



A Citizen AIRMAN

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Official Magazine of the Air Force Reserve

BIG

*What the new force
structure plan means
for the Air Force Reserve*

CHANGES

on the Horizon

FROM THE TOP



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

New web resource provides information to help you plan, manage your career

An open letter to all Air Force Reserve members:

During the course of your career, personal and professional circumstances may change. This is particularly true within the Air Force Reserve, as you seek to strike a delicate balance between commitments and responsibilities to your families, civilian employers and military service.

In this dynamic environment, a "one-size-fits-all" approach to managing the force typically does not work. You may need choices to help navigate the many challenges you face while pursuing your goals. Historically, one of the Air Force Reserve's greatest strengths is its ability to provide the career flexibility necessary to accommodate family or employer concerns.

Maximum career flexibility is achieved by implementing policies that facilitate movement between the various statuses: air reserve technician, active Guard and Reserve, active duty, civilian, traditional Reservist, individual mobilization augmentee and participating Individual Ready Reservist. Each has its own advantages and benefits that may offer the best opportunity to serve, while balancing other professional and personal obligations.

To provide the information you need to make the best decision for you and your family, we have launched a new page on the Air Force Personnel Services website. Called Continuum of Service, this page is designed to be a one-stop shop for information on benefits and assignments for all reserve categories. It brings together career planning information that was previously located on several different websites.

This month's issue of *Citizen Airman* includes a story on Page 21 that explains a lot more about the Continuum of Service site and its importance to your career planning and management. I encourage you to take a few minutes to visit this site and review all of the great information that is available. I believe it will be a tremendous help whether you are looking for a change of pace in your career now or possibly later on down the road. ★

CHIEF'S VIEW



By Chief Master Kathleen R. Buckner
Command Chief Master Sergeant,
Air Force Reserve Command

As new command chief, I believe in you

I am humbled and honored to serve as the 15th command chief of the Air Force Reserve. I am proud and grateful to follow in the footsteps of those who have served in this position before me.

I want to thank all of you who continue to serve with pride and dignity during some of the most challenging times our Reserve has encountered. The teamwork among our traditional Reservists, air reserve technicians, individual mobilization augmentees, civilians, regular Air Force members and contractors who make up the Air Force Reserve Command is unmatched.

In addition, your mothers, fathers, husbands, wives, grandparents, brothers, sisters, significant others, children, friends and civilian employers have made, and continue to make, important contributions to our success. You have all made personal sacrifices so we may continue answering the call to meet all humanitarian and wartime taskings. My job is to make all your sacrifices matter, because you matter!

I advise the commander on all issues that affect the lives and careers of our enlisted force. My responsibilities include, but are not limited to, ensuring you have the best equipment and facilities, proficient training, knowledgeable and competent leaders, and adequate benefits and services to support you and your families during your time of service and into retirement.

I take these responsibilities very seriously. I have high expectations for all of us in uniform — airman basic to chief. I expect a culture of compliance and accountability that enables everyone to safely and effectively accomplish the mission.

I expect all of us to be good wingmen — watching out for the safety and health of each other, both on and off duty. I expect all of us to be mission ready at all times. That is the promise we make to every American citizen when we put on this uniform, and we need to be able to deliver on that promise.

I expect senior leaders to listen to the concerns of the Airmen under their care and for all of us to use the chain of command. I believe we are capable of solving many of our issues at the lowest level if we are given the opportunity and act accordingly.

If there is one message I can get through to you, it is I believe we are the most feared air power in the world. I believe we can meet and exceed any challenge that comes our way. I believe it is an honor and privilege to wear the uniform of the United States Air Force. I believe I have the best job in the world. And, most of all, I believe in you!

I would like to thank our commander, Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., for believing I am the right person to serve you in this position and be the voice of the enlisted force.

I ask that you continue to believe in the Air Force core values and in yourself. And I promise to continue to believe in you and make sure all the sacrifices you and your families make matter, because you all matter to me.

By believing in ourselves and each other, we will continue to be faithful to a proud service. Continue our legacy of valor and our tradition of honor — we will not fail. ★

Airman Citizen AIRMAN

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April 2012

Finding the Way

Tech. Sgt. Jesse R. Cisero, an electrical journeyman from the 944th Civil Engineer Squadron, shoots an azimuth using the "compass to check method" during land navigation training at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. (Staff Sgt. Louis Vega Jr.)

14

Force structure plan calls for reduction in aircraft and manning for Reserve command

18

First sergeants ensure commanders have mission-ready enlisted force

21

Web page provides single source for career info

22

Military training instructor jobs available

24

Course prepares Reservists for joint assignments

27

Variety of Tricare benefits available to meet health-care needs throughout Reserve career

30

Timely activation orders key to Reservists receiving medical benefits



On the cover: A C-130 belonging to the 911th Airlift Wing, Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station, Pa., lands at Schoonover Airfield, Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., to deliver supplies in support of Global Medic 2011, a joint field training exercise for theater aeromedical evacuation systems and ground medical components. Under the Air Force's recently announced force structure plan, the 911th is scheduled to be deactivated, and the Pittsburgh ARS is expected to close. For more on the force structure announcement and its effect on Reserve organizations around the country, see stories beginning on Page 14. (Tech. Sgt. Christopher Hibben)

Gen. Norton A. Schwartz *Chief of Staff, United States Air Force*

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RESERVE SNAPSHOT



Master Sgt. Otis Sharp, medical services technician, demonstrates his knowledge of life-saving skills during a refresher training course at Scott Air Force Base, Ill. He is assigned to the 932nd Aeromedical Staging Squadron. (Tech. Sgt. Christopher Parr)



Airmen of the 77th Air Refueling Squadron work together to pass the gravity stick during the 916th Air Refueling Wing's annual Wingman Day at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C. Members of the wing participated in a variety of briefings and exercises during the February drill weekend. (Maj. Erin Karl)



Master Sgt. Robert Holland (left) and Staff Sgt. Dmitriy Tsvetkov wrap up an external power unit after performing maintenance on a KC-10 Extender at Joint Base Charleston, S.C., Jan. 10. Holland and Tsvetkov are Reservists from the 714th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J. They accompanied a Reserve aircrew in transporting humanitarian cargo from Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Air Reserve Station, Minn., to Charleston as part of the Denton Program, which allows humanitarian cargo to be moved on military aircraft on a space-available basis. (Shawn J. Jones)



Tech. Sgt. Suzanne Redo, 446th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, helps configure a C-17 Globemaster III to carry 36 patient litters during a squadron exercise. More than 30 446th AES members participated in the flight departing from McChord Field, Wash. The exercise included scenarios where patients injured in combat needed to be loaded and cared for on a four-hour flight around the local area. These training exercises occur monthly and enable Reservists to hone their skills for real-world deployments and humanitarian missions.



A 439th Airlift Wing C-5 Galaxy gives a "light show" just before taxiing out for an evening flight from Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass. (Senior Airman Kelly Galloway)

RESERVE SNAPSHOT



Senior Airmen John Flagg (middle) and Ramon Torres, of the 919th Security Forces Squadron, explain their evidence gathering procedures to Brig. Gen. William Binger, 10th Air Force commander, after a prisoner recovery exercise at Duke Field, Fla. Binger rode with the 919th Airmen during the assault on the compound and entered the building with the fire team. (Tech. Sgt. Samuel King Jr.)



Master Sgt. Dennis Moore, a loadmaster assigned to the 315th Airlift Wing at Joint Base Charleston, S.C., prepares final checks before releasing cargo during a night airdrop and air refueling mission aboard a C-17 Globemaster III. (Senior Airman Bobby Pilch)



Members of the 920th Aeromedical Staging Squadron practice their team-building skills while lifting a patient dummy and life-support equipment during a mass casualty exercise at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla. (Capt. Cathleen Snow)

934th Airlift Wing leaders salute deploying Airmen as their aircraft taxis for takeoff from Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Air Reserve Station, Minn. (Tech Sgt. Bob Sommer)



Senior Master Sgt. Ray Lewis, a refueling boom operator assigned to the 931st Air Refueling Group, McConnell Air Force Base, Kan., peers down at the receiving aircraft from the boom pod of a KC-135 Stratotanker during a refueling flight.



Tech. Sgt. James T. Hindinger and Staff Sgt. David M. Corob, attached to the 911th Security Forces Squadron, Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station, Pa., participate in a training exercise designed to help them maintain situational awareness while dealing with potential threats caused by traffic violators and their passengers. (Tech. Sgt. Ralph Van Houtem)

ROUND THE RESERVE

Homestead Maintenance Group Participates in Technology Test

The 482nd Maintenance Group at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Fla., is capitalizing on new technology by participating in a 90-day test project. Members of the group are using 40 Apple iPads to replace more than 900 technical orders.

"Air Force Reserve Command is testing the iPad at Homestead ARB along with five other locations based on variations in climates and other geological factors," said Corey Runge, Technical Order Distribution Office for Quality Assurance.

The other locations involved in the test are the 910th Airlift Wing at Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio; 914th AW at Niagara Falls International Airport ARS, N.Y.; 934th AW at Minneapolis-St. Paul IAP ARS, Minn.; 439th AW at Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass.; and 434th Air Refueling Wing at Grissom ARB, Ind.

"The implementation of these devices is huge," said Chief Master Sgt. Charles Kotsay Jr., 482nd MXG quality assurance superintendent. "Essentially we are taking millions of pieces of technical data and placing them right at our fingertips. In QA alone, our inspections require we

have a reference for everything. That means carrying a lot of bulky, heavy manuals."

In the past, crew chiefs would carry a case full of books and papers with them to the flight line, exposed to the wind and rain of South Florida. The iPad eliminates the hassle of controlling the bulky manuals and looking up data page by page. Once it's inside a weather-proof case, an iPad can withstand the elements of inclement weather.

"The case being used for the iPads was tested by the manufacturer by dropping it out of an aircraft in flight," Runge said. "No harm was done to the iPad. These cases are tough."

445th AW's last C-5 leaves Ohio for new home in Arizona desert

By Stacy Vaughn

The 445th Airlift Wing's conversion from C-5 to C-17 aircraft was completed Jan. 31 as the wing's last Galaxy took off from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, headed to its new home in the Arizona desert.

Tail number 70-0457 now sits at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base as part of the 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group. It was the last of 10 C-5s assigned to the 445th AW to leave the unit as the wing completed its transition to the C-17 Globemaster III. The wing began the aircraft conversion in January 2011.

