere from three to six months.

"These are the Airmen who provide care to our wounded warriors on the C-130, C-17 and KC-135 aircraft, and they are very much in demand. It's critical that we get their initial training and qualification accomplished as soon as possible."

The first AIQ course was conducted at Pope Air Force Base, N.C., home of the Reserve's 440th Airlift Wing, Aug. 5-29. Four flight nurses and six AETs completed the class. A second

class, comprised of two flight nurses and four AETs, received training at Pope Sept. 8 through Oct. 2.

"Training is conducted in four phases," Colonel Starzyk said. The first phase consists of lectures, online computer-based training and some tabletop exercises held in a classroom.

The second phase consists of hands-on training conducted on static aircraft at Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C. (KC-135), and Charleston AFB, S.C. (C-17), as well as the C-130 fuselage trainer at Pope. During the second phase, students are instructed on egress systems and configuration for all three aircraft.

The third phase consists of actual flight training. For the initial class, the third phase took place on a cross-country mission aboard a 440th AW C-130 that flew from Pope to Scott AFB, Ill., to Peterson AFB, Colo., to Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz, and back to Pope. The 10 students were divided into two separate crews.

"While one crew trained on each leg of the flight, the other

crew served as patients, logging secondary time," Colonel Starzyk said. "Each flight nurse got seat time as the medical crew director, and each AET got seat time in the charge medical technician position."

For the second class, the six students flew as one crew on a cross-country flight divided into five sorties.

The fourth phase consists of emergency procedures evaluation testing and flight evaluation.

"There were some challenges with these first two classes, but all of the students remained motivated and eagerly participated in all phases of the training," Colonel Starzyk said. "The majority of comments and ratings we received were highly supportive of the training."

In addition to reducing training time, Colonel Starzyk said the program also saves the command money by consolidating flight training at one location.

"The economy of scale the initial qualification course provides cannot be overemphasized," Colonel Starzyk said. "We're able to accomplish more than 1,000 ground training and more than 100 flying training events in about 24 days and about 17 flying hours. Qualification training conducted at home station or in conjunction with a major command exercise requires a significantly higher number of training days and flying hours." ★





EASING THE STRAIN

Organizations offer programs to bolster volunteerism, help employers cope with absence of essential employees

America has been at war for more than seven years and will remain so for the foreseeable future. Despite more than 30,000 involuntary mobilizations since 9/11, the vast majority of missions supported by the Air Force Reserve continue to be carried out by volunteers. The Reserve provides three to four times as many volunteers as those who are involuntarily mobilized.

An unabated demand for volunteers needed to meet national security requirements continues to place a strain not only on Reservists and their families, but also on employers of Reservists. This strain can affect the relationship between employer and employee, and, if not addressed properly, it may lessen an employer's support for Reserve volunteer duty.

Two organizations — the Small Business Administration and Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve — are available to help address this strain. Both offer programs geared to increase employer support for volunteerism and help employers cope with the absence of their essential employees during deployments.

One such program — the Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan program — made available by the SBA helped Maj. Jeffrey Linscott keep his company, JL Aviation, in business while he was called to active duty. In August 2004, Major

Linscott received a loan that allowed him to catch up on payments on his two helicopters, rehire employees and continue operating until JL Aviation was back in the black.

"Without that loan, I would have failed," Major Linscott said.

The SBA loan program helped the major when he needed it most. This program was created in August 2001 to help small businesses that have suffered financially because a key employee, who is a member of the reserve component, was called away to active duty.

Reservist disaster loan program at a glance

Details about the Military Reservist Economic Injury Disaster Loan program are available online at www.sba.gov/services/disasterassistance. To get an application by mail, or for other questions about the loan program, contact the Small Business Administration's Disaster Assistance Customer Service Center toll free at 800-659-2955 or by e-mail at disastercustomerservice@sba.gov.

For questions regarding the Freedom Award nomination process, visit www.FreedomAward.mil or contact Beth Sherman of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve public affairs office at 703-380-9717.

To update their civilian employer information, Reservists can visit the Guard-Reserve Portal Web site at <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/esgr>. ★

extending the application period, increasing the unsecured loan threshold and raising the maximum loan limit.

Under the new rules, a small business can apply for an MREIDL on the date the essential employee receives notice of the expected call-up. The application period is extended to one

year after the essential employee is discharged from active duty, an increase from the previous 90-day application window.

In addition, the small business is no longer required to pledge collateral to secure an MREIDL of \$50,000 or less. Previously, the business was required to put up collateral if the loan amount exceeded \$5,000.

