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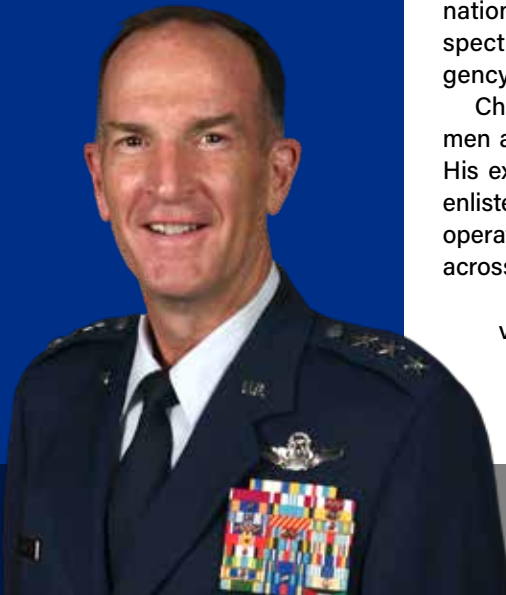
✓ READY NOW!

DEFENDERS PREPARE FOR AUSTERE CONFLICT

Official Magazine of the Air Force Reserve



JOHN P. HEALY
Lieutenant General, USAF
Chief of Air Force Reserve
Commander, Air Force Reserve Command



HELP ME WELCOME OUR NEW COMMAND CHIEF

“Our foundation is one of discipline, honor and standards ... Airmen should not get in the habit of slacking and taking shortcuts.” — Chief Master Sgt. Ramon Colon-Lopez

Citizen Airmen,

The enlisted force is the backbone of the Air Force Reserve and comprises almost 80% of our force. The successful implementation of my task order depends upon every Airman, particularly junior enlisted Airmen, noncommissioned officers and senior non-commissioned officers.

To that end, it is critical that our command chief provides the necessary leadership to continue the advance of my strategic priorities of Ready Now! and Transforming for the Future.

On 1 May, Chief Master Sgt. Israel Nuñez replaced Chief Master Sgt. Timothy White as the new AFRC command chief. An aerial port “port dog” by trade, Chief Nuñez has a diverse professional background.

Since joining the Air Force in 2000, he has proven himself in the aerial port community, serving as a cargo processing specialist, passenger terminal shift supervisor, maintenance training manager, aerial port operations superintendent, programs and quality assurance flight superintendent, chief of plans and compliance, and squadron superintendent for the 69th Aerial Port Squadron at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland.

He then served as the command chief of the 459th Air Refueling Wing at Andrews and most recently as the command chief for Fourth Air Force, advising and mentoring the enlisted force for the strategic airlift community.

As the senior enlisted advisor, Chief Nuñez is my primary counselor regarding the welfare, morale, operational readiness and discipline of the enlisted force. He will ensure AFRC personnel are properly organized, trained and equipped, and ready to support national security requirements across the full spectrum of operations, from war to contingency situations.

Chief Nuñez and I both believe that our Airmen are our most important weapon system. His expertise and experience will ensure our enlisted force is comprised of technical and operational experts and well-rounded leaders across the Air Force Reserve.

Chief Nuñez leads the charge in developing the force for the future fight, a key component in achieving my strategic priorities. When he was assigned to AFRC’s Professional Development



Lt. Gen. John Healy chats with Chief Master Sgt. Israel Nuñez, AFRC’s new command chief.

Center, he served as an instructor at the Chief Orientation Course where he taught and fostered the importance of force development. This knowledge will prove to be critical as he develops multi-capable Airmen who are Ready Now!

He is leading the force for knowledge on retention and dedicated to keeping our Airmen in the force. His initiatives will focus on building readiness and resiliency to support near-peer adversary warfighting, leading AFRC with mission-driven purpose, all while putting our Airmen first.

Chief Nuñez is an exceptional leader, a chief who can lead all of us by example. He has proven himself as a command chief on multiple occasions, and his experience makes him exceptionally prepared for his roles as AFRC command chief and senior enlisted advisor.

He understands the importance of teamwork and partnership between members, units and Total Force Airmen. His experience also enables us to be good partners with the Air Force enterprise and across the Joint Force. As a dual-military spouse, he understands the unique work-life balance requirements of our Citizen Airmen and their families.

I know that Command Chief Nuñez will continue to do amazing things for this organization, and I believe I can speak for all of us when I say, welcome to Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command, Chief! We look forward to working with you.

THE FOUR R’S THAT WILL GUIDE OUR ENLISTED PRIORITIES

Citizen Airmen,

In our service, we often stand on the shoulders of giants and continue the great works of those before us. The opportunity to serve as the Air Force Reserve’s top enlisted leader is no different. I am grateful to serve as your command chief and follow in the footsteps of an outstanding trailblazer and mentor, Chief Master Sgt. Timothy White. He has passed me the baton and I promise to continue this enlisted leadership sprint with similar grace and poise as we help grow and advance our most competitive advantage – our Airmen!