The crew taking the aircraft to Arizona was comprised of pilot Lt. Col. Philip A. Pierce Jr., flight engineers Senior Master Sgt. Allan Blackwell, Master Sgt. Bryan Ayers and Tech. Sgt. Philip Probst, and crew chief Tech. Sgt. Chris Falloon. Because most of the 89th Airlift Squadron crewmembers are now trained and qualified in the C-17, a pilot and loadmaster from the West Virginia Air National Guard's 167th AW were called in to help with the transfer.

Transferring the last C-5 to Arizona allowed the 445th to complete its conversion goal of becoming an up-and-running C-17 unit.

"Until the aircraft left, it was taking away from that because we still had to maintain and keep it operational and current," Pierce said. "I'm glad it has found its final resting place."

Chief Master Sgt. Nathan Wilson, 445th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron superintendent, said as long as the C-5 remained at Wright-Patterson, the wing had to periodically run the engines and service various areas of the plane.

As the time drew near for the transfer, members of the 445th Operations Support Squadron aircrew flight equipment shop stepped in to remove various equipment items from the C-5.



The last of 10 C-5 Galaxy aircraft assigned to the 445th Airlift Wing takes off from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, headed for the Arizona desert at Davis-Monthan AFB. The Galaxies were replaced by the C-17 Globemaster III, lined up in the foreground.

"We came in and removed all of the equipment that is primarily used for survival," said Senior Master Sgt. Alan Berens, aircrew flight equipment NCO in charge. "Some of these items included life rafts, survival vests, drop-down oxygen masks and life preservers."

"Because we removed all of these items, we issued crewmembers a depot kit for their flight to Arizona that consisted of oxygen masks, a minimum survival kit and a flyers safety harness."

When the crew got to Arizona, AMARG employees inventoried all the items that were required to be on the plane. Anything missing or not meeting their requirements could have resulted in a delay or refusal of acceptance. After the inspection, the plane was officially turned over to AMARG. ★

(Vaughn is assigned to the 445th AW public affairs office.)

The iPad was chosen for the test after careful review of all available e-readers because of the screen display quality, visibility in dark and light areas, and usability.

Using the iPads reduces printing, shipping and manpower costs, Runge said.

"Currently, changes to the technical orders come via mail," Kotsay said. "Once received, it may take the work center several days to make the updates, depending on the amount of changes. With the new iPad, the work center will no longer need to tie up a technician to change pages and make pencil adjustments. This process eliminates time-consuming and tedious work."

The aircraft maintenance tool room controls the devices. Users must sign them out during the day and return them after their shift is over, ensuring accountability.

"There are security precautions to the device," Runge said. "Besides it being a controlled item that has to be checked in and out, it also has an automatic lock feature that does not allow the device to be accessible without entering a password after a set amount of time. Once the Wi-Fi capabilities are approved, we will be able to track the devices via GPS (global positioning system).

"A survey is completed once a week to monitor the effectiveness of the iPads as a new tool," Runge said. "Needless to say, everyone loves the new technology." (Staff Sgt. Lou Burton, 482nd Fighter Wing public affairs)

Airmen Interrupt Nighttime Training to Aid Accident Victims

Combat search-and-rescue Airmen from the 920th Rescue Wing at Patrick Air Force Base, Fla., halted their nighttime training operations at a remote drop zone in Central Florida to transport accident victims to the hospital.

Four people were injured, one seriously, Feb. 7 when their airboat flipped on the St. John's River, approximately 30 miles north of where the Airmen were rehearsing for war.

The Brevard County Sheriff's Department launched a rescue mission dispatching airboats from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and Camp Holley Fish Camp to assist in taking paramedics to the secluded accident site. The 920th RQW Airmen joined in the operation by landing their HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter on a spit of land in the middle of a swamp.

After paramedics finished treating the patients, the Airmen transported three of the four victims to Holmes Regional Medical Center in Melbourne. The fourth patient was taken by airboat then driven to Holmes for evaluation.

Maj. Rod Stout was on duty at the 920th's on-call desk when the request for assistance came in at 7:50 p.m.

"We can have these guys to the hospital (from the accident site) in five minutes," said Stout when briefed on the situation.

From the time the call for help came in to the time the helicopter crew unloaded the victims at the hospital, the entire operation only took an hour.

"It was nice to be able to help," said Col. Jeffrey Macrander, 920th RQW



commander, who was piloting the Pave Hawk.

Earlier that same day, the wing welcomed home 70 Airmen from Afghanistan, where they were credited with 490 combat rescues. (Capt. Cathleen Snow, 920th RQW public affairs)

Mobile Web App Makes Personnel Accountability Easier

Software developers have created a new mobile web application that allows total force Airmen the ability to account for themselves and family members from their smartphone during a crisis or natural disaster.

During a crisis, the Air Force uses the Air Force Personnel Accountability and Assessment System to account for and assess the needs of the Air Force's total force: active-duty Airmen, Selected Reserve members, Department of the Air Force and non-appropriated fund civilian employees, Air Force contractors (assigned overseas) and family members.

AFFAAS becomes operational, or active, at leadership request during crises to allow the total force to account for themselves and their family's safety and whereabouts. Now individuals have improved access through certain smartphones to the accountability and assessment features of AFFAAS.

"The Air Force is taking AFFAAS to the next level to align with what is used in the private sector every day," said Brian Angell, Air Force Personnel Center Personnel Readiness Cell operations chief. "This wireless capability enhances Air Force accountability during crises and natural disasters."

In the case of an active AFFAAS event, members can use a smartphone to log into the application via their user identification and password. The application

President nominates Jackson to lead Air Force Reserve

Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta announced March 20 that President Obama had nominated Maj. Gen. James F. Jackson for appointment to the rank of lieutenant general and assignment as chief of Air Force Reserve and commander of Air Force Reserve Command.

Jackson is currently serving as deputy to the chief of Air Force Reserve in the Pentagon.

If the nomination is confirmed by the Senate, Jackson will succeed Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., who will retire. The date of Stenner's retirement has not been announced.

The chief of Air Force Reserve serves as principal adviser on Reserve matters to the chief of staff. The AFRC commander has responsibility for the supervision of all U.S. Air Force Reserve units around the world.

Jackson is a 1978 graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy. He completed more than



Maj. Gen. James F. Jackson

14 years on active duty, including flying tours in Europe and the Pacific, before joining the Air Force Reserve in 1992.

The general has held numerous wing leadership and command positions, as well

as staff assignments at Headquarters Pacific Air Forces, Headquarters U.S. Pacific Command and Headquarters U.S. Air Force.

A career instructor pilot and evaluator, Jackson also flew combat support missions during operations Deny Flight and Allied Force. He served as mobilization assistant and also commander, Air Force Doctrine Center, Maxwell Air Force Base, Ala. Prior to his current assignment, he was the mobilization assistant to the commander of Eighth Air Force at Barksdale AFB, La., and commander, Joint Functional Component Command for Global Strike, U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt AFB, Neb.

The general is a command pilot with more than 3,600 hours in the F-4, F-16 and KC-135R aircraft.

Stenner took over as chief of Air Force Reserve and AFRC commander in June 2008. ★

program, any disclosure is not considered to be voluntary. (Jon Stock, *Air Force surgeon general public affairs, Washington, D.C.*)

DOD Begins Prorating Imminent Danger Pay

Pentagon officials announced in February that service members now receive imminent danger pay only for days they actually spend in hazardous areas.

The change was included in the 2012 National Defense Authorization Act, which President Barack Obama signed into law Dec. 31.

The act called for the Department of Defense to pay service members imminent danger pay only for the time they spend in areas that qualify for the pay. In the past, service members received \$225 per month if they spent any time that month in an area where the pay was authorized.

"This is a more targeted way of handling that pay," said Pentagon spokesman Navy Capt. John Kirby.

Now, service members receive \$7.50 a day for days spent in these areas. Personnel who travel to a designated area for a period of less than 30 days should keep track of the number of days they are in the area to verify they are paid for the correct number of days, officials said.

Proration is based on a 30-day month, which translates into a rate of \$7.50 per day. It doesn't matter if the month is 28 or 31 days long, officials said. If service members serve in affected areas for the complete month, they will receive the full rate of \$225.

On Jan. 31, the secretary of defense gave a 90-day advance notice of the drug testing expansion.

"Abuse of prescription drugs is the fastest growing drug problem in the United States, and, unfortunately, this trend is reflected in the military services," said Maj. Gen. Thomas W. Travis, deputy Air Force surgeon general. "While pain medications are highly effective in alleviating suffering from injuries, they are dangerous and potentially addictive when used outside medical supervision."

Taking controlled medications in a manner other than how they were prescribed poses a risk to a person's health and safety and can put others at risk as well.

"Members who need help discontinuing use of these drugs are encouraged to seek care at a military treatment facility immediately," Travis said.

The policy being addressed is not new. In accordance with Air Force guidance and existing law, the knowing use of any prescription or over-the-counter medications in a manner contrary to their intended medical purpose or in excess of the prescribed dosage may have negative health consequences and may also violate the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

Air Force Instruction 44-121, "Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention and Treatment Program," provides limited protections under certain circumstances for voluntary disclosure of prior drug use or possession to unit commanders, first sergeants, a substance abuse evaluator or a military medical professional. Once an Airman has been ordered to provide a urine sample as part of the drug testing

is accessible on iPhones, Androids and certain touch-screen Blackberry phones; however, it is not available on iPads or non-touch-screen phones.

Once logged in, users can account for themselves and their family members. Other available functions include the ability to update sponsor and evacuation contact and location information as well as complete a needs survey if necessary.

The mobile web app uses the browser on the phone versus downloading an application and uses the same URL as AFPAAS, said Donna Williamson, the lead developer with the Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center, Pacific. The site recognizes the person is using a smartphone and automatically adjusts to a mobile format.

The Air Force recently tested the application and shared its findings with the warfare systems center, which will make updates and improvements to the application as necessary. As AFPAAS improves, so will the application and functionalities.

Each military service uses its own Department of Defense-funded application to assist with its specific personnel accountability and assessment system during a crisis or natural disaster. (Jon Hanson, *Air Force Personnel, Services and Manpower public affairs, Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, Texas*)

Service Expands Drug Testing Policy to Include Certain Prescription Drugs

Effective May 1, the Air Force and other military services will expand their drug testing to include testing for commonly abused prescription drugs.

