

Citizen AIRMAN

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Air Force Reserve



The Future Total Force

Big changes on tap for Reserve units



Training together
page 26



Contact center
page 18



Family affair
page 30

From the Top

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



Holiday season offers a time to reflect on positives in our lives

This past year, we as a nation suffered the horrors of war, floods and hurricanes. These can easily lead to a sense of negativity and distress. However, like so many generations before us, we have the promise of the holiday season to reflect on the many positives in our lives, the greatness of our service and the promise of so many better tomorrows.

Where does such promise come from? It comes from the many people who put their own lives aside

to help others in need. It comes from the newlywed senior NCO who had his house destroyed and life changed by a storm named Katrina. Despite the personal challenge, he relocated to Atlanta and continued flying missions as a Hurricane Hunter crewmember when Rita threatened his friends and neighbors yet again.

It comes from the men and women who opened their homes, their hearts and their lives to those who suddenly found themselves wanting only basics such as food, water and relative safety for their children.

It comes in the form of a C-17 crew that flew down to the Gulf Coast to help those most affected by the storms. Expecting to find people caring only for themselves as depicted in the news, they instead found people who were tired, hungry, thirsty and afraid. One crewmember remarked, "Despite the challenges they faced, they still took the time to smile, shake my hand and say thank you."

Recently, I had the opportunity to hear stories of our Citizen Airmen at our commander's conference. These men and women had little time to tell their stories because of the usual constraints associated with large conferences. And yet, in a matter of a few minutes, they shared with our command's sen-

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ior leaders stories that told of ordinary people doing extraordinary things in places far from home and even further from safety.

They spoke of how they just wanted to help make a difference in the lives of strangers. They spoke of wanting to be people of action, despite exposure to personal risk and separation, by a great distance, from their families. They spoke words that told me our core values live in the hearts and minds of every Citizen Airman who wears the uniform.

For most of the briefings, I sat quietly, struck only by amazement and pride. But what most astounds me is the fact that these people represent a larger group of Citizen Airmen who serve selflessly every day here in the United States and around the world.

True, this past year challenged all of us and struck at the very core of human suffering. But like the men and women who served before us, you rose above the challenge, put the needs of others before your own and once again showed the greatness of our command.

So as we celebrate this holiday season, I ask all of you to reflect on the many positives in your life, both personally and professionally. I ask that you embrace the family that loves you and take time to say thank you. For those away from family and friends, I hope you take comfort in knowing that your hard work and dedication are making a difference. I ask all of you to look toward the weeks and months that lie ahead. We have much work to do, and our nation is counting on us.

Jan and I wish all of you a happy and healthy holiday season and the very best in the coming New Year. Please be safe in your travels. We very much want and need you back in 2006. Thank you, Air Force Reserve Command. I salute you all! ★



Chief's View

By Chief Master Sgt. Jackson A. Winsett
Command Chief Master Sergeant, Air Force Reserve Command

Now, more than ever, we must remember that freedom is not free

As 2005 slowly sinks into the West and the holiday season enters, now is the time for all of us to reflect upon our numerous blessings and accomplishments.

Air Force Reserve Command and I are very proud of how our Citizen Airmen have stood shoulder-to-shoulder with their active-duty and Guard counterparts in support of the Global War on Terrorism. The steady state demands upon our Airmen and our Air Force have changed dramatically since Sept. 11, 2001, forcing new participation expectations on us, our families and civilian employers as we are called upon to assume a greater presence in day-to-day Air Force operations.

Each day we take numerous things for granted, including our freedom. However, we must remember that the cost of freedom is not free. Today, we have hundreds of our brothers and sisters in all components in harm's way fighting for freedom. Let's not forget the sacrifices they are making.

For those not deployed, I ask that you take time to be with your family and friends. Please show them just how much they mean to you and to the Air Force Reserve. Should you know any of our members who are deployed, and their family lives near you, stop by and share the holiday spirit with them. A kind word goes a long way.

2005 was a great year, and I'm sure 2006 will be even better. However, we must be even more vigilant than before. Awareness of our mission requirements and responsibilities along with our ability to meet the mission is paramount. We must be prepared in every sense of the word. This includes giving special attention to our families and friends, for they keep the home fires burning while we are gone.

Please accept my sincere thanks for all that you have done and accomplished. You truly are the best! Karen and I wish each of you a happy holiday season and look forward to seeing you next year. ★

Reservists help offload a C-17 in Iraq.



MASTER SGT. SCOTT WAGERS

**TODAY, WE HAVE HUNDREDS OF
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ALL COMPONENTS IN HARM'S WAY
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Beginning of the End

Brig. Gen. Bruce Davis, 445th Airlift Wing commander, leads a group of young men and women onto the wing's first C-5A Galaxy after it arrived at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, Oct. 3. Once inside the aircraft, the general swore them in as brand-new members of the Air Force Reserve and the 445th. The aircraft's arrival formally marked the beginning of a major transition at the wing and the end of an era within the Reserve. Over the next nine months, the unit will receive 10 more C-5s to replace its fleet of C-141 Starlifters, which are being retired. The aircraft transition should be complete by June. The 445th AW has been flying C-141s since its activation Oct. 1, 1994, and is the Air Force's last C-141 wing. "Although we will miss the dearly loved C-141, we do embrace the change," said Col. Brian Dominguez, 445th AW vice commander. "The C-5 will bring us a new mission transporting cargo and people all over the world. We look forward to the change and the challenges that are ahead." For more on the history of the C-141, please see the story on page 22. (Tech. Sgt. Charlie Miller)



Table of Contents

	10
Round the Reserve	
	14
Reserve a major part of the Future Total Force	
	18
ARPC improves personnel service delivery	
	22
Last C-141 unit begins replacing its aircraft	
	26
Medics strengthen ties to NATO partners	
	30
Family makes Air Force a way of life	

Front cover: Lt. Col. Michael Brill (left), a Reserve pilot with the 419th Fighter Wing, Hill Air Force Base, Utah, talks with Capt. Burke Wooten, an active-duty pilot with Hill's 388th FW. Under a Future Total Force initiative, the Air Force is creating an associate unit relationship between the two wings. See story, page 14. (Staff Sgt. Lara Gale)

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

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

Col. Tom Deall *Director of Public Affairs, Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command*

Cliff Tyler *Managing Editor*

Bo Joyner *Associate Editor*

Tech. Sgt. Jason Tudor *Staff Writer*

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Open Wide

Airmen and Soldiers load a CH-47 Chinook heavy-lift helicopter onto a C-5 Galaxy at Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii, Oct. 16. An Army unit at nearby Wheeler Army Air Field received orders to deploy 60 troops, four helicopters and support equipment to Pakistan to support earthquake relief operations. A joint Army-Air Force team helped load the helicopters and equipment onto C-5s from Air Force Reserve Command's 433rd Airlift Wing, Lackland AFB, Texas, and 439th AW, Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass. Other Reserve units, including the 446th AW from McChord AFB, Wash., and 512th AW, Dover AFB, Del., were involved in the massive effort to provide assistance to the people of Pakistan after a 7.6 magnitude earthquake hit the country Oct. 8. Pakistani officials estimated the earthquake killed about 80,000 people. Millions more were left homeless. The Reservists eagerly supported the international humanitarian mission, despite being heavily tasked for Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom and involved in Hurricanes Katrina and Rita relief efforts. "Being a Reservist, we're always ready to answer the call," said Capt. Christian Force, 326th Airlift Squadron, McChord AFB. "It's a real privilege to be part of something bigger." (Tech. Sgt. Shane A. Cuomo)