To remain competitive today and over the next few years, it is imperative that we organize, train and equip the Reserve Airmen needed to outpace our adversaries. For this reason, I am laying out initial focus areas for our enlisted force. These are echoes from the charge in TASKORD 2022-01 issued by our commander. At the core of these tasks, priorities and actions is an underlying expectation: We will and must be defined by our faithful adherence to standards and orders, our strength of character, respect for others and a lifelong commitment to core values.

Honoring that belief must start with an understanding that we are first and foremost professionals. As outlined in service doctrine, our profession is distinguished from others because we lead with character, live honorably and are willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our nation.

Whether you are an in-flight refueling specialist transferring fuel from a tanker to an F-16, a finance technician ensuring that Airmen receive timely pay or a port dawg expediting cargo and passengers across the globe, our primary duty is the profession of arms.

When we raise our right hand and repeat the oath, we are agreeing to adhere to a certain set of standards above and beyond most of our fellow citizens. We have an established set of core values that serve as common ground that we shall all stand upon: Integrity First, Service Before Self and Excellence in All We Do. Those values cannot simply be words etched in our memory; they must be our way of life.

On top of solidifying a foundation rooted in good order and discipline, we must set some critical focus areas to guide our enlisted priorities. These are the Four R’s – a Ready Force, a Resilient Force, and Recruit and Retain the Force.

To build a Ready Force, we must reestablish the basics. Every Airman is responsible for their readiness and training to become a lethal and effective warfighter. Each member should strive to become an expert in their Air Force specialty, to be mentally and physically fit, and develop an understanding of our future threats. Remain disciplined and concentrate on the crucial fundamentals needed to face our many threats and challenges.

To develop a Resilient Force, we must ensure that we are developing you deliberately and in a way that leads to long-term personal and professional growth. To do that, we must design a cohesive enlisted force development strategy across the Air Force Reserve. One that guarantees that every Airman is equipped with required skills and abilities, while building and reinforcing the institutional competencies needed at each grade and position.

This includes a hard look at our enlisted talent management and promotion process to ensure Reserve enlisted Airmen are evaluated against a consistent standard, know what it takes to advance and that we get talented enlisted leaders in the right positions at the right time.

To Recruit and Retain the Force, we must drive propensity to serve while removing barriers that are preventing members from fulfilling the vision they had of their service. As Citizen Airmen, we have a golden opportunity to tell our stories within our local communities and combat misperceptions about military service.

To retain our talent, we must communicate better with Airmen and have the conversations needed to identify retention gaps. What are the barriers keeping current members from achieving their service goals? What could we do, or have done, differently to retain the Airmen needed to meet our pacing challenge? I encourage you to let me know: AFRC.CCC@us.af.mil.

I am blessed to be your voice to the chief of the Air Force Reserve and commander of Air Force Reserve Command. Serving alongside Lt. Gen. Healy is an honor, and I am committed to advising him on the best courses of action that prioritize constant readiness while balancing the needs of our forces.

As I start this senior enlisted leader journey, I challenge all of us to recommit to our foundational values, be Ready Now and help our great organization Transform for the Future. Remember, you are indeed our greatest weapon system and what keeps our enemies up at night!



ISRAEL NUÑEZ
Chief Master Sergeant, USAF
Senior Enlisted Advisor to the
Chief of Air Force Reserve
Command Chief Master Sergeant,
Air Force Reserve Command



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Thanks to our contributors: Thanks to Staff Sgt. Dylan Gentile for taking the cover photo for this issue of Citizen Airman magazine. Gentile is a public affairs specialist assigned to the 919th Special Operations Wing public affairs office. The photo shows Senior Airman Blake Booton-Popken keeping lookout for oppositional forces while lying in the underbrush during a recent exercise at Duke Field, Florida. For more on the austere training, see the story on page 6.



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UNIQUE EXERCISE PREPARES DEFENDERS FOR AUSTERE CONFLICT

— Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Dylan Gentile

Across the country, Reserve Citizen Airmen are constantly sharpening their wartime skills to ensure they are always Ready Now. Citizen Air Commandos from the 919th Special Operations Security Forces Squadron at Duke Field, Florida, for example, recently completed a four-day field training exercise designed to enhance their readiness and ability to apply appropriate force while defending an austere position.

This was the first event of its kind and involved the entire squadron.

The exercise tested skills necessary for fast-paced operations in foreign environments. Airmen constructed deployable tent systems and used a makeshift base as a launching point for the simulated missions. Some of the scenarios included oppositional forces where Airmen were required to gauge appropriate forces and procedures. The scenarios were designed by the 919th SOSFS's Tech. Sgt. Christina Knepper.