The Defense Department defines imminent danger pay areas as places where members are subject to the threat of physical harm or imminent danger because of civil insurrection, civil war, terrorism or wartime conditions. (Jim Garamone, *American Forces Press Service*)

After Decades at Westover, Unit Commander Named to Top AFRC Post

After more than three decades as a member of the 439th Airlift Wing at Westover Air Reserve Base, Mass., Col. Robert A. Sousa told a packed crowd at the base conference center during his farewell speech in late January that the key to lasting success was simple: "You need to be passionate!"

He explained to the audience at his change-of-command ceremony for the 439th Aeromedical Staging Squadron that "passion is what makes you want to give every ounce of your being during your waking hours — and some of your sleeping ones — to accomplish your mission."

He spoke from experience.

Sousa, after all, first arrived at Westover as an enlisted Reservist in 1974. The years that followed yielded a high-speed Airman and noncommissioned officer who proudly wore the stripes on his sleeves and later an award-winning officer in the medical service corps.

His passionate service at Westover led to his latest assignment, deputy command surgeon for Air Force Reserve Command, the crowning achievement in a long and successful Reserve career.

Sousa, who had been eyeing retirement, said the move to his new assignment at Robins Air Force Base, Ga., came as a surprise.

"I was so close to retirement, even though in the medical field you can go until 62 years old without a waiver," said the 60-year-old Sousa. He said after a lengthy selection and hiring process, he was offered and accepted the position, but not before one final, important, step.

"I said, 'I have to ask my wife (Lydia).'"

She gave her okay.

Lydia will remain in the Northeast with the couple's five children. She said there will be lots of trips up and down the East Coast between the Bay State and the Peach State.

Sousa will work as the chief of staff for the headquarters AFRC surgeon general directorate, which includes serving as career manager for the medical service corps, among other responsibilities.

Because Sousa's new job, which includes guiding the career of officers in the expansive medical service corps, required his immediate attention, he started work while still commanding the 439th ASTS, a position he assumed in 2004. Sousa said that during his first few days on the job, he wore so many hats his head was spinning.

"It took some getting used to," he said.

Sousa has a history of going above and beyond the call of duty to complete a mission and pushing the limits of his own capabilities.

In 1987, he was selected as the 439th Junior Officer of the Year; in 1994 and 2000, he was recognized as the Air Force Reserve's Outstanding Reserve Officer assigned to a medical squadron; and in 2001, he received the prestigious Brigadier General Donald B. Wagner Administrative Excellence Award, just to list a few of his accomplishments.

At his change-of-command ceremony Jan. 21, Sousa relinquished command of the 439th ASTS to Lt. Col. Karen Gardner, after what he described as a very long grooming process, which began years before either of them knew their fates.

"We sat down a long time ago and discussed her future," Sousa said. "I love it when a plan comes together." (2nd Lt. Andre Bowser, *439th AW public affairs*) ★

It's Your Money

By Ralph Lunt

Keep Your Money

My head's going to explode! Seriously, a "new" and "exciting" way to spend money and stay out of debt? How thrilling.

Just pay a monthly fee, load your prepaid card up with your money and spend only the balance on your card. Yes, that's right, the ability to spend your money for a low monthly fee. Brilliant.



I can't believe it took so long for someone to come up with such a great way to suck more fees out of people. Tell you what. You keep your money. Grab a pen, write down this note and put it inside your wallet: "You work hard for your money, and being in control absolutely rocks! Society will tempt you, but never spend more than you make or can afford, as doing so will cause you to lose your financial power and weaken you. Be and stay strong."

As is always the case with our amazing country, you are free to choose your own path. I'm not a "celebrity financial guru" or a hot supermodel. I'm just a guy who 20 years ago got into the financial business. I've made and seen good and bad financial decisions, and I just can't see any good in these "prepaid" cards or, for that matter, any other "pay us to help you keep a budget and not ruin your credit rating" ideas.

We can all do this for free. There is plenty of no-fee advice out there. Check out these online resources:

- <http://www.saveandinvest.org/MilitaryCenter/>
- <http://www.finra.org/>
- <http://www.feedthepig.org/>

Stay powerful, stay strong and make our military the strongest financial force on the planet. ★

(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 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.)



One of the biggest changes for the command is the planned closure of the 911th Airlift Wing at Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station, Pa.

BIG CHANGES ON THE WAY

Force structure plan calls for reduction in Reserve manning

By Col. Robert Thompson

The Air Force Reserve announced March 6 about 3,000 job changes that will realign affected Reservists into growing new career fields and help the total force reduce manning by 9,900 Airmen in fiscal year 2013.

As some Reservists have to move or travel to new jobs, the Reserve plans to decrease its end-strength manning in fiscal 2013 by 900 people, from a total of 71,400 to 70,500.

"We expect to lower the majority of our manning numbers through normal attrition and reduced recruiting accessions," said Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., chief of Air Force Reserve and commander of Air Force Reserve Command. "As we do this, we're realigning our people into the missions that we expect to endure or be new areas of growth in the future."

In addition to the reduction of 900 Reservists, the Air Force plans to decrease the number of active-duty Airmen by 3,900 and Air National Guardsmen by 5,100. These manning cuts are part of the Air Force's force structure changes to align with the president's fiscal 2013 budget plan presented to Congress Feb. 13.

Faced with austere budget times, the Air Force is refocusing and reducing the size of its forces to comply with the Department of Defense's new defense strategy and the Budget Control Act's requirements to cut \$487 billion from the defense budget over the next 10 years.

The Air Force's share of this budget reduction is about \$54 billion, and leaders plan to save \$8.7 billion in fiscal 2013.

"We need Reservists in every Air Force career specialty in order to fulfill the nation's need for cost-effective and efficient daily operations as well as a ready global surge capability," Stenner said. "As people face career and life-changing plans, we want them to know the Air Force Reserve offers them an opportunity to continue to serve."

As the manning changes take effect, they will cause Reservists to move or change units as their old jobs get realigned to new growth areas such as nuclear, space, cyberspace, special operations, training, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance career fields.

One of the biggest changes for the command is the planned closure of the 911th Airlift Wing at Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station, Pa. If the 911th AW is deactivated as planned, the Pittsburgh ARS is expected to close. However, the Pittsburgh Air National Guard Base is scheduled to remain operational.

AFRC officials have assistance programs to help civilians and Reservists affected by these changes to find new jobs:

- ✦ Traditional Reservists, enlisted air reserve technicians and civil servants are encouraged to register in the AFRC clearing-house for job placement elsewhere in the command.
- ✦ Officer ARTs are managed through the ART Officer Career Management Program office and can call DSN 497-1338 or commercial 478-327-1338 for job assistance.

- ✦ Civil servants faced with a move due to organizational restructuring will receive hiring preferences for DOD job vacancies through the Priority Placement Program.

- ✦ All displaced civil servants are eligible for the DOD's Inter-agency Career Assistance Transition Program that gives them special selection priority in other government agencies.

Officials plan to announce details on additional assistance programs as information becomes available. Force shaping programs may be offered if officials deem them necessary to facilitate the planned force structure changes.

Air Force plans call for the Band of the U.S. Air Force Reserve to be deactivated in fiscal 2013. The 45 active-duty Airmen assigned to the band at Headquarters AFRC, Robins Air Force Base, Ga., will be reassigned to other active-duty bands.

In order for the planned manning reductions to take effect, the fiscal 2013 budget must be approved by Congress and signed into law by the president.

For information about the overall Air Force's planned manning changes, go to <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123292694>.



Col. James B. Finney, 911th Airlift Wing commander, briefs unit members on the details of the force structure announcement. The plan calls for deactivation of the 911th AW and closure of Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station. However, the Pittsburgh Air National Guard Base is scheduled to remain operational.

Although subject to change, some of the Reserve's manning changes submitted as part of the fiscal 2013 budget proposal include:

- ✦ Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, Washington, D.C. — Lose one full-time active Guard and Reserve position.
- ✦ Joint Base Andrews, Md. — Add one part-time drilling Reservist position; add one full-time ART/civilian position.

- ✦ Barksdale AFB, La. — Lose 409 part-time drilling Reservist positions; lose 171 full-time ART/civilian positions.

- ✦ Beale AFB, Calif. — Add one part-time drilling Reservist position; add one full-time ART/civilian position.

- ✦ Buckley AFB, Colo. — Lose two full-time ART/civilian positions.

- ✦ Joint Base Charleston, S.C. — Add three part-time drilling Reservist positions; add one full-time ART/civilian position.

- ✦ Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga. — Lose two full-time ART/civilian positions.

- ✦ Dover AFB, Del. — Add two part-time drilling Reservist positions; add one full-time ART/civilian position.

- ✦ Eglin AFB, Auxiliary Field 3, Fla. — Add two part-time drilling Reservist positions; add two full-time ART/civilian positions.

- ✦ Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska — Add nine part-time drilling Reservist positions; add three full-time ART/civilian positions.



Lt. Col. John Breazeale, 917th Fighter Group commander, is interviewed by Adria Goins, KSLA News12 reporter/anchor, beside an A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft at Barksdale Air Force Base, La. The interview focused on the recent Department of Defense decision to cut 21 A-10s from Barksdale. Under the force structure plan, the base is slated to lose 409 part-time drilling Reservist positions and 171 full-time air reserve technician/civilian positions.

- ✦ **Grissom ARB, Ind.** — Lose four part-time drilling Reservist positions; lose nine full-time ART/civilian positions
- ✦ **Hill AFB, Utah** — Add one part-time drilling Reservist position; add two full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Homestead ARB, Fla.** — Lose 40 part-time drilling Reservist positions; lose 13 full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Hurlburt Field, Fla.** — Add 54 part-time drilling Reservist



Air Force plans call for the Band of the U.S. Air Force Reserve to be deactivated in fiscal 2013. The 45 active-duty Airmen assigned to the band at Headquarters AFRC, Robins Air Force Base, Ga., will be reassigned to other active-duty bands. Here, band member Staff Sgt. Marco Munoz performs during a recent Independence Day concert.