Red Light

A C-141B Starlifter called the "Golden Bear" gets the red light as it waits to be backed into its new parking spot near the corner of Burgan Boulevard and Travis Avenue at Travis Air Force Base, Calif. The aircraft is being towed from the flight line area where it had recently received a new paint job. The monumental task of moving the aircraft was supervised by Master Sgt. Terry Juran, 349th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron team chief, who led volunteers from the 349th AMXS, 60th Civil Engineer Squadron, 349th Equipment Maintenance Squadron, 60th EMXS and transit alert. To provide clearance for the Starlifter's wings, several planes from the Travis Air Museum had to be relocated temporarily to nearby fields, and some light poles and stop signs were taken down. Working together, the members of Team Travis were able to safely and successfully move the "Golden Bear" into its new home. (Tech. Sgt. Wendy Weidenhamer)



Round the Reserve

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

Reserve Inactivates Combat Logistics Support Squadrons

Air Force Reserve Command inactivated all of its combat logistics support squadrons Oct. 1 as part of a force structure realignment.

The units that were disbanded were the 419th CLSS at Hill Air Force Base, Utah; 433rd CLSS at Lackland AFB, Texas; 445th CLSS at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio; 507th CLSS at Tinker AFB, Okla.; and 622nd CLSS at Robins AFB, Ga. The inactivations affected more than 650 job authorizations throughout the command.

"These are valuable people we want to keep because of their vast amounts of experience and maintenance skills," said Lt. Col. John Rocchio, deputy chief of programs in Headquarters AFRC's Plans and Programs Directorate. "We are trying to make this as easy as possible for them while at the same time keeping the Air Force Reserve an evolving and relevant part of the Future Total Force."

Command planners are evaluating ways to transfer squadron manpower into other units. This change will ensure that the military is employing its forces in the most efficient way possible.

Colonel Rocchio said affected

Reservists may have to commute longer distances than they are accustomed to in order to continue serving in the Air Force Reserve. (1st Lt. Matthew Fuller, AFRC public affairs, Robins AFB)

Web-Based System Changes How Orders are Processed

Individual mobilization augmentees have a new way to get military orders.

Air Reserve Order Writing System-Reserve, a Web-based system, allows IMAs to initiate the orders process from any computer anywhere in the world.

Two Barksdale A-10 pilots reach career milestone

By Tech. Sgt. Sherri Savant

Two Reserve A-10 pilots at Barksdale Air Force Base, La., reached a milestone in their flying careers that very few people in the entire Air Force A-10 community ever dream about achieving.

When Lt. Cols. Jimbo Macaulay and Brady Glick of the 47th Fighter Squadron landed on the Barksdale flight line Sept. 1 after a routine mission, they completed 4,000 flying hours in the aircraft affectionately known as the Warthog.

Colonels Macaulay and Glick are the newest members of a group of about 10 A-10 pilots in the entire Air Force who have reached the 4,000-hour mark. They joined another Barksdale Reservist, Lt. Col. David Deaton, chief of safety for the 917th Wing, who accomplished the feat earlier this year.

Colonel Deaton accompanied Colonels Macaulay and Glick on the flight. They were joined by Col. Bob Tarter, 917th WG commander.

"These men are true aviators in the grandest sense," Colonel Tartar said. "This historic accomplishment puts them in a league with few peers. I am very proud of them and honored to have flown with each of them."

Colonels Macaulay and Glick put their flying experience to good use as A-10 instructors.

"We learn something from every sortie we fly, and our job as instructors is to transfer that knowledge to our students," Colonel Macaulay said.

The average A-10 instructor pilot at Barksdale has about 2,700 flying hours, making the 47th FS the most experienced squadron in the world, according to Colonel Glick.

Both Colonels Macaulay and Glick plan on hanging around the A-10 for a long time to come.

"I love to fly as much now as ever," said Colonel Glick, a



Lt. Col. Jimbo Macaulay of the 47th Fighter Squadron, Barksdale Air Force Base, La., holds up four fingers, signifying his accumulation of 4,000 flying hours in the A-10. He is one of about 10 A-10 pilots who have reached the 4,000-hour mark.

17-year veteran. "My enthusiasm for 'strapping on' an A-10 has never waned over the years, and I'm hoping to fly for many more."

"There is no other fighter that is comparable," Colonel Macaulay said. "The almost daily smell of Herculite gunpowder from the GAU-8 (30mm Gatling gun) firing is a necessary tonic that keeps me motivated." ★

(Sergeant Savant is assigned to the 917th WG public affairs office at Barksdale AFB.)

TECH. SGT. SHERRI SAVANT

Units began using AROWS-R Nov. 1, said Air Force Reserve Command officials.

"My maiden voyage into AROWS-R was great," said Col. Rune B. Lillquist, an IMA assigned to the 59th Maintenance Squadron at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. "It was easier than my first try at (the Web Orders Transaction System). I found the multiple-choice selections very helpful."

WOTS was the previous program used by IMAs to generate military orders. IMAs can continue accessing WOTS for past duty information but must request

all new orders through AROWS-R.

The new system combines WOTS and three existing personal computer-based systems to process Reservists' orders.

"AROWS will revolutionize the way orders are published throughout this command," said Col. Deborah Suski, AFRC comptroller at Robins AFB, Ga. "Commanders will have visibility of their troops' TDYs to include the cost and what operations they are supporting."

After a request has been entered into the system, the program automatically routes it through all the necessary chan-

nels. The program also checks for funding and any required waivers at the beginning of the process.

AROWS-R allows Reservists, commanders, and people in the base finance office and orderly room to check the status of the orders throughout the entire process.

"AROWS will provide the Air Force Reserve Command 100 percent accountability of our assigned forces while on active duty," said Col. Roxane Towner, Readiness Management Group commander. "It will integrate the IMAs and



TECH. SGT. JASON SCHAAP



TECH. SGT. JASON SCHAAP

HAVE RIFLE, WILL TRAVEL — Maj. Johnnie Bair, an avid shooter for most of his life, is the only Reservist among the 10 Airmen on the Air Force High-Power Rifle Team. A member of the 931st Air Refueling Group at McConnell Air Force Base, Kan., he is also the only pilot on the team. Prior to flying KC-135 Stratotankers for the Reserve, Major Bair was a helicopter pilot and rifle team member in the Army Reserve. The major said he wanted to keep shooting when he switched services, but Air Force Reserve Command doesn't have a team. So he earned a spot on the active-duty team. Major Bair loves competing so much he pays most of his own expenses. He bought his own rifle, a modified version of the AR-15, the civilian counterpart to the military's M-16A2. He also paid for his own special shooting jacket. Both are on display above. In the past three years, Major Bair estimates he has paid \$2,000 to \$3,000 out of his own pocket to compete in various matches. "The Air Force budget is much smaller than what the Army and Marine teams have," he said. "And since I'm not on active duty, I'm not eligible for the same support as my teammates." At left, Major Bair uses a spotting scope to see his shots on a target 1,000 yards away.

unit Reservists into one orders system, giving the command complete visibility over our Reservists."