In addition, the Small Business Disaster Response and Loan Improvements Act, passed in May 2008, increased the MREIDL cap from \$1.5 million to \$2 million. As of Dec 1, 2008, the SBA had approved 308 MREIDLs for a total of more than \$27 million — the average loan amount being \$89,356.

"The SBA is willing to do all it can to support military reservists and keep their businesses alive," said SBA spokeswoman Carol Chastang. "The same is true for providing assistance with the application process."

The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is another organization that can act as an enabler for volunteerism. The ESGR mission is to gain and maintain support from all public and private employers for the men and women of the National Guard and Reserve. ESGR provides free education, consultation and, if necessary, mediation for employers of Guard and Reserve members. ESGR advises employers about the rights and responsibilities of civilian employees who have a military service obligation as outlined in the federal law known as the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act.

In addition to the advice it provides, ESGR sponsors an awards program designed to help recognize employers for implementing employment policies and practices that are supportive of their employees' participation in the National Guard and Reserve. All employer recognition and awards originate from nominations by individual reserve component members. Depending on the degree of support, the level of recognition rises all the way to the Employer Support Freedom Award, given by the secretary of defense.

Employer awards include:

- **Patriot Award Certificate of Appreciation:** ESGR awards this certificate and a Patriot lapel pin on behalf of the Department of Defense. All members of the National Guard and Reserve forces are eligible to nominate their employers for the Patriot Award certificate. This employer recognition is the most frequently presented. A certificate is given to all nominated employers. This nomination is subsequently used by the local ESGR Committee as the basis for consideration to receive higher-level awards.

- **Pro Patria:** This award is presented to those employers who demonstrate exceptional support for national defense by adopting personnel policies that make it easier for employees

to participate in the National Guard and Reserve. Each ESGR committee may give only one Pro Patria annually.

- **Employer Support Freedom Awards:** These awards, ESGR's most prestigious, are presented annually to employers by the secretary of defense. They recognize unique support to National Guard and Reserve employees. The nation's most supportive employers receive the awards at a ceremony held annually in November.

Individual Reservists can help strengthen the relationship with their employers by updating the civilian employer information database at the Air Reserve Personnel Center. The CEI database is the basis for ESGR outreach. It is key to facilitating open communication between the DOD and civilian employers of Reservists about Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act rights, benefits and obligations. Increased communication can lead to better understanding and may increase employer support for volunteerism while reducing the chance of conflict between employer and employee.



Maj. Jeffrey Linscott testifies in front of the Commission of the National Guard and Reserves during a hearing in May 2007. He discussed the challenges he, as an Air Force Reservist, faced trying to get financial assistance for his business to help with the financial loss he faced while serving on active duty.

Since April 3, 2003, DOD policy requires the CEI program to capture and maintain current and accurate civilian employment-related information on each Ready Reserve Airman. This includes Air Force Reserve unit members, Air National Guard members, individual mobilization aug-

mentees, and both participating and nonparticipating Individual Ready Reservists.

The purpose for collecting CEI program information is to achieve fair treatment for Airmen in the Ready Reserve who are being considered for recall to active duty without their consent. It is used to ensure there will be no significant attrition of the Ready Reserve Airmen or units during a mobilization.

The Air Force Reserve must identify, collect and report each Airman employer's name, the employer's complete mailing address, the Airman's current civilian job title, and the total years experience in current civilian occupation. ESGR staff will not directly contact any employer about an individual Reservist unless the Reservist asks for assistance with an employer issue.

By supporting Reservists who volunteer for active service, employers enable some of our country's most experienced military men and women to fulfill critical wartime requirements. Therefore, strengthening the relationship between Reservist and employer is essential to the nation's defense, and the ESGR and SBA offer many programs toward that end. ★

(Information regarding Major Linscott and his testimony before the commission of the National Guard and Reserves taken from an article titled "SBA loan helps small businesses weather the loss of a key employee to mobilization" in the September 2008 issue of The Officer magazine. Information regarding ESGR and its programs taken from the organization's Web site at <http://www.esgr.org>.)

AIRMEN AT WAR

Reservists helping compile history of Global War on Terrorism

Air Force Reservists deploying and working with the Air Force History and Museums Program are writing and providing information for an encompassing study of the Air Force's efforts in the Global War on Terrorism.

Dick Anderegg, Air Force History Office director, launched the study, titled *Airmen at War*, in October 2007. According to planning documents, the study will produce a history of Air Force participation in the new century including strategic, national, political, operational and tactical aspects of the Air Force.

When completed, the project will consist of seven volumes covering the time period from Desert Storm to Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Air Force Reserve Command historian individual mobilization augmentees are directly responsible for organizing and writing two of the volumes: a chronology and a statistical digest.