- positions; add nine full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Keesler AFB, Miss.** — Add five part-time drilling Reservist positions; add five full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas** — Lose 385 part-time drilling Reservist positions; add one full-time AGR position; and lose 178 full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Joint Base Langley-Eustis, Va.** — Lose one full-time AGR position.
- ✦ **Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.** — Add one part-time drilling Reservist position; add one full-time ART/civilian position.
- ✦ **Little Rock AFB, Ark.** — Add five part-time drilling Reservist positions.
- ✦ **Luke AFB, Ariz.** — Add 1 part-time drilling Reservist position; add two full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **MacDill AFB, Fla.** — Add six part-time drilling Reservist positions; add one full-time ART/civilian position.
- ✦ **March ARB, Calif.** — Lose 12 part-time drilling Reservist positions; lose 14 full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Maxwell AFB, Ala.** — Add two part-time drilling Reservist positions; add one full-time ART/civilian position.
- ✦ **McConnell AFB, Kan.** — Add one full-time ART/civilian position.
- ✦ **Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J.** — Add three part-time drilling Reservist positions; add one full-time ART/civilian position.
- ✦ **Minneapolis-St. Paul IAP ARS, Minn.** — Add one part-time drilling Reservist position; lose one full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Nellis AFB, Nev.** — Add one full-time ART/civilian position.
- ✦ **Niagara Falls IAP ARS, N.Y.** — Lose one part-time drilling

- Reservist position; add nine full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Patrick AFB, Fla.** — Add 10 part-time drilling Reservist positions; add four full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Pentagon** — Lose five full-time AGR positions.
- ✦ **Peterson AFB, Colo.** — Add one part-time drilling Reservist position; add one full-time ART/civilian position.
- ✦ **Pittsburgh IAP ARS, Pa.** — Lose 1,122 part-time drilling Reservist positions; lose 45 full-time AGR positions; and lose 281 full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Pope Field, N.C.** — Add six part-time drilling Reservist positions; add three full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Robins AFB** — Lose 35 full-time ART/civilian positions; lose 45 active-duty positions.
- ✦ **Schriever AFB, Colo.** — Add 56 part-time drilling Reservist positions; add 23 full-time AGR positions; and add 1 full-time ART/civilian position.
- ✦ **Scott AFB, Ill.** — Add 23 part-time drilling Reservist positions; add 13 full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.** — Add one part-time drilling Reservist position; add three full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Tinker AFB, Okla.** — Lose 61 part-time drilling Reservist positions; lose 21 full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Travis AFB, Calif.** — Add one part-time drilling Reservist position; add two full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Tyndall AFB, Fla.** — Add one full-time ART/civilian position.
- ✦ **Westover ARB, Mass.** — Lose four part-time drilling Reservist positions; lose 13 full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth, Texas** — Lose 40 part-time drilling Reservist positions; lose 13 full-time ART/civilian positions.
- ✦ **Whiteman AFB, Mo.** — Lose five part-time drilling Reservist



The latest force structure plan calls for Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, to lose 385 part-time drilling Reservist positions and 178 full-time ART/civilian positions. If the plan is approved by Congress and signed into law by the president, 16 C-5A aircraft assigned at Lackland, like the one shown here, will be retired between fiscal years 2013 and 2016, and the C-5A training school will be closed.

- positions; add one full-time ART/civilian position.
- ✦ **Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio** — Add 49 part-time drilling Reservist positions; add 11 full-time ART/civilian positions
- ✦ **Youngstown ARS, Ohio** — Lose 97 part-time drilling Reservist positions; lose 33 full-time ART/civilian positions. ★
(Thompson is a public affairs officer working in the Office of Air Force Reserve in the Pentagon.)

Under plan, Reserve command will retire 82 aircraft

By Col. Robert Thompson

The Air Force intends to retire 82 Air Force Reserve Command aircraft and make other changes in the command over the next few years as part of an overall force structure plan announced Feb. 3 in Washington, D.C.

The AFRC aircraft are located at units scattered across 14 states: Alabama, Arkansas, California, Georgia, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Texas.

Overall, the Air Force plans to rebalance its ratio of regular, Reserve and National Guard forces at about 60 installations in 33 states and retire 227 aircraft to support a new defense strategy and the president's budget proposal for fiscal year 2013, which begins Oct. 1.

All of the planned actions included in the force structure announcement must be approved by Congress and signed into law by the president.

"We're going to do everything we can to take care of our people as these changes occur," said Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., AFRC commander. "We're putting together programs to retain as many of our Reservists as possible."

Over the next 10 years, the Department of Defense is committing to cutting \$487 billion from its budget. The Air Force's share

of this amount is about \$54 billion, and those cuts may increase.

"The president and Department of Defense have directed our new defense strategy guidance," Stenner said. "Now our Air Force has to set priorities and make some tough choices to rebalance our forces and realign with the new strategy."

To achieve these goals, the Air Force is planning significant organizational changes. AFRC's portion of the cuts includes reducing its inventory by 61 airlift and air refueling aircraft, as well as 21 fighters. This will retire the Air Force's oldest aircraft, make room for newer models and consolidate similar types of aircraft at common locations as much as possible.

One of the biggest changes affecting AFRC is the planned closure of the 911th Airlift Wing at Pittsburgh International Airport Air Reserve Station, Pa. If the 911th AW is deactivated, the ARS is expected to close. However, the Pittsburgh Air National Guard Base is planned to remain operational.

Other AFRC changes include:

- ✦ **Barksdale Air Force Base, La.** — Draw down one squadron by retiring 18 A-10 aircraft as part of the president's fiscal 2013 budget. Also, retire three other A-10s in fiscal 2013 that were previously slated for retirement and waiting to be transferred. Transfer three A-10s to Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo. End the

active associate unit that hosts regular Air Force Airmen and flies A-10 aircraft with the AFRC A-10 squadron. The Reserve unit that flies B-52 aircraft remains operational at Barksdale.

- ✦ **Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Ga.** — Retire seven C-130H2 aircraft and add 10 C-130Js during fiscal 2014.
- ✦ **Keesler AFB, Miss.** — Transfer 10 C-130J aircraft to a new location in fiscal 2014. Although the active associate unit ends as part of the president's fiscal 2013 budget, the Reserve unit remains operational.
- ✦ **Lackland AFB, Texas** — Retire 16 C-5A aircraft in fiscal 2013 through 2016. Close the C-5A training school. Add eight C-5M aircraft in fiscal 2015.
- ✦ **Little Rock AFB, Ark.** — Retire two C-130H2 aircraft in fiscal 2017. The unit remains operational.
- ✦ **March ARB, Calif.** — Retire one KC-135 aircraft in fiscal 2013. The unit remains operational.
- ✦ **Maxwell AFB, Ala.** — Draw down one squadron by retiring seven C-130H2 aircraft in fiscal 2014. The unit remains operational.
- ✦ **Minneapolis-St. Paul IAP ARS, Minn.** — Draw down one squadron by transferring eight C-130H3 aircraft in fiscal 2013. The Reserve unit remains operational even though the ARS is transferred from the Reserve to the Air National Guard.
- ✦ **Niagara Falls IAP ARS, N.Y.** — The air reserve component associate unit, composed of Air Force Reserve and Air National

Guard, ends as part of the president's fiscal 2013 budget. The Reserve retires three C-130H2 aircraft in fiscal 2013 and eight more in fiscal 2017. However, eight C-130H3 aircraft are planned to be added to the Reserve unit during fiscal 2013.

- ✦ **Pope Field, N.C.** — Retire one C-130H2 aircraft and add one C-130H2 in fiscal 2013.
- ✦ **Tinker AFB, Okla.** — Retire four KC-135 aircraft in fiscal 2013; however, the unit remains operational.
- ✦ **Westover ARB, Mass.** — Transfer eight C-5Ms in fiscal 2016. The unit remains operational.
- ✦ **Youngstown-Warren ARS, Ohio** — Retire six C-130H2 aircraft and add four C-130H2.5 aircraft.

"Our future plans must ensure the total force can fulfill the nation's need for daily operations and a surge force in the new strategy," Stenner said. "DOD's goal is to balance force structure reductions with our ability to project power globally and to maintain our force readiness."

"We worked closely with our regular Air Force and Air Guard partners to rebalance our total force team. In order to make our Air Force smaller, all three components had to find efficiencies and reductions — to get smaller together."

For information on overall Air Force changes, go to <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123288620>. ★

(Thompson is a public affairs officer working in the Office of Air Force Reserve in the Pentagon.)

Diamond on the Sleeve ... Gold in the Heart

The approach has changed over the years, but first sergeants still make sure commanders have a mission-ready enlisted force

By Gene Van Deventer

First sergeants have always played a vital role in supporting the health, morale and welfare of all Airmen. They are a critical ingredient to maintaining good order and discipline throughout the ranks, and they promote an atmosphere of opportunity among units, commanders and Airmen by removing obstacles and barriers to performance.

Though their role hasn't changed much over the years, first sergeants' demeanor and personal approach, or at least people's perception of them, have certainly changed over time. Back in the day, the last person on earth who you wanted to be called to see, other than the commander, was the first sergeant. If you were called to see the first sergeant, it was to settle an issue, assign you to some sort of detail or inform you of an emergency. Whatever the case, it wasn't something to look forward to.

Back when I was assigned to the 3800th Headquarters Technical Training Center at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., the first sergeant looked like the model for a recruiting poster. His uniform was professionally pressed, he sported a chest full of fruit salad and a flat-top haircut, and when he walked he did so with military precision. Each step he took was deliberate, and you could hear the sound of his shoe taps well before you ever saw him. When he asked you a question from beneath those darkened sunglasses, "Yes sir!" was the only acceptable reply.

I knew who he was and what he looked like, and I avoided him like the plague. Those who did go to his office went with their supervisor, who was just as nervous.

But that description or image of a first sergeant doesn't apply today. Now, more than ever, first sergeants help provide commanders with a mission-ready enlisted force. They advise the commander on a wide range of issues encompassing esprit de corps, discipline, health and morale, and career and professional development.

Some of the core duties still exist as they did years ago. ... care and upkeep of unit dormitories, customs and courtesies, dress and appearance, drill and ceremony, and commonly executed orderly room functions. However, the first sergeant role today calls for a more "worldly approach" to dealing with the overall health of Airmen and their families.

Physical health is definitely an important factor in being able to meet the stringent demands of multiple deployments. But there's also the mental health side of things. Increases in technology, advances in the complexity of administrative and legal procedures, deployment issues facing Airmen and their families, and the gigantic increase in the need for improved human relations have elevated the responsibilities of the "shirt" immensely.