"These scenarios prepare troops for real-life situations," said Staff Sgt. Dan Ordoqui, 919th SOSFS cadre for the exercise. "It conditions them to perform effectively and appropriately while under stress or duress."

Airmen performed missions on an impromptu and evolving schedule. They convoyed out to remote locations and performed the assigned and often unfamiliar tasks. One of the missions involved locating and recovering a simulated downed pilot. They navigated through dense underbrush and longleaf pines of the Eglin Range while defending their team from the threat of oppositional forces.

The 919th SOSFS members learned troop leading procedures, movements, how to react to improvised explosive devices, land navigation techniques, personnel recovery and personnel security missions.

Airmen from the 919th Special Operations Communications Squadron assisted with radio communications from a hub tent complex.

"This is a good way to show how communications troops can be successful in the field," said Tech. Sgt. Zachary Villareal, 919th SOCS expeditionary communication assistant flight lead and exercise participant. "Participating in these kinds of exercises reiterates the importance of tactical communications. We were out here providing radio capability back to headquarters and others in the field."

The 919th SOCS team's expertise helped security forces overcome line-of-sight communication barriers.

During the field training exercise, Airmen were divided into teams. Each team had an embedded communications Airmen who acted as a mobile radio specialist. Their role included assembling, deconstructing and transporting antenna systems to ensure clear transmission in the dense forests.

"Having someone on the ground who can use the array of communications equipment will be a major capability in future conflict," Villarreal said.

The exercise ended in a blitz of gunfire as the team's camp was overrun by oppositional forces. Students stood their ground and successfully defended their positions.

"Rigorous training is essential to maintain our mission readiness," Ordoqui said. "We sweat more in times of peace so we can bleed less in times of war."



(Gentile is assigned to the 919th SOW public affairs office.)



Clockwise from above: 919th Special Operations Security Forces Airmen hike out to a simulated downed pilot during a recent exercise at Duke Field, Florida. Tech. Sgt. Michael O'Callaghan performs a weapons check before engaging simulated opposition forces. Airmen carry a simulated injured pilot. Senior Airman Blake Booton-Popken keeps lookout for opposition forces while lying in the underbrush.



WARRIORS TAKE AIM AT BREAKING BARRIERS AT INAUGURAL ARC ATHENA EVENT

— By 2nd Lt. Marjorie A. Schurr

Some of the top minds in the Reserve Component gathered to focus their attention on removing long-standing barriers to women's service at the inaugural Air Reserve Component Athena event in Moon Township, Pennsylvania in April.

The Air Force Reserve's 911th Airlift Wing hosted the event in conjunction with the Air National Guard's 171st Air Refueling Wing and the Army Reserve's 316th Expeditionary Sustainment Command.

The event attracted a host of senior leaders, including Sharene Brown, wife of Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. CQ Brown, Jr.; Gen. Daniel R. Hokanson, chief of the National Guard Bureau and member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; Lt. Gen. John Healy, chief of the Air Force Reserve and commander of Air Force Reserve Command; Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force JoAnne Bass; and former Air Force Reserve Command Chief Master Sgt. Timothy White.

"We have to do everything we can within the scope and scale of the authority we have to remove those barriers," Hokanson said. "These conversations are the things that will make our organizations better."

ARC Athena is the fifth of its kind since Air Combat Command launched its Sword Athena in August of 2020, followed by Air Force Materiel Command's Reach Athena, Air Force Special Operation Command's Dagger Athena, and Air Education and Training Command's Torch Athena. ARC Athena is unique in that it is led by and designed to impact Guardsmen and Reservists all over the world.

Senior Master Sgt. Rebecca Schatzman, 911th Operations Support Squadron senior enlisted leader and ARC Athena co-lead, solicited the support of volunteers across the country from a variety of bases and statuses to launch this event.

"That's a lot of compiling," she said. "That's different states, different time zones ... and the result is awesome. I am humbled to have had a part in this effort to enact change."

Guardsmen and Reservists collaborated in support of nine lines of effort to make recommendations for change to senior leaders. Discussions covered a wide variety of topics, including childcare availability for traditional Reservists and drill-status Guardsmen, pregnancy discrimination and maternal bias, maternal fitness and healthcare, and programs to support families with special needs.



Though these issues have existed for years, it is never too late to start addressing them, White said. "The best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago, but the second-best time is today," he said. "Thank you for the seeds you have planted today."

Healy emphasized that these are not issues that only affect the female members of the Total Force. Instead, they affect every Airman, no matter their branch or duty status, and impact the ability to accomplish the mission.

"Ultimately, this gets down to readiness," he said. "This is a readiness issue, pure and simple."