Besides giving the command a way to account for its Reservists, the new system provides active-duty commanders and supervisors visibility into the process with a report capability.

"Not only did I accomplish the process of transmitting my request for orders more rapidly than with WOTS, but I also had a draft copy to validate the process to my supervisor and to keep in my records," said Colonel Lillquist.

AROWS-R is not new to the Department of Defense. The Naval Reserve and the Marine Corps Reserve use the system.

If people have questions or need more information about the new system, they can call the help desk at DSN 497-0522, commercially at 478-327-0522 or toll-free at 800-223-1784, ext. 0522. They can also use extension 1455 or 1258. (*AFRC News Service*)

Being Nosey Pays Off for Government and Employee

Because Sara Simms was nose, the U.S. government saved more than \$424,000. And she received a surprise, too.

During a data review, Ms. Simms, a lead human resources assistant at the Air Reserve Personnel Center in Denver, noticed an unusual annotation on a Reservist's record. After being convicted of a first-degree felony, the Reserve officer's status was listed as being "dropped from the rolls" as of Jan. 30, 2003.

Ms. Simms also found that the officer had been transferred to an unassigned Reserve section but was still collecting voluntary separation incentive payments. She contacted ARPC finance officials, who took action to get the person to repay \$35,254.18.

If Ms. Simms had not caught the error, the man may have continued to receive annual payments for 20 years, which would have totaled nearly \$400,000.

Senior Master Sgt. Janet Riley, Individual Ready Reserve Program Management Branch chief, found a way to reward Ms. Simms for her alertness and vigilance.

After researching Air Force Instruction



The 446th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, McChord Air Force Base, Wash., is handing out bracelets in support of deployed maintainers.

Bracelets help McChord maintainers remember those who are deployed

By Staff Sgt. Wendy Beauchaine

The 446th Airlift Wing's aircraft maintenance crews are known for expertise on the job, but it is the tight, family-like structure that helps keep them bonded together. Once again, they have come up with their own unique way to maintain that close-knit atmosphere, even while thousands of miles apart.

Eight months ago, Chief Master Sgt. Steven Slagle of the 446th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, McChord Air Force Base, Wash., created a reminder for unit and family members to keep in touch with deployed Airmen. He designed a bracelet, modeled after the prisoner of war/missing in action bracelets, to serve as a reminder that a maintainer was deployed and experiencing long days away from home.

"After a deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, I became aware of how disheartening it can be to open your e-mail and see you haven't received anything other than business correspondence," Chief Slagle said. "Most everyone has e-mail, and when you go to check it and there's nothing there, it's almost an empty feeling. Here, the days run very quickly, but over there, a simple e-mail to a deployed person can make all the difference."

After the chief returned home, he made a point to try and keep in touch with his deployed friends and co-workers.

"When Senior Master Sergeant (Robert) Belletti was deployed for more than 100 days, I tried to send him an e-mail every day, and I asked other people to send him something as often as

possible," Chief Slagle said. "(When he returned, he noted how nice it was to get news from home, even if it was a joke or a weather report."

That gave the chief the motivation to press forward with a project to help people remember those away from home. During his spare time, he obtained polished stainless steel sheet stock and created 40 bracelet blanks. Then he had them engraved with the name, rank, unit and flight of a deployed Airman.

"The first one probably cost me about \$1,000 worth of materials and personal time," he said. "We make the bracelets for a squadron member to wear and a family member, too."

The first bracelet was made for Senior Master Sgt. Dan Morris of the 446th AMXS. His 12-year-old daughter, Carly, wore a bracelet to remind her about his journey.

While it is considered an honor to wear the bracelet, the squadron has created rules and responsibilities that go along with that honor.

They include wearing the bracelet until the member returns home, maintaining communication, coordinating care packages, announcing the latest status or update of the deployed Airman during commander's calls, supporting family members through the 446th AMXS Top 3 Association and presenting the worn bracelet to the returned Airman at a commander's call. ★

(Sergeant Beauchaine is assigned to the 446th AW public affairs office at McChord AFB.)

Pope's Puns



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

36-1004, Managing the Civilian Recognition Program, the sergeant submitted her for a Special Act or Service Award.

This is a monetary award that recognizes General Schedule employees for special achievements.

For her diligence, Ms. Simms received a \$3,500 award Oct. 18.

Ms. Simms said she was shocked to receive an award for being nose.

"All I asked myself was, 'What does dropped from the rolls really mean?'" she said. (*Cindy Dewey, ARPC public affairs, Denver*)

Reservists Clean House, Increase F-16 Capability

Desire and motivation drove 14 Reserve Airmen to turn a barely functional back shop into one of two fully functional avionics intermediate

shops at Balad Air Base, Iraq.

The revamped work center allowed the staff to double its improved avionics intermediate repair capabilities. The Reservists deployed to Balad from Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla.

"When we arrived, the alternate shop was dirty and dark, and it smelled bad," said Senior Master Sgt. Huey Hill, 332nd Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron avionics team chief. "The walls were black. ... it took three days to pressure wash them clean."

The shop's staff tests, aligns, troubleshoots and repairs mission-critical F-16 aircraft line replacement units. That includes any avionics parts that come off the aircraft.

"The shop was so ill-equipped that to test any equipment here we had to use flashlights," Sergeant Hill said. "This situation was unacceptable. So our team

spent 10 days turning this office around."

To overhaul the shop, the Reservists cleaned and painted the floors, walls, doors and ceiling. They removed old items that cluttered the area.

The work was accomplished as a self-help project, and the team only sought outside help from the 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron to fix the lighting.

Squadron commander Maj. David Nicholson said the unit can now fully test line replacement units. It can also return them to the supply system to fill mission-critical needs for broken aircraft in half the time, he said.

"We have been able to double the avionics repair capability for the F-16 operations being performed," Major Nicholson said. (*Staff Sgt. Tammie Moore, 332nd Aerospace Expeditionary Wing public affairs, Balad AB*) ★

The Future Total Force

New directorate shaping the Air Force of tomorrow today

By Bo Joyner

From a small office inside the Pentagon, Brig. Gen. Allison Hickey is leading a diverse group of some of the Air Force's brightest forward-thinkers as they help shape what the Air Force of tomorrow will look like and how it will operate.

As the director of the newly established Future Total Force Directorate, General Hickey is focused on bringing the active duty, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard together in new and innovative ways.

"Simply put, our goal is to increase the combat capability of the Air Force by capitalizing on the inherent strengths of the Air Force's three components: the active duty, the Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve," she said.

The Future Total Force initiative isn't new. Originally established by then-Air Force Secretary F. Whitten Peters and then-Chief of Staff Gen. Michael E. Ryan in 1998, the Future Total Force project was designed to explore potential solutions to some of the Air Force's most pressing recruiting, retention, manning and budgetary problems.

At the time, the people assigned to the project were given the freedom to think way outside the box to come up with concepts that might strengthen the rapidly evolving Air Force of the 21st century. Many of the FTF initiatives implemented since that time have addressed how the Air Force can integrate the higher experience levels of the air reserve components with the higher deployability of the active duty.