While civilian historians are the primary writers and supervisors of the project, key IMAs have been identified to write and support these two volumes under the direction of Dr. Charles O'Connell, director of the Air Force Historical Research Agency at Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala. Dr. O'Connell formerly served as AFRC director of Historical Services.

Air Force History Office IMAs Lt. Cols. Ken Tilley and Joel Irvin are writing the chronology volume, focusing on key Air Force events occurring after 9/11 for each major operation.

"The chronology is essentially a timeline of significant events that allows researchers to formulate an idea of what was going on in a specific timeframe," Colonel Irvin said. "They'll be able to identify dates and sources of information to conduct in-depth research from Air Force records and histories of detailed operations."

Capt. Nicole Dubnicay and Master Sgt. Craig Mackey are compiling statistical information from historical reports to produce a consolidated statistical digest of Air Force operations, personnel, equipment and support functions.

"When researchers are looking for summarized numerical data for Air Force operations, they will be able to go to our volume and find them," Sergeant Mackey said.

History office IMAs are not the only Reservists working on the *Airman at War* study. Additional people are on loan from their home units on military personnel appropriation orders to provide research and writing support to the project. Senior Airman Matthew Dearth of the 908th Airlift Wing at Maxwell AFB is assisting with the statistical digest volume after Master Sgt. Johnny Montgomery, also from the 908th AW, finished an extended MPA tour.

"Working as a historian has been a smooth transition from my origins as a loadmaster," Airman Dearth said. "I enjoy working here because it gives me the opportunity to examine bigger Air Force issues through the historical documents and statistics."

Additionally, Air Force Reserve historians play a vital role in the collection of information and data related to Air Force efforts. Deployed historian duties include writing unit chronologies and historical records, collecting historical data, and conducting oral history interviews of deployed Air Force personnel.

"For the past three years, Air Force Reserve IMA and traditional historians have consistently exceeded the AOR deployment goal set by the Air Force History Office and have done so by volunteering," said Betty Kennedy, AFRC director of Historical Services.

"Some of the locations that Reserve historians have deployed to in support of the GWOT are Qatar, Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Kyrgyzstan, and CENTCOM (U.S. Central Command) headquarters at MacDill AFB, Fla.," said Michael Dugre, ACC historian functional area manager. "A majority of the deployments last 120 days."

The information collected from civilian and Reserve historians during deployments is the fundamental source of information used to write the *Airmen at War* study. The volumes focusing on Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom pull significant amounts of data from histories written at deployed locations.

In conjunction with the *Airmen at War* study, AFRC Historical Services is providing the Air Force Reserve portions as well as writing "The Air Force Reserve Command's Contribution to the Global War on Terrorism."

"AFRC IMAs assigned to the other major and joint commands are either supporting the writing of the *Airmen at War* study or their own commands' specific GWOT contributions," Ms. Kennedy said. "For example, Master Sgt. Joanne Therriault at Air Force Space Command has written their ONE and OEF chronology, which became part of the *Airmen at War* project, and Senior Master Sgt. Charles Newell and Master Sgt. Jennifer Gordon at U.S. Central Command have been recording events there since 2001."

Additional Reservists assigned to the Air Force History Support Office at Anacostia Naval Station in Washington, D.C., such as Master Sgt. Albert Garver, provide research and writing support to the civilian writing teams assigned to the other five volumes of the study. IMA members who can't serve extended MPA tours provide support as needed during annual tours and individual inactive duty training days.

"Reserve unit historians and IMAs have provided outstanding support to the Air Force History and Museums Program as it collects contemporary historical documents at deployed locations, and the program uses those documents to build the *Airmen at War* study," Dr. O'Connell said. ★

(Information for this article provided by the Air Force Historical Research Agency at Maxwell AFB and the Air Force History Office at the Pentagon.)



Capt. Douglas Lantry, an individual mobilization augmentee historian, prepares to board a helicopter for transport to Iraq and Camp Bucca during a recent deployment to Southwest Asia. Captain Lantry is one of a number of Reservists working on a comprehensive study of the Air Force's efforts in the Global War on Terrorism.

HOW TO SURVIVE OFFICER TRAINING

Recent graduates offer tips to help others prepare for course

(Editor's note: Lt. Col. Steven Podnos, 920th Aeromedical Staging Squadron at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., and Capt. Tom McKinney, 908th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron at Maxwell AFB, Ala., completed Reserve Commissioned Officer Training in April 2008. As a result of their experience, they wrote the following article to provide others with information, resources and suggestions to help them prepare for the rigorous training.)