Though these issues are not necessarily unique to Reservists and Guardsmen, they pose unique challenges to different duty statuses, and adding ARC voices to the conversation is necessary for growth.

For the Air Force to accelerate change and thrive, said Brown, leaders from all ranks and walks of life need to work together to address these critical needs.

While the event wrapped up after two days, the work has only just begun. As the Air Force Reserve celebrates its 75th year of service, Airmen driving ARC Athena will continue to work toward change within the nine lines of effort and are scheduled to come together again next year in New Mexico to continue the collaboration and teamwork needed to transform for the future.

(Schurr is assigned to the 911th Airlift Wing public affairs office.)



Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force JoAnne Bass, Air Force Reserve Command Commander Lt. Gen. John Healy and Senior Master Sgt. Rebecca Schatzman, Air Reserve Component Athena co-lead, were three of the featured speakers at the inaugural ARC Athena event. (Staff Sgt. James Fritz)





Chief Master Sgt. Barbara Gilmore, 403rd Wing command chief, shown here riding her bike, serving up a hot meal and speaking with her troops, was one of three victims in a tragic accident that resulted in one fatality in 2021. (Staff Sgt. Kristen Pittman)



THE ROAD TO RECOVERY: COMMAND CHIEF FIGHTS BACK AFTER TRAGEDY

— By Tech. Sgt. Kristen Pittman

Chief Master Sgt. Barbara Gilmore, the command chief of the 403rd Wing, Keesler Air Force Base, Mississippi, has always liked to push her limits. From running 5Ks or half marathons to skydiving to participating in the 26-mile Bataan Memorial Death March through desert terrain and conditions, she was always looking for the next challenge.

She didn't know it at the time, but an adventure she signed up for in February 2021 would change her life forever and put her resilience to the ultimate test.

"No one is immune to the challenges of life," Gilmore said during a recent interview. "And those challenges will most often come unexpectedly."

All of Gilmore's military and life experiences couldn't prepare her for February 28, 2021, and the hurdles she would have to figure out how to overcome over the next two years and beyond.

The chief and two of her friends were participating as a team in a 72-hour expedition race called "Sea to Sea." The race's route took participants from the shores of the Gulf of Mexico

in Spring Hill, Florida, to the Atlantic coastline in St. Augustine and was completed by a combination of biking and either kayaking or canoeing.

Gilmore had never done anything like this race before, so when Capt. (Dr.) Troy Manz, a fellow Airman serving in the Air National Guard at the time and a civilian doctor in his first year of residency, put the idea out on a group social media page inviting people to join him in the race, she scrolled right past it.

"It wasn't until later that Troy reached out to me directly asking me to join him and his fiancée," she said. "They both had a certain perception of me and a confidence that I would be an asset to the team, so I eventually signed up."

Living in Illinois at the time, the harsh mid-Western winter did not allow much opportunity for Gilmore to work up her cycling endurance, so she said she was struggling right out of the gate.

In addition to the physical struggle of willing her legs to continue peddling, there were other factors that

contributed to the challenge of completing the race.

"There were no lodging checkpoints or anything like that, you slept wherever you could find," she explained. "The first night we decided to stop at a church that had some picnic tables that we figured would be better than sleeping on the ground."

Despite the exhaustion of a day's worth of biking, sleep would not find Gilmore. This, she said, would become a trend throughout the race.

While the physical exhaustion, sleep deprivation and the trials of maintaining team cohesiveness were prevalent throughout the race, she said that overall it was still a good experience.

"We all had our moments of weakness, but each of us did really well in being there for each other, picking each other up and encouraging each other to keep moving forward," she said.

While it was a worthwhile experience, Gilmore said that by the time the final day rolled around, she was anxious to be finished. She still couldn't

sleep, and she wanted a shower and maybe a nap in a real bed before she had to catch her flight back home later that afternoon, so she woke up her teammates at the previously agreed upon time of 1:15 a.m.

Understandably, it took the trio a considerable amount of effort and time to rouse themselves from their slumber, but after a little more than an hour, they were back on the road.

In the cool stillness of that Sunday morning, with about 16 miles left to go out of the nearly 300 they had pedaled and rowed already, their journey came to a crashing halt as a vehicle collided with all three unsuspecting cyclists.

"I laid on the side of the road after dragging myself from the middle white line, unable to move my legs," Gilmore said. "I sized up the scene and tried to understand what had just happened."

Immobilized, in shock and bleeding, Gilmore could only watch as a bystander performed CPR on Manz. She felt she had escaped death when she shouldn't have. Her friend and fellow service member was not so lucky.

In an instant, what was supposed to be a fun, challenging and rewarding race weekend turned into devastation and years of physical and mental anguish. Gilmore would start a new race that day ... on the road to recovery.