Today, the first sergeant is indeed the "counselor of counselors," assisting in the acquisition of professional support for Airmen in a wide variety of areas, from financial management and responsibility to family support, housing, education, work, ethics, career development and countless other lifestyle issues.

First sergeants delve deep to try and keep a good read on the pulse of individual Airmen within their unit and the unit's morale as a whole. Many times the first sergeant must act as a detective of sorts to discover and analyze actions that may be tell-tale signs of a personal problem, hidden consciously or unconsciously from the supervisor and others. Sometimes these warning signs are out there for all to see, while at other times they are unknown to the casual observer. Regardless of the situation or issue involved, the first sergeant helps identify problems and seeks trained professional assistance, with the goal of restoring Airmen to good mental and physical health, and maintaining a high level of readiness.

As an active counselor, this "support warrior" can sometimes be stressed beyond his or her limits and must know when to take a respite. Perhaps this is why the first sergeant position has transformed over the years from being an actual career field specialty to a special duty assignment with limited performance years. Compassionate counselors and care providers over long periods of time can easily "burn out." Being on-call and actually coming out to the base in the wee hours of the morning to address an unexpected incident or crisis does eventually have an effect on one's mental well-being.

Candidates for a first sergeant position go through a very thorough and rigorous application and selection process that involves unit commanders and wing command chief master sergeants. Once selected, applicants — regular Air Force, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard — must attend the Air Force First Sergeant Academy at Maxwell AFB, Ala.

The First Sergeant Academy course is 15 training days long. Class size ranges from 70 to 80 students, with roughly 20 percent of the seats filled with Air Force Reserve Command candidates. The academy's curriculum is divided into five major areas: unit administration, human resources, quality force management, deployment issues and military justice.

Successful completion of the course earns graduates the coveted "diamond" device that is worn in the center of their rank insignia. Additionally, graduates earn six college credits toward a Community College of the Air Force degree.



Being recognized as the best among your peers in any specialty is an outstanding feat. ... it's multiplied 10-fold in the command's annual Outstanding Airman of the Year, First Sergeant Category, competition. Master Sgt. Tina Robinson of the AFRC Recruiting Service, Robins Air Force Base, Ga., is the 2011 award recipient.

When asked why she became a first sergeant, she replied: "With my primary duty centered on the welfare of Airmen, what could be a more satisfying job? I've had the best three positions in the Air Force: a personnelist, technical school instructor and now a first sergeant.

"All three specialties have people in the spotlight with a common denominator focused on interpersonal communications," she said. "I'd recommend this duty for anyone positively motivated, people-oriented, and concerned about the physical and mental well-being of the war fighters and their families."

"As a traditional Reservist, it is extremely difficult to manage a full-time civilian job and then be an effective first sergeant serving the needs of my squadron's Airmen," said Senior Master Sgt. Randy Bowen, first sergeant of the 94th Aerial Port Squadron at Robins AFB.

"But it can be done. My success is made possible with the support of my family at home and superb air reserve technicians at work keeping me up to date with issues before our weekend drills. They're the best."

Bowen said being a first sergeant is a challenge and a privilege. "You will most likely find yourself being the first one in for

duty and one of the last to leave," he said. "But one thing is for sure: You'll be a mentor every day to someone in the unit, and therein lies the reward."

"Senior enlisted leaders must epitomize the finest qualities of military leaders and display their professional competencies every day," said Chief Master Sgt. Michael Bellerose, the command's first sergeant functional manager. "The first sergeant special duty is an extraordinary and prestigious venue helping to grow highly motivated Airmen developmentally outside of their Air Force specialties. Commanders should encourage their best noncommissioned officers to seek out career opportunities such as this one. For, without a doubt, serving as a first sergeant is one of the most demanding, yet rewarding, duties an Airman could ever have."

First sergeants proudly display their diamond within their grade insignia. The icon provides an easily recognizable symbol of a professional, trusted agent, whose sole purpose is to provide mentoring care and discipline principles to all within the unit. ... 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The diamond symbol is most appropriate for the identification of a first sergeant, for just as the diamond is a rare and precious stone, cut and etched to brilliance, so too are the proud Airmen who are commonly and respectfully referred to as "first shirts." ★

(A regular contributor to Citizen Airman magazine, Van Deventer is assigned to the Expeditionary Combat Support Division of the Installations and Mission Support Directorate at HQ AFRC.)



Master Sgt. Tina Robinson, who is assigned to the Air Force Reserve Command Recruiting Service at Robins Air Force Base, Ga., would recommend being a first sergeant to anyone who is "positively motivated, people-oriented, and concerned about the physical and mental well-being of the war fighters and their families."

RIGHT PEOPLE in the JOB at the TIME

Continuum of Service web page helps AFRC employees stay informed as they transition through their career

Air Force Reserve Command employees, no matter their category or status, now have a single, continually updated online resource where they can obtain career management information.

The personnel community unveiled the Continuum of Service page (https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/18464/p/16%2C18) on the Air Force Personnel Service website in January. The page was created to keep all employees better informed as they transition between the regular Air Force, Reserve and civilian service during the course of their career.

In the past, information about the various employee statuses — air reserve technician, active Guard and Reserve, active duty, civilian, traditional Reservist, individual mobilization augmentee and participating Individual Ready Reservist — was scattered among several unrelated websites, links and systems.

"The new site was developed as a single point of entry for any personnel-related information, regardless of a person's status," said Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., Air Force Reserve Command commander.

"A successful career in the Air Force Reserve may involve changing from one status to another," Stenner said. "To provide the greatest support possible for a career transition, the Air Force Reserve Continuum of Service site brings together a great deal of information in a single location that is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

The Continuum of Service page on the AFPERS website is accessible from any computer by using either a Common Access Card or password. And since a significant percentage of web browsing is accomplished using smart phones, an evaluation is under way to determine the feasibility of making the AFPERS website accessible through this medium.

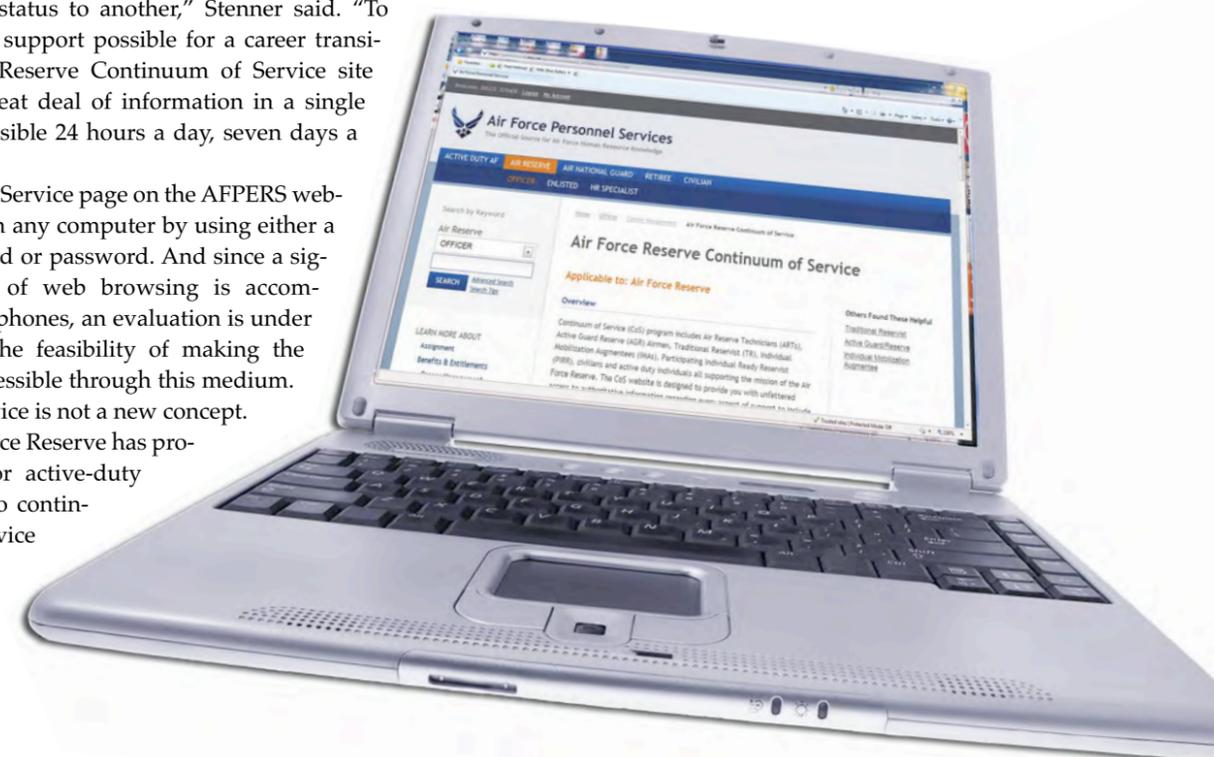
Continuum of service is not a new concept. For years, the Air Force Reserve has provided an avenue for active-duty Airmen who want to continue their military service on a part-time basis. And within the Reserve, it's common for people to

switch among the various programs or statuses during the course of their career.

"For personal or professional reasons, a person may need to change status several times in his or her career," said Col. Connie Hutchinson, deputy director of personnel, manpower and services at AFRC headquarters, Robins Air Force Base, Ga. "They may start out on active duty, then become a TR after a few years, then switch over and become an IMA or an ART, and then move on to an AGR tour.

"What we are trying to do is make these transitions easier for military members because it helps us hold on to highly skilled and trained individuals who may otherwise decide to leave the service. It also helps us meet our goal of getting the right people in the right job at the right time."

In order to ensure the website is current and relevant, subject matter experts continuously develop, implement, execute, monitor and adjust information and policy. Content is reviewed every 180 days to make sure it is still valid and the information is accurate. ★



Military training instructor Tech. Sgt. Carlos Recoder has been training Airmen since 2006



DO YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES?

SENIOR MASTER SGT. MINNIE JONES

Air Force looking for Reservists to serve as military training instructors

By Tech. Sgt. Carlos Trevino

The Air Force is looking for traditional Reservists, staff to master sergeants, who are interested in filling military training instructor positions at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

Currently, 37 Air Force Reserve members serve as MTIs. By September, the Air Force wants to hire 76 more Reservists to fill MTI vacancies.