In March, the Air Force stood up a full-time Future Total Force Directorate to focus on force structure bed-down and FTF organizational constructs. The people who work in the new organization, just like their predecessors, are still encouraged to think outside the box.

"We will eventually have 45 to 50 people working Future Total Force on a full-time basis," General Hickey said. "And the interesting thing is we are an organization that is exactly what we are asking others to be. We have active-duty individuals, Air National Guard individuals and Air Force Reserve individuals.

"Among our ANG and AFR people, we have all of the statuses you could think of. We have AGRs (active Guard and Reserve members), people on drill status, IMAs (individual mobilization augmentees), statutory tour individuals, people from the field and the state ANG headquarters, civilian employees, and contractors. We are tapping into all of the great experience we have available in a total-force environment. When we get together in a room, it's a very rich environment for discussing not what's best for the Reserve, the Guard or the active duty, but what's best for the Air Force as a whole."

Lt. Gen. John A. Bradley, chief of Air Force Reserve and commander of Air Force Reserve Command, believes the Future Total Force initiative is critical to AFRC's future.

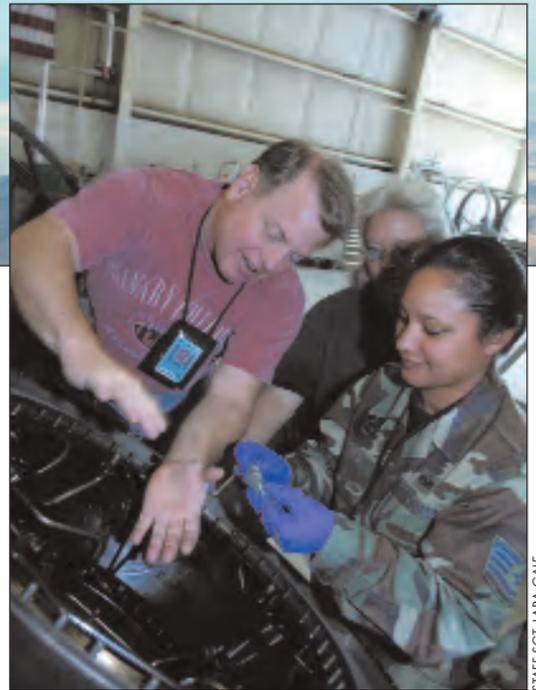
"Future Total Force provides the Air Force Reserve the opportunity to continue to be an integral member of the Air Force team," he said. "By exploring new organizational constructs, we are poised to make transformational leaps now and throughout the 21st century by leveraging the unique strengths that active-duty Airmen and Citizen Airmen bring to the fight."

"The active duty, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard all have different strengths and weaknesses," said Brig. Gen. Charles Ethredge, deputy to the chief of Air Force Reserve. "In an era of smaller budgets and fewer people, it's imperative that we capitalize on these strengths and use our people in the most effective way possible. That's where the Future Total Force comes in."

Under one Future Total Force initiative, Guardsmen and Reservists will be used extensively in new Predator unmanned aerial vehicle units throughout the country.



At Hill Air Force Base, Utah, the Reserve's 419th Fighter Wing is becoming an associate unit with the active-duty 388th FW. (Below) Joel Meyers (left) and Debra Wimberly (center), assigned to the 419th's propulsion flight, review their shop's standard maintenance practices with Tech. Sgt. Valorie Mathes, their active-duty counterpart from the 388th FW. Engine shop mechanics from each wing are spending time together reviewing common business practices in an effort to learn from each other.



STAFF SGT. LARA GALE

At Air Force bases around the country, the Future Total Force is a reality today. Here are just a few of the FTF projects currently under way or planned for the near future:

- At Hill Air Force Base, Utah, the Air Force is creating an associate unit relationship between the Reserve's 419th Fighter Wing and the active duty's 388th FW. Both units fly the F-16. The overall objective of this initiative is to enhance war-fighting capability in everything from peacetime steady-state to wartime surge operations. While the Reserve and active duty have enjoyed tremendous success with its associate concept in tanker and airlift operations since 1968, the integration at Hill will give Air Force officials the chance to evaluate the associate construct in the fighter world. The 388th/419th FW will be the model Air Force fighter wing.

- At Elmendorf AFB, Alaska, the Reserve will become a classic associate unit partner with the 3rd Wing as it transitions into the C-17 Globemaster III. Experienced Reservists will train and fly with members of the 3rd WG, allowing maximum usage of the airlift platform.

Aircraft maintenance will be organized and performed in the same manner as existing associate C-17 units.

- At Peterson AFB, Colo., the active duty will fly and train as an active associate unit with the Reserve's 302nd Airlift Wing. In an active associate unit, the Reserve owns the aircraft, while the active force provides aircrews and maintainers who share the responsibility of flying and maintaining the planes. This setup differs from the Reserve's traditional associate unit program, in which Reservists fly and maintain aircraft owned by the active duty.

- At Scott AFB, Ill., active-duty members will fly and train as an active associate unit with the Reserve's 932nd Airlift Wing to maximize use of new C-40 aircraft.

- At Lackland AFB, Texas, the Reserve will train all C-5 aircrews to alleviate shortages in active-duty airlift personnel as the majority of C-5 aircraft transfer to the air reserve components.

- At Nellis AFB, Nev., the Air Force is

integrating Air Force Reservists into all mission areas at the Air Warfare Center. The Air Warfare Center manages Red Flag advanced pilot training operations, the weapons instructor course and Predator unmanned aerial vehicle operations, and integrates many of the Air Force's test and evaluation requirements. It also serves as home of the Thunderbirds. Officials say the center is experiencing the challenges of high training loads, high operations tempo, limited surge capability and low experience levels.

- At Langley AFB, Va., for the first time in Air Force history, the Air National

Guard will be an associate partner with the active duty. Experienced fighter pilots from the Virginia ANG's 192nd FW and active duty's 1st FW will combine to fly the F/A-22.

- In South Burlington, Vt., the Air Force is testing a community basing program involving the ANG's 158th FW. Active-duty Airmen are being stationed at the 158th FW to take advantage of the highly experienced Guardsmen to accelerate their technical training. While stationed at this first community base, the active-duty Airmen will find support functions traditionally provided on an active-duty installation (housing, medical, etc.) in the local community instead.

- In several states, including Texas, Arizona, New York and North Dakota, the Air Force is planning on using Guardsmen and Reservists extensively as it sets up new Predator unmanned aerial vehicle units.

Air Force Reservists are also involved in FTF initiatives throughout the entire spectrum of Air Force space operations.

At Hill, Reservists from the 419th FW were surprised to hear their unit would become an associate wing with the active-duty 388th when then-Air Force Chief of Staff John P. Jumper made the announcement last November.

"The announcement came as a surprise to the Airmen in each fighter wing," said Lt. Col. Michael Brill, FTF coordinator for the 419th FW. "It generated quite a bit of stress and anxiety in both organizations at the time, but now our people see that we have a huge opportunity to better serve our Air Force and our country. The associate relationship will allow us to capitalize on the strengths of both the active duty and the Reserve and help us both work through some of our weaknesses."