Newly commissioned officers in the Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard medical specialties often come into their jobs with no prior military experience. Though most organizations offer these new officers some type of initial military orientation, the orientation is rudimentary at best.

Sometime during their first 12 months of service, these new medical specialty officers are obligated to attend either Commissioned Officer Training or Reserve Commissioned Officer Training, where they receive a more definitive orientation to military service. These courses are abbreviated versions of the three-month Officer Training School that line officers attend and are shortened in recognition of the special hardships created when medical providers must be away from their civilian jobs for training.

The five-week COT and two-week RCOT courses are intended to provide entry-level officer training to orient officers to the U.S. Air Force culture, history, customs and courtesies, as well as introduce them to the profession of arms. To cover three months of information in these shortened periods of time is a daunting task for both students and instructors.

These courses are both rigorous and rewarding. One important step new officers can take to help them prepare for what they will face is to familiarize themselves with some of the material and take advantage of some valuable Air Force resources beforehand.

The best initial training is found

on the Web sites sponsored by the school: <http://www.maxwell.af.mil/au/holmcenter/OTS/COT-RCOT/index.asp> and <http://www.maxwell.af.mil/au/holmcenter/OTS/COT-RCOT/WelcomePackage.asp>. Be sure to visit these sites first and download all the information available.

Watch the video to get a feel for what the experience will be like, and download the operating instructions. The OIs will be your primary reference, especially during the first week of COT/RCOT. You will need to have a good understanding of the information contained in the OIs upon arrival, so begin to study them well ahead of your school dates. Specifically, focus on customs and courtesies, reporting statements, dining procedures, and class opening and closing procedures.

Also, continue to monitor these sites as the course date nears, because they will be used to update you to changes that may occur in the course requirements or other instructions to students.

Air Force Portal

The Air Force Portal (www.my.af.mil) was designed to be an initial entry point for all your Air Force needs, so you will have to be able to access this site immediately. Be sure your account is set up, active and available before arrival.

Once your account is established, you can surf the Portal and its many links to get information regarding regulations, benefits, training, pay, etc.

The Portal includes a link to information on Air Force uniforms. You will be expected to know not only which uniforms to wear but how to set them up and care for them.

You must be able to pass the Air Force physical fitness test during the second week of training, so you should know your target requirements for achieving this goal. Practice running and doing sit-ups and push-ups. Try to plan for a score of 85 percent or better, so you have a "buffer" in case you suffer an

injury or illness while attending the training. You can find all the charts and scoring systems on the Portal.

If possible, try to get your weight down to a level that gives you a body mass index of 25 or better. You can download a BMI chart from the Internet, or use an online calculator and input your specific height.

Use the Portal to access the Advanced Distributed Learning Service site or use this link: https://golearn.csd.disa.mil/kc/login/login.asp?kc_ident=kc0001. There is a significant amount of computer-based training you will need to accomplish during your Air Force career, and much of it occurs on this site. Three of these courses must be completed before you leave RCOT/COT: Self-aid and Buddy Care; SERE 100; and Information Protection.

Complete these courses and take the certificates of completion with you to the training. You can do them during the course, but they take up about nine hours of instruction, and time is a precious commodity.

Computer Skills

The military uses Microsoft Office, so ensure you are comfortable using Word, PowerPoint, and Outlook programs, at least for basic functions. If necessary, see the Microsoft site or your unit for online tutorials.

Uniforms

Though you can purchase your uniforms during the first couple of days of training and have them altered there, it's better if you obtain your uniforms before arrival. Also, have all sewing and alterations done at your local base clothing sales store. This is especially important for the two-week RCOT course due to the turnaround time for alterations, which may be several days.

References

The following items were issued during our course for our reference.

- "The Flyby: USAF Preparation for Active Duty Pamphlet," ninth edition.
- "Airman: U.S. Air Force Handbook 1." This reference is available on the Web at <http://www.airman.af.mil/index.htm>.
- "A New Officer's Guide to Etiquette and Decorum."
- Air Force Manual 10-100, "Airman's Manual," June 1, 2004. This general-purpose reference for all things Air Force is available at <http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/shared/media/epubs/AFMAN10-100.pdf>.
- AFMAN 36-2203, "Drill and Ceremonies," Sept. 24, 2007. This document covers basic marching commands and cadences. It's available at <http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/shared/media/epubs/AFMAN36-2203.pdf>.
- Air Force Instruction 36-2903, "Dress and Personal Appearance of Air Force Personnel," Aug. 6, 2007. Available at <http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/shared/media/epubs/AFI36-2903.pdf>.