"Our role in the basic military training arena is to assist the active duty in manning shortfalls and be part of the total force

initiative within Air Education and Training Command and the Air Force Reserve Command," said Chief Master Sgt. Julie Begley, 433rd Training Squadron superintendent at Lackland.

In addition to the TR vacancies, there are five positions available for air reserve technicians and 12 openings for members of the active Guard and Reserve. These jobs range in rank from staff sergeant to chief master sergeant.

"The 12 AGR tours are four-year (active-duty) tours in our

unit," Begley said. "The AGR MTIs are the constant for our unit."

The five ART positions are designed to provide support to keep the squadron functioning during the period between unit training assemblies, the chief said.

Tech. Sgt. Carlos Recoder, who has been training Airmen since 2006, took advantage of the AGR program to continue to serve.

"I found that being an MTI has afforded me the opportunity to train America's Airmen," said Recoder, an El Paso, Texas, native who transferred to the Air Force Reserve from the active-duty U.S. Marine Corp.

Before taking the helm of a flight of recruits, an MTI trainee has to complete a seven-week course, Begley said. MTI trainees learn how to lecture classes, perform proper drill formation instruction, conduct dormitory inspections and counsel recruits.

"The course is challenging," Begley said. "It demands preparation, tenacity, time-management skills and extreme self-discipline."

One misconception about being an MTI is the amount of time it takes to do the job.

"It's all about time management," Recoder said. "It's what you make it. The first year is learning time management, effective teaching, mentoring younger instructors, making appointments for trainees, counseling them, advising them on finances and making sure they are meeting fitness requirements."

Recorder pointed out he has time to help coach his daughter's volleyball team. Instructors generally work eight to 10

hours a day on a unit training assembly weekend, Begley said.

ART MTIs fulfill duties and responsibilities during the work-week that do not require them to work with the trainees. However, during UTAs and annual tours, ART MTIs do work with trainees.

Instructing trainees is not the only job of a MTI. They also serve as judges at Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps drill competitions, participate in change of command ceremonies and serve at other official functions throughout the Air Force.

"MTIs are the experts for drill and ceremonies," said Tech. Sgt. Michael Hernandez, an ART MTI. "We might get called to go on a TDY (temporary duty) to participate in a change of command ceremony. MTIs are always called for those events; we do it on a regular basis."

Another benefit of serving as an MTI is the acquired skills carry over and strengthen a person's civilian and military resume when they finish their tour, Begley said. One of our members, Tech. Sgt. Ricardo Chavez, was selected as one of the Air Force's 12 Outstanding Airmen in 2011.

"Experience as an MTI gives an NCO experience as a supervisor in the Air Force, and it is a career enhancer," Begley said.

For information about filling an MTI vacancy or the job qualifications, contact the 433rd TRS MTI recruiting team at 210-671-3025/2410 or via email at 433TRS.RECRUITING@us.af.mil. ★

(Trevino is assigned to the 433rd Airlift Wing public affairs office at Lackland AFB.)

Air Force prior service recruiting program open to Reservists

By Staff Sgt. William Royster

A large percentage of the people who join the Air Force Reserve do so after serving on active duty first. But did you know that this process can work in reverse as well — that the active-duty Air Force has a prior-service recruiting program that is open to all members of the military branch's reserve and guard forces?

The prior-service program opens Oct. 1 of each fiscal year with three categories of opportunity: direct duty with no requirements for completed years of service; direct duty with a requirement for completed years of service; and retraining opportunities.

The key element for those wanting to join through the prior-service program is their most recent Air Force specialty code. A select number of applicants will fall into the direct duty with no time in service requirements category. This option is reserved for members holding very specific AFSCs. Most applicants will fall into the direct duty with time in service requirements or retraining categories.

Applicants not falling into the first direct duty category should refer to the prior-service matrix to determine their tentative eligibility.

The matrix is released at the beginning of each quarter and can be found on the Air Force Recruiting Service's portal page. To locate it, select "Publications" from the side menu of the main AFRS page. Then select "Procedural Guidance Messages, 900-Prior Service."

This matrix shows the total number of positions the Air Force

needs for each AFSC, broken down by total years of service. For example, if you have 10 years of service, hold the 2A6XI AFSC and there is a positive number in the corresponding cell on the matrix, you may be eligible for the prior-service program.

Members who do not qualify for one of the direct duty positions may be eligible to retrain. On average there are between 75 and 110 retraining slots available for all prior-service applicants into the following AFSCs:

- ✦ 1C2X1 (combat control)
- ✦ 1T231 (pararescue)
- ✦ 1C431 (tactical air control party)
- ✦ 3P031B (combat arms)
- ✦ 1U031 (remotely piloted aircraft sensor operator)
- ✦ 1T031 (survival, evasion, resistance and escape)
- ✦ 3E8X1 (explosive ordnance disposal)
- ✦ 8R000 (recruiter)
- ✦ 6C031 (contracting)

The prior-service program will accept 250 applicants (including retrainees) during fiscal 2012 on a first-come, first-served basis. However, this total is subject to change based on the Air Force's needs.

Members interested in this program should contact their local recruiter as soon as possible to determine their eligibility. For information or to locate your local recruiter, visit <http://www.airforce.com/contact-us/faq/prior-service/>. ★

(Royster is assigned to the 336th Recruiting Squadron, Moody Air Force Base, Ga.)

PUT ON YOUR

THINKING CAP



A Reserve Components National Security Course student asks Dr. Dan Kuehl a question during his lecture on information and national security. Kuehl is director of the Information Strategies Concentration Program at the National Defense University, Fort Lesley J. McNair in Washington, D.C.

National security course is an educational experience like no other

Story by Maj. Sharon Kibiloski, photos by Coast Guard YN1 Sagrario Medrano

It's a chilly morning on Fort Lesley J. McNair, a historic military post situated at the confluence of the Anacostia and Potomac Rivers in Washington, D.C. In a National Defense University classroom, several students in business suits pore over a world map and debate courses of action for their given problem.

"Direct military action? I'm not sure that's the best option. There's got to be something else we can do," said Air Force Col. Vito Addabbo, an individual mobilization augmentee assigned to the Global Operations Directorate at U.S. Strategic Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.

"How about assisting their military instead? We could place a special forces team there to provide them with advice and guidance," said Army Lt. Col. Chris Gerdes, staff officer in the Office of the Provost Marshal General, Headquarters Department of the Army.

Addabbo and Gerdes are attending the Reserve Components National Security Course, a two-week joint course for senior officers and senior noncommissioned officers designed to lay a foundation for future joint command management and staff responsibilities in multinational, intergovernmental and joint national security settings.

By emphasizing joint roles, requirements, missions and operations, the RCNSC awards graduates two points in the joint qualification system.

"The course offers a framework for thinking about problems strategically," said Navy Cmdr. Mike Mullen, director of the Joint Reserve Affairs Center, the NDU special component responsible

for administering the course. "We bring together reservists from all services — and even partner nations — to focus on teaching them how to think. ... not what to think."

Conducted three times a year for about 350 total students, the RCNSC is an educational experience like no other for most members of the reserve components.

ACADEMIC CONTENT AND PHILOSOPHY

Using a unique lecture and small group format, students learn about and discuss a vast array of national security topics in an environment free from military rank and attribution. Course topics are pulled from a variety of disciplines and range from military strategy to economics to interagency processes to regional studies.

While these enduring subjects make up a bulk of the coursework, current topics such as the effects of the Arab Spring and lessons in development and foreign aid add to the distinctive curriculum. Lectures are taught by faculty from several of the prestigious colleges and centers within the university, including the National War College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

"I love teaching at RCNSC because reservists have such broad backgrounds," said Dr. Alan Gropman, a recently retired distinguished professor of national security policy at ICAF who is now an adjunct professor at George Mason University. "In addition to military expertise, reservists have broad experience in industry and all parts of our government. They ask very sophisticated questions."

Mark Foulon, professor of business and industry at ICAF, agrees.

"RCNSC students live in a world beyond the military," he said. "If I tell them something that they don't agree with, they will not hesitate to call me on it!"

RCNSC is open to reserve senior officers (usually O-5 and O-6) and reserve senior NCOs (E-8 and E-9) of all services. To provide for a more open learning environment unencumbered by rank, students wear civilian business attire for the duration of the course. Adherence to a "non-attribution policy," meaning nothing said during the course can later be attributed directly or indirectly without permission, allows for more candid and beneficial discussions.

This type of collaborative environment better lends itself to learning, according to RCNSC senior staff.

"We want people to think about what answers are out there — what's in the realm of the possible," said Air Force Col. Carol Reece, RCNSC senior seminar leader and a regional emergency preparedness officer for the Federal Emergency Management Agency. "There's no spoon-feeding here. ... we want students to think and contribute without rank in any way."

Chief Master Sgt. Desriann Stevens found the environment very helpful.

"The freedom to be able to speak and share ideas without worrying about rank has impacted my learning tremendously in a good way," Stevens said. As a member of the active Guard and Reserve, Stevens is superintendent for policy integration in the Office of Air Force Reserve at the Pentagon.

While originally only for officers, senior NCOs have been taking part in RCNSC as part of their professional development for several years.

"Opening the course to enlisted reservists has been great for a couple of reasons," said Senior Master Sgt. Dominick Landolfi, superintendent for the RCNSC and a course graduate. "First, as senior NCOs, you are the voice of the enlisted, and that is a valu-



Celina Realuyo challenges RCNSC students to think about the new global security environment. She is an assistant professor of national security affairs at the Center for Hemispheric Defense Studies at the National Defense University.

"WE BRING TOGETHER RESERVISTS FROM ALL SERVICES — AND EVEN PARTNER NATIONS — TO FOCUS ON TEACHING THEM HOW TO THINK. ... NOT WHAT TO THINK."

Navy Cmdr. Mike Mullen, director of the Joint Reserve Affairs Center

able perspective to have represented in discussions. And second, the course really broadens the perspective of the senior enlisted, forcing them to think globally, beyond their work centers."

Days at RCNSC are divided almost equally between large group lectures — complete with question-and-answer interactions with the professors — and small group seminars where students can discuss the material together with the help of a seminar leader.

The cadre of seminar leaders is comprised of prior students who are specifically interviewed and chosen for their facilitation skills and passion for the subjects, Reece said.