The transformation at Hill is currently in phase two of a



At Scott AFB, Ill., Reservists and active-duty members will combine to fly C-40s for the 932nd Airlift Wing.

three-phase process. Officials from both wings are meeting regularly to review and modify regulations and instructions to develop joint publications and procedures.

Phase three, the end state, will occur when all of the 419th's jets have been transferred to other AFRC units. The current plan calls for that to be completed by September 2007.

"But because execution of phase three will require the construction and renovation of numerous 388th FW facilities, the true end-state to the association may not be realized until 2010, and the phase-three organizational structure we have in September 2007 will itself be a transitional phase," Colonel Brill said.

"We have a lot of work ahead of us," he said. "But we feel honored to have been handpicked by the chief of staff of the Air Force to be the role model for the fighter associate program. What we do will impact our nation's defense posture for many years to come."

"We're real excited about the FTF initiative at Hill," General Hickey said. "Again, this is a great opportunity for us to capitalize on the rich experience levels of our Reservists."

General Hickey said that the FTF initiatives under way right now are just the tip of the iceberg.

"We are constantly looking at how we can better integrate our reserve component members with the active duty into both existing missions and emerging mission sets," she said.

"Our Air Force today is busier than it's ever been, and we are facing threats today that we have never faced before," General Ethredge said. "But we still have to prepare for the threats of tomorrow. The Future Total Force is helping us meet the challenges of today, and it's going to be critical to how we meet the challenges of tomorrow." ★



At Lackland AFB, Texas, a Future Total Force plan calls for Reservists to train all C-5 aircrews.



Service Evolution

Using the Web, the telephone and e-mail, the Air Reserve Personnel Center can get you information in as little as 30 seconds. Here's how it does it.

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Jason Tudor

A world of personnel services directed at almost 1 million people is changing, and for the people championing the effort, as well as those affected by the transformation, the work cannot come quickly enough.

The Air Reserve Personnel Center in Denver is the human resources hub for Air Force Reservists and Air National Guardsmen across the globe. One of the center's primary functions is moving personnel information from the center to the client. However, the process of change and moving information to the center is sometimes cumbersome and hampered by service delivery inconsistencies, according to Col. Ann Shippy, center commander.

A change in what the Air Force calls "personnel service delivery" was necessary.

Colonel Shippy said that meant moving many of the functions reserve-component Airmen use for military personnel flights and ARPC and creating client-controlled telephone- and Web-based tools to deliver services.

"The change saves time and manpower," said the colonel, the first female Air Force Reservist to command the center. "It also allows the Air Force more time for training and readiness and puts more war-fighters back in the field."

Dave Aldrich, chief of the Personnel Services Delivery Directorate, described the time savings like taking a trip in a car.

"Traditionally, a trip to the MPF also meant the person could also make a few other stops: the base exchange, the commissary and other places along the way," Mr. Aldrich said. "For the supervisor, it meant having someone out of work one to three hours. That time could be used for things like readiness preparedness."

So, ARPC, in conjunction with efforts by the Air Force Personnel Center at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, is creating processes to, in effect, evolve the unit personnel specialist into a "commander's strategic adviser," while putting the paperwork on a self-service basis.

First, it has reshaped its "contact center." The contact center — a centralized point where personnel information requests are received — handles more than 14,000 toll-free telephone calls per month, according to John Egolf, contact center manager.

Instead of clients directly calling multiple work sections, they call the contact center. Once callers identify their need, agents search for solutions in a knowledge base, or the Automated Record Management System for personnel documents.

"Our agents can usually handle issues or fill requests within a few minutes, depending on the need," Mr. Egolf said. "That's a huge change."

Next, ARPC has pushed information out of directorate "stove pipes" and into the contact center. If a Reservist needs an

officer performance report, a contact center agent can find and e-mail it.

There's also the matter of allowing clients to retrieve information on their own. Called "Tier Zero," the service is modeled after what AFPC officials are providing to active-duty members via the virtual MPF. Airmen can retrieve duty history, awards and decorations, participation points, and more through a Web site (The address for the Reserve component vMPF is in the sidebar story).

In the future, clients will be able to access data directly to read and print themselves, Mr. Aldrich said.

"This is the Air Force's 'eRecords' project," said Debi Young, record quality management director. "It's a major transformation component. The Air Force is getting ready to scan the entire unit personnel records group from the MPFs, therefore making records available to customers electronically."

Tech. Sgt. Jennifer Bye manages Web, fax and e-mail workflow for 15 contact center agents, handling much of the other Tier 1 service. Tier 1 is the term ARPC uses to refer to a client interfacing with a contact center representative on the telephone or via the Web.

She described transforming the contact center into the nexus of operations for ARPC in one word.

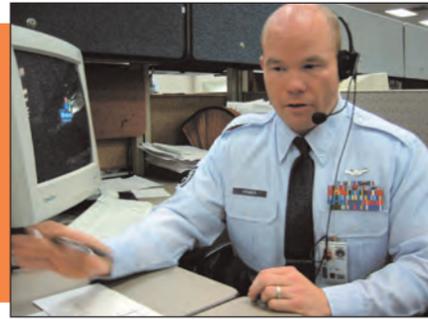
"Busy," said Sergeant Bye, who handles more than 100 requests each week. "The volume is the toughest part."

What information is most requested? Department of Defense Forms 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, according to Sergeant Bye. Performance reports run a close second.

Given the scope of ARPC's reach, there's plenty of work to go around. The center is the hub for actions including:

- Officer and Airman career management;
- Master and field personnel records maintenance;
- Appointment, classification, point credit accounting, promotions, career development, discharge and retirement.

Staff Sgt. Craig Kramer answers a call during business hours. Sergeant Kramer and others respond to more than 14,000 inquiries per month.



ARPC also maintains medical records of non-unit Reservists for certification of fitness and more, according to its fact sheet.

The key to meeting people's information needs is technology. Hugo Padilla, chief of systems support for the Personnel Services Delivery Directorate, is overseeing the merging of computers, phone systems, data systems and people. The goal, he said, isn't just to be ahead of the technology curve.

"We're evolving the mind-set in a lot of arenas," Mr. Padilla said.

Staff Sgt. Carrie Doolen is one of the programmers helping Mr. Padilla in that evolution. Sergeant Doolen's been building interface prototypes for information delivery on the Web. Writing HTML code is a new challenge for her, as is changing the way ARPC delivers information. She said she loves every moment.

"We're finding ways to do away with tedious work and making things easier," she said. "It's a very positive experience."

None of what ARPC is doing gets done in a vacuum. Transformation efforts mimic those done by the active-duty force, Colonel Shippy said. However, each step taken toward streamlining personnel information delivery is a "baby step."

"Change management takes people aback," she said. "I've been in the military 26 years, and the way we deliver personnel services has not changed. But right now, for the first time in history, we are changing the way we deliver information."

"We are aware we have to educate our commanders and ensure the 430 people at ARPC know their jobs will change."

Changes in culture could also mean changes in manpower. The "old way" of doing things means legacy jobs will give way to more technologically "wired" positions. Nicole Vaughan, a manpower

analyst for the center, is examining how the transformation will affect those 430 people.

"We have to have the right people to do the right jobs," she said. "I'm proud of where we're going."