Physically, Gilmore would need physical therapy for the impact to her hip, and she suffered a mild traumatic brain injury resulting in persistent post-concussion syndrome which caused difficulties with memory loss, dizziness, brain fog, insomnia, noise sensitivity and headaches. Both of these injuries would improve over time.

Mentally, there was trauma, survivor's guilt and a constant fear that "death would come back to finish the job."

As a senior noncommissioned offi-

cer 25-plus years into her career at this point, Gilmore said she had always emphasized to her Airmen and peers that "It's okay to not be okay," and that help was available to those who needed it. It was time she listened to her own advice.

"I struggled at first to find a mental health provider," she said. "Everyone I would reach out to would be booked for months. Luckily, the director of psychological health at my unit at the time was able to see me, refer me and get me in at a place where I could get the care I needed."

Through eye movement desensitization and reprocessing therapy, Gilmore was able to build her coping skills and begin looking forward to what her next chapter in life would read like.

"I had initially planned to retire after my time as command chief of the 932nd (Airlift Wing) came to an end," she said. "But after losing Troy, who I had served alongside, who had such a heart for service and was so proud of what he did, I wanted to continue in his honor."

So Gilmore searched for opportunities and applied for the command chief position with the 403rd Wing. She serves as an advisor to the wing commander, acting on behalf of the wing's enlisted force while also ensuring implementation of the commander's priorities and expectations within the enlisted ranks.

"In her time here, she has been the epitome of a wingman and has been outstanding in leading our enlisted force and really our entire wing," said Col. Stuart Rubio, 403rd Wing commander. "She's been a great voice to advocate on behalf of the Airmen."

Rubio commended her willingness and desire to continue serving despite all of the physical and mental hurdles she faced.

"She is an outstanding example of

understanding where your limits are and being willing and confident enough to get help when needed," he said. "That is what allowed her to come back and continue serving."

Two years later, the events of that February morning still impact Gilmore's life. But, she has persevered and sought help when she needed it, balancing the need to make sure she is okay and seeing to the needs of her wing's enlisted force.

She finally willed herself to purchase a new bike in October 2022, a process that proved to be quite emotionally taxing – only for it to sit unused. A couple months later, she took the next step and bought a new helmet. It collected dust with the bike for a time.

"On the second anniversary of the incident, I faced my fear," she said. "I strapped on my helmet and got back on that bike. It was a lot emotionally, but also it was freeing. This was one thing that incident wouldn't take from me."

Gilmore was wary of cycling on a road, but with the support of two of her fellow wingmen, she was empowered to complete six miles on the quiet neighborhood streets of Bay St. Louis.

She credits the military resources available to her, her family and her military family for leading her to the milestone of getting back on the bike.

"Take time to get to know your teammates," she urged. "Find a mentor, become a mentor and never underestimate your impact and influence on someone else. You could be the reason they don't quit. As I near the end of my time with the 403rd Wing, I want to thank you for being my reason."

(Pittman is assigned to the 403rd Wing public affairs office.)



YOUNGSTOWN WING TESTS NEW ELECTRONIC AERIAL SPRAY SYSTEM

— Story and Photos by Tech. Sgt. Noah Tancer

When members of the 910th Airlift Wing returned to Hill Air Force Base, Utah, in March for their annual aerial spray mission at the Utah Test and Training Range, this year's product sprayed just a bit faster out of the unit's aerial spray-modified C-130H Hercules aircraft.

Based out of Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, the 910th brought its brand-new electronic modular aerial spray system along with a legacy spray system to create fire breaks for wildfire prevention and safe unexploded ordnance removal at the training range. It was the operational debut for the new electronic system.

As in previous years, the Reservists used an Environmental Protection Agency-approved product with biodegradable blue dye for swath tracking over the largest overland contiguous special-use airspace within the continental United States.

The electronic modular aerial spray system, or EMASS, conceptualized in the early 2000s, was rumored to have been birthed from notes drafted on a restaurant napkin after a successful yet problem-fraught aerial spray mission.


"It's been a long time coming," said Lt. Col. Ryan Cooley, the chief of aerial spray assigned to the 757th Airlift Squadron. "A lot of the valves that open and close on the legacy model are physical valves that you have to close by hand, whereas now a lot of the valves on the new system are controlled electronically."

The legacy MASS is full of analog parts no longer mass produced, requiring expensive specialty orders to make repairs. Developed in the 1980s, before the peak of the computer age, the 910th Maintenance Squadron has kept the systems operational for a smooth transition into the electronic age of military aerial spray.