Col. Wade Smith, a first-time seminar leader during the January 2012 course, sees his role ranging from facilitator to referee, if need be.

"I try to set the right tone for interaction in the seminar sessions," he said. "Seminar leaders aren't just lecturers. We need to facilitate the conversation by pushing it in different directions, without being too directive, while still keeping the focus. It's an interesting balance."

Smith is the mobilization assistant to the deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force for contracting in his Air Force Reserve capacity and a Federal Aviation Administration flight test engineer in Atlanta when he is not on duty.

Learning about all of the components impacting national security in a joint environment, even things such as the structure of the U.S. electrical grid, has been eye-opening, Addabbo said. In his civilian career, Addabbo is an American Airlines pilot flying the Boeing 777 aircraft.

"Interaction with the other services has really been my favorite part of the course," he said. "During our discussions, we've discovered that we are all fighting the same battles in our services. ... we may just come at it a bit differently."

As preparation to attend RCNSC, students are required to write and bring with them a 500-word essay giving a viewpoint on one of several questions. The questions, ranging from the U.S. strategy toward China to the impact of the country's debt on national security, are meant to be thought-provoking and get the students ready to delve into strategic subjects they may not have dealt with before, Reece said.

Toward the end of the course, students share their essays with each other and discuss if, given the chance to do the assignment again, they would write anything differently. Most students say they would.

"I wrote about our strategic interest in Afghanistan post-Bin Laden," Stevens said. "After being in this course, I've definitely changed my thoughts a bit. I've got so much more knowledge to add now."

APPLYING THE CONCEPTS

To complement the lectures and seminars, RCNSC students have the opportunity to apply what they are learning in several venues, including a strategic policy exercise, a visit to Capitol Hill and an optional tour of Gettysburg National Military Park.

"These opportunities reinforce the principles of strategic thinking and take into account many different learning styles," Mullen said. "Some people learn by listening, some are more visual learners, and others need hands-on experiences in order to absorb the material."

The "Gulf Gambol" exercise, created by the Center for Applied Strategic Learning at NDU, provides a "hands-on" introduction to national security policy and strategy formulation. The problem is designed to require students to assess the security challenge to U.S. national interests, determine appropriate policy to protect those interests, incorporate key concerns of members of the interagency community, consider opportunities and limitations, and ultimately develop a strategy that draws on a range of instruments of national power.

"Most of us are used to looking at problems from the tactical and operational level," Addabbo said. "When we were presented with this problem, we had to think strategically and not get bogged down in just how many battalions and wings we'll need. That was a bit out of our comfort zone."

During the exercise, students are assigned roles to play. Most are positions outside of the Department of Defense, such as in the Departments of State, Agriculture and Commerce.

"Part of the value of the exercise was just to see how hard it really is to account for everyone's equities when trying to develop a solution to a problem in a very time-constrained environment," Stevens said.

Taking advantage of the location in Washington, a highlight of the course is Capitol Hill Day. The day begins with briefings from a member of Congress, congressional staffers and other



RCNSC students discuss national security decision-making processes during their small group seminar.

HOW TO APPLY TO ATTEND RCNSC

Officers:

- ✦ Course is targeted at O-5s and O-6s (O-4s are allowed to apply and attend).
- ✦ Application and selection is made through the Reserve School Selection Board, which meets twice a year, usually in January and July.
- ✦ Invitation to apply goes out from the Air Reserve Personnel Center with applications due 30 days before a board convenes.
- ✦ Must meet all readiness requirements to apply.
- ✦ For more information, visit the Reserve School Selection Board page on the Air Force Personnel Services website at https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/14251/p/16,17/c/549.

Enlisted:

- ✦ Course is targeted at E-8s and E-9s
- ✦ Application and selection is made through the Enlisted Developmental Education Board, which meets once a year.
- ✦ Invitation to apply goes out in the May timeframe from the Air Reserve Personnel Center with applications due in early September.
- ✦ Members must have completed Community College of the Air Force, have at least three years retainability and meet readiness requirements.
- ✦ For information, contact Chief Master Sgt. Ingrid Floyd, chief of enlisted force development at Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command, DSN 497-0252 or commercial 478-327-0252.

experts on the legislative process. Students then spend the afternoon on the Hill touring the Capitol — with special access to both the House and Senate galleries — or meeting with legislators from their home states and districts.

Building on the strategic geography course topic, students have the chance to tour the battlegrounds of Gettysburg with Dr. Paul Severance, a professor of military strategy and warfare at ICAF. Severance is an expert in the Civil War and provides a unique look at how geography played an important role in wars of the past just as it still does today.

COURSE ADMINISTRATION

Putting on a course of this magnitude requires an extensive and motivated support staff. RCNSC boasts a cadre of hand-selected people who ensure the smooth operation of the course. From in-processing students to providing technical support to seminars and lectures, the team of fellow Guard and Reserve members manages it all.

Enlisted Guard or Reserve members interested in becoming part of the RCNSC support staff can contact Master Sgt. Cynthia King, NCO in charge of the Joint Reserve Affairs Center, via email at cynthia.king@ndu.edu. ★

(Kibiloski is the mobilization assistant to the chief of public affairs at the Air Force Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Office in San Antonio, Texas, and is a 2011 graduate of the Reserve Components National Security Course.)



Learning to Navigate the Tricare Maze

Benefits available to meet health-care needs throughout your Reserve career

Lt. Col. Alexander Alex



Over the past 10 years, there has been a major shift in access to medical benefits for members of the reserve components and their families. While the benefits are attractive, Reservists have a complex task figuring out what they are eligible for and how the rules are applied.

To make this task a little bit easier, I have assembled information to outline benefits in an easy-to-understand format. Keep in mind that while activated under federal orders for a period of more than 30 consecutive days, reserve members are covered, from a health-care standpoint, as active-duty service members, and their families are covered as active-duty family members.

Non-activated members of the Selected Reserve of the Ready Reserve may qualify to purchase two voluntary, premium-based plans for themselves and their families: Tricare Reserve Select for health-care coverage and the Tricare Dental Program for dental coverage.

Members of the Retired Reserve may qualify to purchase Tricare Retired Reserve for health coverage and the Tricare Retiree Dental Program for dental coverage for themselves and their family members.

First and foremost, Reservists and their family members must be registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System to be eligible for Tricare. Reservists must register their family members by visiting a uniformed services identification card-issuing facility. To find a facility, go online to www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl. More information about updating DEERS records is available at www.tricare.mil/deers.

TRS, TDP, TRR and TRDP are available for purchase by qualified sponsors. Selected Reserve members and Retired Reserve members do not qualify to purchase TRS or TRR if they are either eligible for or enrolled in the Federal Employees Health Benefits program.

Coverage varies depending on a person's uniformed service status: not activated, activated, deactivated or retired. As mentioned earlier, activated Reservists and their family members receive the same health-care benefits as active-duty military members and their families. Refer to the accompanying tables to learn about the Tricare coverage options available to Reservists and their family members during each of the other three service statuses.

Medical and Dental Benefits

Deactivated (released from a period of activation)

| Potential Coverage | Sponsor Coverage | Family Coverage |
|--|--|--|
| Transitional Assistance Management Program | * TAMP provides 180 days of transitional Tricare coverage for eligible sponsors. * Eligible sponsors may enroll (or re-enroll) in Tricare Prime, if available, or use Tricare Standard and Tricare Extra. Tricare Prime Remote is not available during TAMP. | * TAMP provides 180 days of transitional Tricare coverage for eligible family members. * Family members are automatically covered under Tricare Standard and Tricare Extra and may choose to enroll (or re-enroll) in Tricare Prime, if available. Tricare Prime Remote for active-duty family members is not available during TAMP. |
| Tricare Reserve Select | * Qualified sponsors may purchase TRS to begin after active-duty benefits or TAMP coverage ends, whichever is later. * To receive continuous coverage, TRS coverage must be purchased within 30 days of the last day of Tricare coverage (e.g., active duty benefits, TAMP). | * Eligible family members may be included in TRS member-and-family coverage. * Family members may only receive TRS coverage through their sponsors. * If Selected Reserve member is covered by TRS on the day of his or her death, surviving family members may be eligible to purchase or continue coverage for an additional six months beyond the date of the member's death. The effective date of coverage is the day after the date of death. Surviving family members are responsible for paying applicable monthly premiums. |
| Continued Health Care Benefit Program This is the military's version of COBRA coverage found in the civilian sector | * CHCBP provides up to 18 months of premium-based health coverage. * Eligible sponsors may purchase CHCBP within 60 days of the end of Tricare eligibility or TAMP coverage, whichever is later. * If Selected Reserve status ends, sponsors who had TRS coverage are eligible for any time remaining in the 18-month CHCBP eligibility period. Sponsors must enroll in CHCBP within 30 days of the end of TRS coverage. | * Eligible family members may be included in CHCBP family coverage purchased by their sponsors. * Former spouses of National Guard and Reserve members are not eligible for CHCBP family coverage. |
| Tricare Dental Program | * Sponsors enrolled in the TDP before activation will be automatically re-enrolled. * Sponsors not previously enrolled may purchase TDP sponsor coverage, which is separate from TDP family coverage. | * Eligible sponsors may purchase or continue TDP family coverage, which is separate from sponsor coverage. * Premium will increase to the National Guard and Reserve family rate. |

Not Activated (includes members on active-duty orders for 30 days or less)

| Potential Coverage | Sponsor Coverage | Family Coverage |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Line-of-Duty Care | LOD care covers treatment of an injury, illness or disease incurred or aggravated in the line of duty. | LOD care is not available for family members. |
| Tricare Reserve Select | Qualified members may purchase TRS member-only or member-and-family coverage. | Eligible family members may be included in TRS member-and-family coverage. |
| Tricare Dental Program | Eligible sponsors may purchase TDP sponsor coverage, which is separate from family member coverage. | Sponsors may purchase TDP family coverage, which is separate from sponsor coverage, for eligible family members. |