Colonel Shippy, Mr. Aldrich and others rooted in the effort emphasized the time needed to ensure new processes are put into place correctly. The center is also looking at a possible move 10 miles east to Buckley AFB. There's also "new" money being directed at the transformation. Until recently, ARPC had been using its own money to buy computers and train people.

"I think we have done amazing things with our own money, but with additional money, we're going to move light years into the future," Colonel Shippy said.

There's also a need, Mr. Aldrich said, to ensure contact center agents are

trained to handle the multiple data tasks that will go with the contact center's burgeoning duties. The push to move information closer to the user will also mean contact center agents will need to get smarter on separations, performance reports and the litany of activities ARPC handles.

Meanwhile, some processes may never change.

"ARPC serves millions of Guard and Reserve personnel from the day they enlist until well after retirement, said Staff Sgt. Craig Kramer, who answers 50 to 75 calls each day. "Some of our customers are computer savvy; however, many are not. ARPC is here to assist them all."

"We'll be flexible to our clients' needs," Mr. Aldrich said. "Technology integration and use is at the forefront, but we'll ensure everyone who needs access (to information) gets it."

Will ARPC's transformation mean the end for the 39 Air Force Reserve MPFs? Maybe not anytime soon, but most involved with the technology shift agree it's not far off.

"It's hard to define where we'll end up," Mr. Egolf said. "We must look at the budget; the goal for the Air Force is that we service the unit of every component. We can define it as one-stop shopping."

"But we'll never fully get away from paperwork. It will always be there."

"What was once a consolidated base personnel office is now an MPF. That was a change, too," Mr. Aldrich said. "Now, we're moving forward to free up remaining unit-level personnelists to move toward become their commander's strategic advisers."

Colonel Shippy summed up the center's effort.

"In the long run, from a customer's perspective, it will be amazing," she said. "It's not just a big thing in the personnel world – it's the big thing." ★



Getting help

Here's how to reach ARPC's contact center for help with separation paperwork, performance reports and more. Operators (or "agents") are, quite literally, standing by:

Telephone: 1-800-525-0102

Web address:

<http://arpc.afrc.af.mil/support/default.asp>



Senior Airman Mark Fowler, a crew chief with the 403rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., guides a C-130J aircraft into its parking spot Nov. 2. Five aircraft carrying more than 30,000 pounds of equipment returned to Keesler that day, the last of the 403rd's aircraft and equipment to come home after a two-month deployment that began when Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast and caused extensive damage to the base. The return signalled the reinstatement of full Reserve operations at Keesler, bringing home Reservists and civilians displaced since late August. The 403rd Wing is the parent organization to both the 815th Airlift Squadron and the 53rd Weather Reconnaissance Squadron. The wing and its people continued both the airlift and hurricane reconnaissance missions without missing a single tasking despite working from a forward operating location at Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Chance Babin)

The Final Chapter

C-141 approaches historical conclusion as last flight nears

By Gene Vandeventer



Airmen applaud and cheer, thanking injured Soldiers and Marines for their service in the war on terrorism as they are brought aboard the last C-141 Starlifter aeromedical evacuation flight from a combat zone Sept. 29 at Balad Air Base, Iraq. The aircraft, assigned to Air Force Reserve Command's 445th Airlift Wing at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, transported the injured servicemembers to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany, for treatment. The flight concluded more than three decades of overseas aeromedical evacuation missions with the aircraft, beginning during the Vietnam War. (U.S. Air Force photo by Maj. Robert Couse-Baker)

Since its first flight Dec. 17, 1963, the C-141 Starlifter has had a prestigious history. The last chapter of that history began in October when the Air Force's last C-141 unit, the 445th Airlift Wing at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, started replacing its Starlifters with C-5 Galaxies.

Over the years, C-141s have carried cargo, passengers and patients around the globe. Air Force Reservists flew many of those missions, first in an associate-unit capacity and later in a unit-equipped role. In 1987, the 459th Military Airlift Wing at Andrews AFB, Md., became the first Air Force Reserve Command unit to get C-141s. The 445th AW became the second Reserve wing to be equipped with C-141s in October 1994.

The Reserve's 34th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron flew C-141 aeromedical missions in May 1968 when it was recalled to active duty to support combat forces in Vietnam. During their unit's 179-day activation, squadron Reservists flew medical evacuation routes from Vietnam to the United States, participating in no less than 1,262 combat missions in Southeast Asia and 948 evacuation missions from Japan to the United States.

Overall, the Military Airlift Command, in conjunction with the Air Force Reserve, evacuated more than 400,000 patients, including 168,000 battle casualties, between 1965 and 1973, with a perfect flying record.

Operation Homecoming, the repatriation of American prisoners of war near the end of the Vietnam War, once again involved C-141 aeromedical evacuation missions. Between Feb. 12, 1973, and April 4, 1973, Air Force Reserve aircrews, doctors, nurses and medical technicians participated in five Operation Homecoming flights.

The first 40 American POWs to leave Hanoi's Gia Lam Airport were aboard a Starlifter (tail number 66-0177). The "Hanoi Taxi," as the aircraft came to be known, now belongs to the 445th AW and features the plane's original white and gray paint scheme.

Between April 1975 and June 1975, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve C-5 and C-141 crews flew nearly 775 sorties, airlifting evacuees and refugees during Operation New Life, the Indochina

Refugee Airlift. C-141s transported 949 Vietnamese orphans in 24 Operation Babylift missions, starting April 4, 1975.

Most noteworthy during the 1990s were the aeromedical evacuations performed by Air Force active-duty and Reserve crews during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. From August 1990 to March 1991, the Starlifter, along with other airframes, combined to airlift 4,437 litter-borne patients and more than 7,800 ambulatory ones on inter-theater flights. Additionally, the aircraft participated in carrying 1,600 litter-borne and 2,424 ambulatory patients in the intra-theater arena.

In its role as a force provider, the Starlifter aided immeasurably in the delivery of war-fighting equipment and forces to the Persian Gulf theater of operations. C-141s, along with other strategic airframes, flew more than 15,000 missions carrying more than 500,000 people and more than 500,000 tons of cargo during deployment and re-deployment operational phases.

Throughout the years, the Starlifter underwent airframe modifications that improved performance and capability. In 1977 Lockheed began a government contract to stretch the C-141A aircraft, incorporating aerial refueling and other upgrades resulting in the redesignation, without serial number change, to the C-141B. In the 1990s a portion of the C-141B fleet received glass cockpit upgrades, resulting in changing the name to C-141C.

Over the years, Air Force Reserve C-141 crews served as America's ambassadors, delivering food, clothing and medicine in crisis areas around the world. This assistance sometimes involved evacuating people to safety zones. These missions included:

- Evacuating wounded Marines from Beirut, Lebanon, in 1983;
- Providing medical relief to Armenia's earthquake victims in 1988;
- Delivering medical supplies to Mongolia in 1991;
- Off-loading food and medicines to Somalia in Operations Provide Relief and Provide Hope in 1992;
- Airlifting disaster relief items in South Florida after Hurricane Andrew, in Hawaii after Typhoon Iniki and in Guam

after Typhoon Omar in the summer of 1992;

- Delivering humanitarian supplies to Bosnia (Operation Provide Promise) and to Rwanda (Operation Support Hope) in the summer of 1994;

- Transporting support equipment to Oklahoma City, Okla., in response to the bombing of the Alfred P. Murrah U.S. Federal Building in April 1995;

- Delivering aviation and relief cargo to Guam after a Korean airline crash in August 1997;

- Airlifting supplies and personnel in response to Southeast Asia's tsunami in January 2005;

- Performing its last Operation Deep Freeze airlift support mission to McMurdo Research Station, Antarctica, in February 2005; and

- Evacuating patients from New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina slammed the Gulf Coast Aug. 29, 2005.