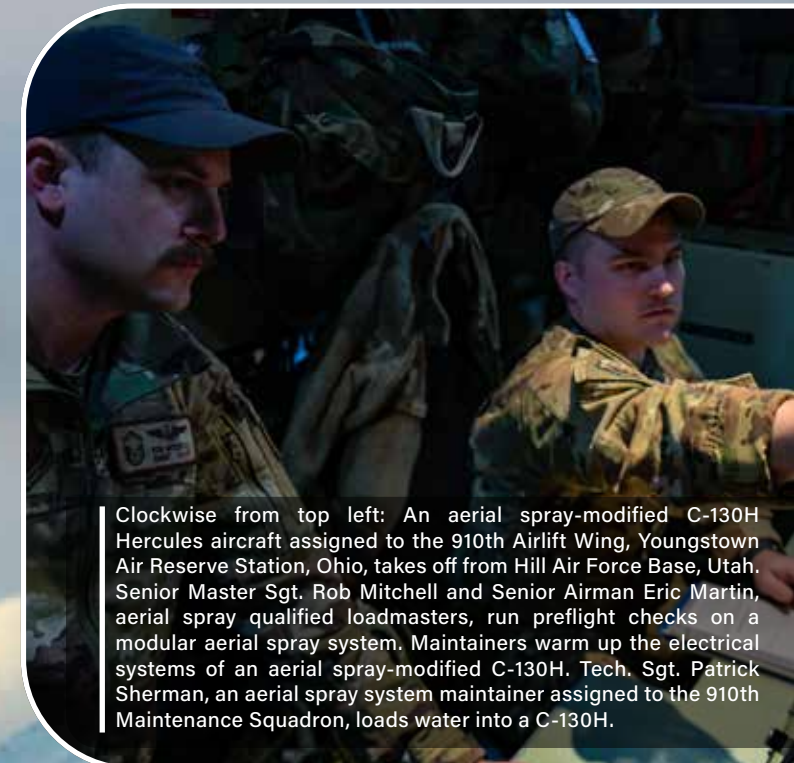
"With the EMASS, you program in what you need and the computer does what you want it to do," said Staff Sgt. Zachary Wilson, an aerial spray maintenance technician assigned to the maintenance squadron. "That's the biggest part, the computer is a game changer. What we can do now goes so much further than what we could do before. The possibilities are endless and we're just getting started with it."

Not only is the new EMASS smarter than its predecessor, it's bigger. The legacy system has a maximum capacity of 2,000 gallons, flying missions at approximately 1,800 gallons to allow room for sloshing in the tank. The capacity of its successor is up to 3,500 gallons with the ability to fly missions at an estimated 3,000-gallon capacity. The legacy model is tried and true, whereas the new model has room to grow with things to learn and kinks to work out.

"We didn't totally run the new system through its paces as far as how much product it can carry, but both performed pretty well," Cooley said. "The old one's tough. There are a lot of moving parts past their useful life, but our spray maintenance team does a phenomenal job keeping it running."

One of the five legacy MASSs at the 910th AW was retired when the first EMASS was received. Moving forward, it will be a one-for-one swap as the new systems are introduced. Until then, both systems will continue to operate together until further operational testing is completed and the electronic system is verified to be compatible with C-130J Super Hercules aircraft. In late December 2022, Secretary of the Air Force Frank Kendall announced Youngstown as the preferred location to receive eight new C-130Js. 

(Tancer is assigned to the 910th Airlift Wing public affairs office.)



Clockwise from top left: An aerial spray-modified C-130H Hercules aircraft assigned to the 910th Airlift Wing, Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, takes off from Hill Air Force Base, Utah. Senior Master Sgt. Rob Mitchell and Senior Airman Eric Martin, aerial spray qualified loadmasters, run preflight checks on a modular aerial spray system. Maintainers warm up the electrical systems of an aerial spray-modified C-130H. Tech. Sgt. Patrick Sherman, an aerial spray system maintainer assigned to the 910th Maintenance Squadron, loads water into a C-130H.





RESERVE TRANSITIONS TO DEFENSE TRAVEL SYSTEM

— By Lt. Col. James R. Wilson



Air Force Reserve Command is continuing steps to prepare for the transition to a single travel management system which, when completed Oct. 1, 2023, will mark a transformational effort for the command.

The initiative to transition all commercial travel arrangements to the Defense Travel System was announced in a memo to all Airmen in March by Lt. Gen. John Healy, chief of the Air Force Reserve and commander of Air Force Reserve Command.

“At its core, this initiative will help ensure our members get paid in a timely manner whenever they are traveling in support of our global mission,” said Col. Shannon Thompson, AFRC’s director of financial management and comptroller. “This is also a significant step to better align us with our active-duty counterparts and should help prepare us to integrate with MyTravel in the future.”

While DTS is operational throughout the Reserve today, many Airmen conduct official travel using orders produced in AROWS-R and vouchers that are submitted for payment upon completion of duty through the Reserve Travel System. Consolidating to a single platform for the full range of travel management support is intended to ensure a smoother travel and pay process for all Citizen Airmen.