Retired Reserve

| Potential Coverage | Sponsor Coverage | Family Coverage |
|---|---|---|
| Tricare Retired Reserve (gray area Reservist) | * Qualified members of the Retired Reserve may purchase TRR until they reach age 60. | * Eligible family members may be included in TRR member-and-family coverage purchased by their sponsors. * If a qualified member of the Retired Reserve dies during a period of TRR coverage, the sponsor's immediate family members may qualify to purchase new or continue existing TRR coverage until the date the deceased member of the Retired Reserve would have turned 60. |
| Tricare Retiree Dental Program | * Eligible sponsors may purchase coverage under the TRDP. Eligibility begins upon retirement from the Reserve and is not contingent upon reaching age 60. | * Eligible family members may purchase coverage under the TRDP as long as the sponsor is also enrolled in the TRDP. * Former spouses and remarried surviving spouses are not eligible to purchase coverage. |

Premiums and Deductibles

Tricare Reserve Select Premiums

| Type of Coverage | Monthly Premium |
|--|-----------------|
| Tricare Reserve Select Member-Only | \$53.16 |
| Tricare Reserve Select Member-and-Family | \$197.76 |

Tricare Retired Reserve Premiums

| Type of Coverage | Monthly Premium |
|---|-----------------|
| Tricare Retired Reserve Member-Only | \$408.01 |
| Tricare Retired Reserve Member-and-Family | \$1,020.05 |

Annual Outpatient Deductible (The annual deductible varies based on beneficiary category and type of coverage, individual or family.)

| Beneficiary Category | Outpatient Deductible | |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| Tricare Reserve Select (sponsor rank E-4 and below) | \$50/Individual | \$100/Family |
| Tricare Reserve Select (sponsor Rank E-5 and above) | \$150/Individual | \$300/Family |
| Tricare Retired Reserve | \$150/Individual | \$300/Family |
| Family members of National Guard and Reserve activated for more than 30 consecutive days in support of a contingency operation | \$0 | |

Tricare Dental Program Monthly Premiums (Amounts are based on beneficiary category and type of plan, single or family.)

| Beneficiary Category | Type of Plan | Monthly Premiums |
|---|---|------------------|
| National Guard or Reserve Member | Single (sponsor only) | \$12.69 |
| National Guard or Reserve Family Member | Single (one family member, excluding sponsor) | \$31.72 |
| | Family (more than one family member, excluding sponsor) | \$79.29 |
| National Guard or Reserve Member and Family | Single plan (sponsor only) and family plan | \$91.98 |
| Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) Member | Single (sponsor only) | \$31.72 |
| | Family (more than one family member, excluding sponsor) | \$79.29 |
| IRR Family member | Single (one family member, excluding sponsor) | \$31.72 |
| | Family (more than one family member, excluding sponsor) | \$79.29 |
| IRR Member and Family | Single plan (sponsor only) and family plan | \$111.01 |



Catastrophic Cap

The catastrophic cap is the maximum out-of-pocket amount beneficiaries will pay each fiscal year (Oct. 1 – Sept. 30) for Tricare-covered services.

For people enrolled in Tricare Reserve Select, the catastrophic cap is \$1,000. For those in Tricare Retired Reserve, the cap is \$3,000. Beneficiaries are not responsible for any amounts above the catastrophic cap in a given fiscal year, except for services that are not covered, point-of-service charges and the additional 15 percent that non-participating providers may charge above the Tricare-allowable charge. The catastrophic cap amount is based on a person's beneficiary category and is not affected by the program option. POS deductibles, cost-share amounts, and TRS and TRR premiums are not creditable to the annual catastrophic cap.

Tricare Retiree Dental Plan Monthly Premiums

Monthly premiums for the Enhanced Tricare Retiree Dental Plan vary depending on location and type of plan (single, dual or family). Annual rates are subject to change each fiscal year. Reservists who move or change their enrollment option may

see an increase or decrease in their monthly premium rate. To view the premium rate for a specific region, visit www.trdp.org and use the "Premium Search" tool in the "Prospective Enrollees" section. ★

Reservists reaching age 60 qualify for Tricare Standard/Prime

| Beneficiary Category | Type of Plan | Monthly Premiums for 2012 |
|----------------------|--|--|
| Tricare Standard | Benefit includes eligible family members | \$0 premiums, but annual deductibles and cost-shares apply |
| Tricare Prime | Single (sponsor only) | \$260 |
| | Family plan | \$520 |

For Information and Assistance

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| TRICARE North Region Health Net Federal Services, LLC 1-877-TRICARE (1-877-874-2273) www.hnfs.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 www.triwest.com/NGR |
| TRICARE Overseas Program (TOP) Regional Call Center—Eurasia-Africa1 +44-20-8762-8384 (overseas) 1-877-678-1207 (stateside) tricarelon@internationalsos.com | TOP Regional Call Center— Latin America and Canada1 +1-215-942-8393 (overseas) 1-877-451-8659 (stateside) tricarephl@internationalsos.com | TOP Regional Call Centers—Pacific1 Singapore: +65-6339-2676 (overseas) 1-877-678-1208 (stateside) sin.tricare@internationalsos.com Sydney: +61-2-9273-2710 (overseas) 1-877-678-1209 (stateside) sydricare@internationalsos.com |
| TRICARE Reserve Select www.tricare.mil/trs | TRICARE Retired Reserve www.tricare.mil/trr | Transitional Assistance Management Program www.tricare.mil/tamp |
| TRICARE Dental Program 1-800-866-8499 (stateside) +1-888-418-0466 (overseas) www.TRICAREdentalprogram.com | TRICARE Retiree Dental Program 1-888-838-8737 (stateside) AT&T USADirect® Access Number plus +866-721-8737 (overseas—for access numbers, visit www.usa.att.com/traveler/index.jsp) www.trdp.org | Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS)—Update Information 1-800-538-9552 1-831-655-8317 (fax) www.tricare.mil/deers |
| Continued Health Care Benefit Program Humana Military Healthcare Services, Inc. 1-800-444-5445 www.tricare.mil/chcbp | TRICARE Pharmacy Program 1-877-363-1303 www.expresscripts.com/TRICARE www.tricare.mil/pharmacy Member Choice Center (convert retail prescriptions to home delivery) 1-877-363-1433 | US Family Health Plan 1-800-74-USFHP (1-800-748-7347) www.usfhp.com |

(Anyone who has a question regarding a benefit as it relates to a Reserve member or family beneficiary member may e-mail the Tricare advisor at Alexander.Alex@us.af.mil.)

The Earlier the Better



SENIOR AIRMAN NICK WILSON

Timely activation orders are key to Reservists receiving all entitled medical benefits

Reservists from the 442nd Fighter Wing, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., head to Afghanistan on a recent deployment. Timely activation orders are critical so Reservists can receive all the pre-activation medical benefits to which they are entitled.

Air Force Reserve Command officials are working diligently to ensure Reservists who are involuntarily mobilized or are on volunteer status tours receive timely activation orders so they can receive the maximum pre-activation benefits to which they are entitled.

"Early Tricare benefits are available up to 180 days prior to a Reservist's activation date in support of a contingency for more than 30 days," said Columbus Brown, chief of the Personnel Readiness Operations Branch at AFRC headquarters, Robins Air Force Base, Ga. "It's important that we identify individuals early in the mobilization-volunteer process so they can take advantage of the early Tricare benefit."

Brown said the command is addressing many challenges units face that can cause a delay in activation orders production. In the past, units would wait until the actual requirement was finalized by the lead major command before issuing activation orders. Many commanders expressed that orders production was delayed because the requirements can change significantly right up until the time of the activation.

"In situations where final numbers are in fluctuation and there is no question that a portion of the requirement will need to be filled, it is prudent to identify how many Airmen express a desire to utilize early Tricare benefits," Brown said. "When AFRC commanders know how many of their Airmen want this benefit, they are empowered to get their orders published promptly while final adjustments to the volunteer split and the actual force requirement are still being made."

Commanders must know they are authorized to produce mobilization orders in the Air Reserve Orders Writing System-Reserve immediately upon receipt of the partial mobilization message. Conversely, once the requirements are visible in the Deliberate Crisis Action Planning and Execution System, units should submit the Military Pay Appropriations request via the Command Manday Allocation System. Once the CMAS authorization has been received, units are authorized to produce the MPA orders.

"We are aware that changes occur," Brown said. "Once the

order is processed through AROWS-R, the certification date flows as the member's notify date. If the member needs to be removed from the mobilization, the certification date on the cancelled order flows as the member's non-mob notify date."

Over the past year, AFRC has made a concerted effort to inform commanders and individual Reservists of their entitlement to early Tricare benefits. Still, Brown fields questions daily concerning this entitlement to ensure that AFRC units are being advised correctly.

"It appears the biggest misconception is Reservists believe they are entitled to 180 days of pre-Tricare benefits regardless of the date their orders are certified," he said. "That interpretation is incorrect, and we are working diligently to ensure our people are advised correctly. The benefit is effective the date the order is certified. The governing DODI (Department of Defense instruction) states personnel are eligible up to 180 days prior to the start of activation.

"Another misconception is, if mobilization orders are cancelled, members believe they are responsible for bills incurred prior to their removal from orders. In actuality, they are entitled to the benefits for the entire period they are notified."

As a part of its education process, personnel's Plans and Integration Division is including this information in commander and air reserve technician courses conducted at the Professional Development Center. In addition, the division has generated a briefing titled "Timely Activation Orders for EID-TRICARE Benefits" available to leadership at all levels. This briefing can be found online at <https://eim.afrc.af.mil/sites/A1/A1R/A1RR/SitePages/Home.aspx>.

"We recommend commanders make this a part of their newcomers/right start briefings," Brown said.

Reservists needing more information should contact their local installation personnel readiness office located in their force support squadron. IPRs requiring assistance regarding mobilizations can contact Brown at DSN 497-1261 or via email at columbus.brown@us.af.mil. Questions concerning benefits can be directed to Roy Cross, DSN 497-1265 or roy.cross@us.af.mil. ★

 DELTA DENTAL

TRICARE Retiree Dental Program



trdp.org

- Authorized by the U.S. government especially for Uniformed Services retirees and their families
- Members of the National Guard/Reserve in Retired Reserve status are eligible, including "gray-area" retirees under age 60
- Special enrollment opportunity for new retirees
- Comprehensive coverage that includes crowns, bridges, dentures, orthodontics and dental implants
- An expansive nationwide network of dentists for maximum cost savings and program value
- Enhanced-Overseas Program offers the full scope of coverage for enrollees living overseas



The development of this piece is supported by Department of Defense Contract No. H94002-07-C-0003. The TRICARE Retiree Dental Program is administered and underwritten by Delta Dental of California.



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