From Vietnam to present-day Iraq, Air Force Reserve C-141 crews have played a significant force projection role.

These airlifters were in Grenada in October 1983 for Operation Urgent Fury, Panama in 1989 for Operation Just Cause, Somalia in 1993 and 1994 for Operation Restore Hope, Kosovo in 1999 for Operation Allied Force, the United States in 2001 for homeland defense in Operation Noble Eagle, Afghanistan in 2001 for Operation Enduring Freedom, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in 2002 to deliver the first Taliban and al-Qaida detainees from Operation Enduring Freedom and the global war on terrorism, and in Iraq in 2003 for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

When a 445th AW crew flies the last C-141 mission in the spring of 2006, the plane should not be remembered for how it weathered all kinds of adverse situations or kept flying missions for more than 40 years. What makes the plane memorable are the proud men and women who maintained its air worthiness, filled its cargo bays with critically needed support equipment, and flew its passengers and patients to all corners of the world. It is the people and what they did with the aircraft, and not the plane itself, that secures it a special place in aerial history. ★

(Mr. Vandeventer is a staff historian at AFRC headquarters, Robins AFB, Ga.)



Shep and Lilly make their way to a C-141 Starlifter belonging to the 445th Airlift Wing, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, during the final hours of an air evacuation from the Southeast Texas Regional Airport in Beaumont Sept. 22. The dogs and their owner, Linda Haley, were evacuated from the path of Hurricane Rita.

Lt. Col. (Dr.) Joe Legan, a physician from the Air Force surgeon general's office in Washington D.C., conducts a training session for a multinational group of medics at exercise Cooperative Key '05.



Training Together

Reserve medics build NATO ties during Cooperative Key '05

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. Chance Babin

With an assortment of 60 aircraft, many from Eastern European countries formerly part of the Soviet Union, airlifting and transporting patients, a group of 30 Air Force Reserve medics worked side by side with their NATO brethren during Exercise Cooperative Key '05 in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, Aug. 25 through Sept. 5.

Altogether, approximately 140 Airmen were among the more than 1,600 people who participated in Cooperative Key, a NATO air force exercise. The Airmen joined military members from 14 NATO nations and seven partner nations in an effort to enhance their interoperability through cooperation and familiarization with the organization's procedures.

The exercise primarily took place at two air bases — Graf Ignatievo and Krumovo — located in the central region of Bulgaria. The scenario involved two fictional factions that were previously at war with one another but who are now in an unstable peace. A NATO-led peace support operation, with partner nation participation, was in place to enforce the peace and provide humanitarian assistance.

"It provided Reserve medics with the opportunity to work hand in hand with their NATO/PPF (Partnership for Peace) counterparts," said Maj. Melissa Triche, Air Force Reserve Command medical planner for the exercise. She is assigned to the 445th Aerospace Medicine Squadron, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. "For many of our Reservists, this was their first interaction with medics from other nations, and this exercise provided valuable insight as to what they might encounter if or when they

deploy to a location with coalition forces.

"The relationships formed between U.S. medics and their peers from other nations are important. The hope is that our Reservists will be able to reach back and draw from the cultural experiences they had during Cooperative Key and apply them during future encounters with medics from partner nations."

In addition to the 21 participating nations, representatives from nine other nations were on hand to observe the exercise.

"We do a lot of bilateral or multilateral exercises, with one or two other nations, but here we get the most bang for the buck by getting exposure, not only from

a medical but from operational aspects," said Col. Chris Kleinsmith, chief of occupational medicine, 75th Medical Group, Hill AFB, Utah. "In a four- or five-day period, participants get to fly (train) on six or seven different aircraft from other nations."

During the exercise, patients were evacuated by air from various locations in the field and brought to medical treatment facilities as was deemed necessary for their medical care. Approximately 80 patients per day were treated for a variety of simulated injuries resulting from battle and such things as motor vehicle accidents and aircraft mishaps.

For the Reservists, the exercise provid-



Master Sgt. Jerrard Mack, an aerospace medical technician from the 622nd Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., directs the loading of a patient for a medical evacuation flight.

ed a chance to not only demonstrate and share their skills and training but also to learn from others.

"The main thing we get is interoperability with foreign nations and knowledge of how their systems work," said Master Sgt. Jerrard Mack, aerospace medical technician, 622nd Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, MacDill AFB, Fla. "Their systems are very similar, but they don't have quite as much equipment. So you have to do more with less."

Sergeant Mack said one of the biggest challenges working with people from foreign countries is communication.

"The crews have been good to work with, but there are language barriers," Sergeant Mack said. "But with sign language and understanding their limited English, we are able to accomplish the mission."

One key to success for any multinational exercise is for all participants to keep an open mind and be willing to learn.

"The foreign nationals have been very receptive and have opened our minds to different things and new techniques," said Staff Sgt. Chip Crain, a medical evacuation technician with the 622nd



(Above) Capt. Judith Mate, a flight nurse with the 622nd AES, teams up with a nurse from Hungary to set up a cot to be used in a medical tent. (Below) Cooperative Key participants assess patients.



AES. "We've had good crews and good communication. The main thing is we all put our egos aside and got our hands dirty together."

For Capt. Matt Opada, a critical care air transport nurse, 349th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, Travis AFB, Calif., the exercise's success is measured by how much he and his fellow medics learned from one another.

"With this many nations participating, I've been able to learn so much," Captain Opada said. "We (in the United States) often think the way we do things is the only way. This shows us there really is more than one way to skin a cat."

In the larger picture, exercises like Cooperative Key give nations an opportunity to work out the bugs in a practice environment, so all the parts are in place when and if a disaster occurs.

"This exercise affords us a great opportunity to practice peace support operations in a combined scenario," said Lt. Col. Jim Fike, liaison to the Air National Guard for the International Health Specialist program. He served as the NATO medical exercise director and 401st Expeditionary Medical Squadron commander at Cooperative Key '05. "It's a chance for our people, no matter what their rank or specialty, to work with their counterparts from other nations and gain invaluable experience while bolstering our NATO capabilities.

"In any exercise, you get unit and individual training, but on a bigger scale is the ability to exercise in a larger coalition environment. It's a chance for operators to find out things that are and aren't compatible."

For the IHS program, Cooperative Key provided an opportunity to interact with international communities.

"The goal of the exercise is to build international medical relationships," said Lt. Col. Diana Flores, IHS program director, Brooks City-Base, Texas. "It substantiates the importance of medical international relationships and builds international medical interoperability.

"This exercise has proven to be worthwhile. It's sharpened the international relationships, and we've built friendships. Each country has learned medical management of patients. We've learned techniques from one another. Everyone's been open-minded and willing to learn."