“We see this as an opportunity for the command to be innovative,” said Thompson. “It also allows our units

more flexibility to take care of their Airmen and ensure they get paid in a timely manner without having to rely on financial management specialists who are thousands of miles away to review and approve vouchers.”

Specialists from AFRC will be available for tailored on-site training with leadership, squadron commanders and other members down to the end user to help prepare for the merger.

“This initiative will be a slight adjustment for Airmen who are accustomed to using RTS,” said Wendy Bellamy, chief of AFRC’s Financial Services Branch. “Our DTS specialists at headquarters will provide in-person training to lead defense travel administrators throughout the command. Additionally, we are offering mobile training teams to provide hands-on training on the planning changes to ensure a smooth transition in the new fiscal year.”

After implementation, AROWS-R will continue to be used to produce the orders required to reflect the “call to duty” activations via the AF Form 938 for Citizen Airmen. The travel authorization and voucher will be managed exclusively through DTS for the defined group and published via DD Form 1610 for non-PCS travel.

To request virtual or hands-on training on the planned changes associated with the implementation, contact the DTS Transition Team at afrc.fmworflow@us.af.mil.

PHASE I

April 1, 2023 — Civilians, Air Reserve Technicians and Active Guard Reserve members assigned to Air Force Reserve Command begin using DTS for end-to-end travel management needs.

PHASE II

July 1, 2023 — Traditional Reservists assigned to Headquarters begin using DTS.

PHASE III

October 1, 2023 — All other Reserve members who did not transition in Phase I or II begin using DTS.



ONE TEAM, NO SEAM: TRAVIS HOSTS LARGE READINESS EXERCISE

— By AFRC Public Affairs

The Air Force Reserve's 349th Air Mobility Wing was a major player when the active-duty 60th Air Mobility Wing executed Exercise Golden Phoenix, a large-scale readiness exercise synchronizing full-spectrum support from installation partners at Travis Air Force Base, California, in May.

The exercise was held in conjunction with Travis' 621st Contingency Response Wing's Exercise Storm Crow and featured maneuvering the joint force at tempo with direct support to a readiness exercise executed by the I Marine Expeditionary Force at Camp Pendleton, California.

The I-MEF readiness exercise sought to demonstrate the skillsets to provide distributed operations across a wide range of terrain and generate combat-credible readiness throughout the Joint Dynamic Force Employment integrating service partners throughout the western United States.

The 60th Mission Support Group demonstrated Team Travis' support for large force reception, staging, onward movement and integration operations. The team executed a three-day bed down of more than 340 Marines and Sailors.

These I-MEF Sailors and Marines, alongside 255 Devil Raiders from the 921st Contingency Response Support Squadron and 35 Airmen from the 60th AMW, were processed by the 60th AMW Logistics Readiness and Installation Deployment Readiness Cell through a realistic personnel deployment line exercising all requirements to ready personnel forces.

Additionally, the 60th Maintenance Group supported operations for more than 60 sorties within the 12-day exercise period, moving 1.53 million pounds of cargo and more than 700 passengers, deploying personnel to three downrange locations.

"Everyone had some piece of the puzzle to make it work," said Dale Patterson, 60th Maintenance Group deputy commander. "It's a Total Force initiative between the active duty, the civilian workforce and the Reserve workforce. One team, no seam. We could not do this without their help."

"When we say 'Team Travis,' we truly mean it's a Total Force effort," said the 349th AMW's Maj. Jami Gunnels. "It is our duty as the Reserve component to support the installation, providing that critical subject matter expertise and backfilling those essential positions. Exercise Golden Phoenix was no exception. Our Reserve teams integrated directly into the mission set, providing a large spectrum of support and operational functions."

"Our largest success was demonstrating the ability to assess, open and operate airfields in a contested environment with the help of our joint force partners," said Lt. Col. Timothy Kniefel, 921st CRSS commander. "This capability will be absolutely critical to the future fight, and we couldn't have done it without the Marines, the 60th AMW and the unwavering dedication of every single multi-capable contingency response member on the team."

The exercise addressed Air Mobility Command's focus areas to include resilient command and control, navigation, operations and logistics at tempo. The 60th and 349th AMWs also practiced flexible deterrent and response options, including the ability



to land in austere environments and quickly accomplish a mission in dynamic environments.

"The expeditionary air base was tasked with taking over the base from contingency response forces in order to allow them to project the cluster farther forward," said Maj. Cal San Filippo, expeditionary air base detachment commander. "We immediately integrated into the CR's operating schedule and began manning shifts. The team wasted no time."

The exercise culminated with a maximum aircraft generation event demonstrating the installation's ability to ready and launch 21 aircraft in rapid succession, showcasing Team Travis' posture as the Gateway to the Pacific.