Also, be aware of the concepts of trimming all strings and "cables" from every piece of your clothing and tucking your shoe laces into your shoes or boots so they do not flop or protrude. Know which uniforms should be pressed along with the proper combinations of uniforms.

• AFMAN 36-2105, "Officer Classification," April 30, 2001. Available at <http://www.valpo.edu/afrotc/AFMAN%20362105%20Officer%20Classification.pdf>. This reference specifies which badges you are eligible to wear: basic, qualified or advanced/staff/chief/master. Reference this to determine which uniform badges to purchase, or have your unit assist you. These badges are based on your experience level in your occupation and have specific requirements.

• AFI 36-2101, "Classifying Military Personnel," March 2006. Available at <http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/shared/media/epubs/AFI36-2101.pdf>. This reference explains the Air Force specialty code occupational classification system. This is not a critical reference before COT/RCOT, but it's helpful to explain some of the numbers and letters you will hear referenced during the training.

• Air Force Handbook 33-337, "Tongue and Quill," Aug. 1, 2004. Available at <http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/shared/media/epubs/AFH33-337.pdf>. This is the official style manual for all Air Force correspondence and a critical reference to be used throughout your Air Force career. Specifically, know how to draft an official memo and a memorandum for record before going to COT/RCOT, and know how to properly use office symbols. See the COT/RCOT OIs for their specific office symbols for instructors, command staff and student positions.

• AFI 36-2406, "Officer and Enlisted Evaluation Systems," April 15, 2005. Available at <http://www.e-publishing.af.mil/shared/media/epubs/AFI36-2406.pdf>. In general, be familiar with the process of writing officer and enlisted performance reports. The courses will provide more detail.

General Resources for Learning Air Force Culture

- Air Force chief of staff recommended reading list, <http://www.af.mil/library/csafreading/>.
- Air Force Reserve Command fact sheet, <http://www.af.mil/factsheets/factsheet.asp?fsID=151>.
- AFRC public Web site, <http://www.afrc.af.mil/>.
- ANG fact sheet, <http://www.af.mil/factsheets/factsheet.asp?fsID=160>.
- ANG public Web site, <http://www.ang.af.mil/>.
- Citizen Airman, official magazine of the Air Force Reserve, <http://www.citamn.afrc.af.mil/>.
- Information on ANG and AFRC people, installations and aircraft (available from the Air Force Association Web site), <http://www.airforce-magazine.com/Almanacs/Pages/default.aspx>. ★

2009 Reserve Pay for Four Drills — 3.9% Raise

Grade	Years of Service														
	<2	2	3	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26
O-8	1,212	1,252	1,278	1,285	1,318	1,373	1,386	1,438	1,453	1,498	1,563	1,623	1,663	1,663	1,663
O-7	1,007	1,054	1,076	1,093	1,124	1,155	1,190	1,226	1,261	1,373	1,468	1,468	1,468	1,468	1,475
O-6	746	820	874	874	877	915	920	920	972	1,064	1,119	1,173	1,204	1,235	1,296
O-5	622	701	750	759	789	807	847	876	914	972	999	1,026	1,057	1,057	1,057
O-4	537	622	663	672	711	752	803	843	871	887	896	896	896	896	896
O-3	472	535	578	630	660	693	714	750	768	768	768	768	768	768	768
O-2	408	465	535	553	564	564	564	564	564	564	564	564	564	564	564
O-1	354	368	445	445	445	445	445	445	445	445	445	445	445	445	445
O-3E	-	-	-	630	660	693	714	750	779	796	820	820	820	820	820
O-2E	-	-	-	553	564	582	613	636	654	654	654	654	654	654	654
O-1E	-	-	-	445	476	493	511	529	553	553	553	553	553	553	553
E-9	-	-	-	-	-	-	589	603	620	639	659	691	718	747	790
E-8	-	-	-	-	-	482	504	517	533	550	581	597	623	638	675
E-7	335	366	380	399	413	438	452	477	498	512	527	533	552	563	603
E-6	290	319	333	347	361	393	406	430	438	443	449	449	449	449	449
E-5	266	284	297	311	333	356	375	377	377	377	377	377	377	377	377
E-4	244	256	270	284	296	296	296	296	296	296	296	296	296	296	296
E-3	220	234	248	248	248	248	248	248	248	248	248	248	248	248	248
E-2	209	209	209	209	209	209	209	209	209	209	209	209	209	209	209
E-1	187	187	187	187	187	187	187	187	187	187	187	187	187	187	187

E-1 with less than four months: \$168

Source: DefenseLink

All amounts rounded to nearest dollar.