Col. Bohdan Makarewycz, chief of professional services for the 349th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, Travis Air Force Base, Calif., and 1st Lt. Cheryl Stacklin of the Virginia Air National Guard's 192nd Medical Group diagnose a patient brought to the medical treatment facility in Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

This open-minded approach is one of the factors that made Cooperative Key '05 a success in the eyes of those running the show, such as Colonel Fike.

"I think it went very smoothly," he said. "Like any other exercise, there were changes dictated by weather and maintenance, which reflected in a requirement to adjust medical operations, but every-

one did a good job of adjusting and overcoming. By the end of the exercise, everyone was working as a team rather than a bunch of individuals." ★

(Sergeant Babin is assigned to the 926th Fighter Wing public affairs office at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base New Orleans, La. He deployed to Bulgaria with the Reserve medics for Cooperative Key '05.)

A Family Affair

Air Force is a way of life for McMillan clan

Story by Tech. Sgt. Rob Mims, photos courtesy of the McMillan family

In his poem "Road Less Traveled," Robert Frost wrote, "Two roads diverged in a wood, and I — I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference."

For one Air Force chief master sergeant at the Air Reserve Personnel Center in Denver, the road less traveled has become one well traveled by her family.

Chief Master Sgt. Karen McMillan, superintendent of medical operations and standards, is an individual mobilization augmentee from Redding, Calif., attached to ARPC's 9019th Air Reserve Squadron. Her duties help ensure the readiness of more than 14,000 IMAs.

While she is using her knowledge and experience to ensure part of her Air Force family is ready when duty calls, she has also ensured that the Air Force remains a part of her real family for the foreseeable future.

Chief McMillan, the daughter of a 24-year Air Force veteran, the late retired Master Sgt. Charles Martin Jr., decided early on that she wanted to live her life in the military.

"I had always wanted to be in the military because of our family's travels and the good friends we met along the way," the chief said.

At first she didn't follow in her father's footsteps but her brother's. Chief McMillan's older brother, Robert J. Martin, was an Airborne Ranger in the Army.

"He was very persuasive and (had) lots of good stories," she said. "I enlisted in the Army Reserve. I couldn't resist the \$2,000 bonus they were offering at the time."

After spending four years in the Army Reserve, she decided to follow her father's path. Chief McMillan joined the Air National Guard, where she stayed for eight years. During that time, she transformed from Air Force "brat" to Air Force member who was

ready to raise some "brats" of her own.

She met Airman Richard McMillan through a mutual friend while on lifeguard duty at the Castle Air Force Base, Calif., pool in May 1979. The two hit it off and were married 23 months later.

"Our first base together was in Greece," she said. "He was on a remote communications site, and I lived downtown so we could be together."

The couple moved back to California for an assignment at March AFB. After being in the Air Force six years, Airman McMillan decided to get out and get a college degree. He graduated from Fresno State, where he also was a member of the school's Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps.

He came back on active duty for another 18 years and retired as a lieutenant colonel. During his second stay in the Air Force, the family of five traveled from Blytheville AFB, Ark. (later Eaker Air Force Base), to Castle AFB, to Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C., to Hickam AFB, Hawaii, to Fort Richardson, Alaska, before finally ending up at Travis AFB, Calif., where the colonel retired.

"We always had great assignments, friends and jobs," Chief McMillan said. "There was always a positive influence on our military life from the people we met in both our careers."

The assignments, friends and jobs did more than have a positive influence on the couple's military careers. They had a major influence on their three children.

Youngest son Charles recently graduated from Air Force basic military training at Lackland AFB, Texas. Charles' older brother, Airman First Class Richard McMillan Jr., is a KC-10



Proud parents Chief Master Sgt. Karen McMillan and her husband, retired Lt. Col. Richard McMillan, pose for a photo with their son, Airman Basic Richard McMillan Jr., after he graduated from basic training. Richard is now an airman first class at Travis Air Force Base, Calif.



First Lt. Nathan Loyd, the McMillans' son-in-law, gives a briefing at McChord Air Force Base, Wash.

boom operator with the 9th Air Refueling Squadron, Travis AFB. He recently returned from a deployment to the United Arab Emirates.

"Most kids never move out of the same town until they go away to college," Richard said. "I went to three different high schools: Radford High in Hawaii, Chugiak in Eagle River, Alaska, and Dixon High in Dixon, Calif."

Although the Air Force attempts to avoid permanent change-of-station moves during a school year, Richard said his dad was transferred twice in the middle of a school year. But the youngster didn't mind the inconvenience of relocating, asking, "How many kids can say they lived and traveled to California, Hawaii and Alaska for free?"

While the McMillan boys followed the enlisted ways of their mother, the couple's daughter, Kristen Loyd, chose the commissioned path of her father. She is a second lieutenant with the 62nd Services Squadron at McChord AFB, Wash. Lieutenant Loyd attended ROTC at Sacramento State University and was a student at the University of California Davis.

While attending ROTC, Lieutenant Loyd met her future husband, 1st Lt. Nathan Loyd, 62nd Communications Squadron at McChord, whose father retired from the Marine Corps as an E-6. They were married March 22, 2003, at Travis AFB. The Loyds are now part of the Air Force family and can follow in the footsteps of the McMillans and be parents of their own Air Force family.

"Both (of my) parents had a significant effect on my entrance into the Air Force," Kristen said. "As a child, I loved moving around, meeting new people and being among other military folks. I did not want to lose the feeling of family that the Air Force provides, so I applied for an AFROTC scholarship."

She said the people she met in ROTC were the same type of people she grew up with during her family's military adventures.

"Military brats have to be many things, among these are flexible and open-minded," the lieutenant said. She said Air Force members and their families move around a lot and experience many different types of societies and cultures. "Being quick to make friends becomes second nature."

Lieutenant Loyd said the people she met in ROTC, although not necessarily from a military background, had the same sort

of accepting, easygoing way about them.

Like her parents, the lieutenant said she still stays in contact with many of the people she met in ROTC.

"My parents have many friends that they have kept in contact with over the years, and I hope it will be the same for me," she said.

Staying friends over the years has had its benefits for this Air Force family. When son Richard received his Air Force wings, his mother and father could not attend the ceremony. However, another member of their Air Force family — Lt. Col. Edgar LaBenne — stepped in to fill the void and pinned on Richard's wings. Colonel LaBenne was stationed with the McMillans at their first base.

"It is a very small Air Force," Chief McMillan said.

When she and her husband started their lives together, Chief McMillan said she had no idea her two families would be so intertwined. When she was promoted to chief master sergeant May 1, 2004, she wished her parents were alive to celebrate her achievement.

Although her parents are gone, Chief McMillan's extensive Air Force family stands with her shoulder to shoulder in celebration and love.

"Being in the Air Force is a unique bond to share; it is one that makes you more than colleagues; you become family," Kristen said. ★

(Sergeant Mims is assigned to the ARPC public affairs office in Denver.)



Second Lt. Kristen Loyd, shown here at work at McChord, followed her parents and both of her brothers into the Air Force. Her husband also wears the Air Force blue. "Being in the Air Force is a unique bond to share; it is one that makes you more than colleagues; you become family," she said.



Airman Charles McMillan takes aim during Warrior Week in basic training.



Lieutenants Kristen and Nathan Loyd on their wedding day.

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