"We've never launched this many jets at a time," said Capt. Keegan Reynolds, C-17 instructor pilot and lead mission planner. "I can't think of a better way to end the exercise. Every aircraft that was prepared to take off was green and it did."

(Information for this article came from an article written by 2nd Lt. Casey Sturdivan, 60th Air Mobility Wing Public Affairs.)

From above: A C-17 Globemaster III participating in Exercise Golden Phoenix takes off on a dirt runway at Schoonover Airfield, California. (Heide Couch). Airman Cora Alvarez observes the wing of a C-17 Globemaster III flying from Travis to Schoonover (Heide Couch). 2nd Lt. Camryn Lam and Staff Sgt. Nichole Ballant prepare to marshal a C-5M Super Galaxy (Nicholas Pilch). Marines with the I Marine Expeditionary Force board a C-5M Super Galaxy. (Nicholas Pilch)



Left: Marines board a KC-10 Extender preparing to take off during a maximum aircraft generation event for Exercise Golden Phoenix at Travis Air Force Base, California. (Heide Couch). A formation of 21 aircraft line the runway. (Senior Airman Alexander Merchak)



CIVIL ENGINEERS TRAIN WITH DEFENDERS TO PROMOTE MULTI-CAPABLE WINGMAN CONCEPT

— Story and Photos by Tech. Sgt. Noah J. Tancer

More than 80 Reserve Citizen Airmen assigned to the 910th Airlift Wing's Civil Engineer Squadron deployed from Youngstown Air Reserve Station, Ohio, to Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Georgia, this spring for a 96-hour contingency training with a detachment of defenders assigned to the 910th Security Forces Squadron.

Troops and cargo were transported via two of the 910th's C-130H Hercules aircraft to demonstrate the wing's independent mobility capabilities under simulated wartime operations. Dobbins' vehicle assets and field-condition facilities were used to prepare the 910th CES for potential near-peer or peer deployment scenarios.

"Some of our training is geared toward contingency environments where we will have to augment security forces at some point," said Senior Master Sgt. Clay Bucy, the operations superintendent with the 910th CES. "There's a lesson plan for civil engineers to learn and try to teach each other a good product, but why reinvent the wheel when I can just ask security forces, 'Hey, do you want to come along and help out?'"

The mission of Air Force civil engineers is to provide, maintain and protect installations, infrastructure and facilities necessary to support U.S. airpower and global reach. "Provide" and "protect" are emphasized under the Air Force's Agile Combat Employment concept as civil engineers could be forward-deployed with security forces to build and secure forward operation bases in austere or hostile locations.

"Having that smaller, more capable and mobile force is what the future holds," said Master Sgt. Jeremy Bryner, a fire team leader with the 910th SFS. "If we follow the plan,



Clockwise from above: Tech. Sgt. Justin Ross carries a fire and rescue service mannequin down a ladder during a recent joint training exercise for civil engineers and defenders from the 910th Airlift Wing. Senior Airman Marcus Figler navigates his way out of the woods. Reserve Citizen Airmen dig a defensive fighting position. Tech. Sgt. Noah Enano traverses a land navigation course. Senior Airman Devonte Whatley prepares lunch in a field kitchen.




we'll have a small force on a plane and an area that's not inhabited structurally by the military."

Reservists from the 910th CES's full spectrum of career fields were taught land navigation, individual movement techniques, convoy operations and integrated defense skills. In turn, defenders were taught forklift operations.

"The cops are first to secure the location and then we come right behind them to start building infrastructure," Bucy said. "We're training multi-capable Airmen for when it's just the two of us in that contingent area."

When deployed with limited personnel, both engineers and defenders will have to be on alert while pulling manpower from each career field to accomplish the mission.

"It wasn't just us teaching them things about our career field, it was an absolute transference of skills our way from them as well," Bryner said. "If you and I are back-to-back, then we have 360-degree security and we can start to build together from there. But nobody can do what needs to be done until that security is established."

Along with the 910th SFS, an Airman assigned to the 910th Communications Squadron attended the training event to teach radio operation and a small group of Airmen assigned to the 910th Force Support Squadron provided troop feeding. 

(Tancer is assigned to the 910th Airlift Wing public affairs office.)





A VALUABLE ADDITION TO ★ ★ CONTINUOUS AND INNOVATION TOOLKIT

If you've been around the Air Force Reserve for any amount of time, you probably know that the Reserve has used tools like Continuous Process Improvement (CPI), which utilized Lean and Six Sigma methodologies, for years to try and improve efficiency and quality in most of its processes.

What most members of the Air Force Reserve team may not know is that there are a host of other tools within the Continuous Improvement and Innovation (CI2) toolkit readily available that can help them improve a process, address a problem or promote innovation in their workplace.

Design Thinking is one such tool.

According to the Harvard Business School, Design Thinking is a mindset and approach to problem-solving and innovation anchored around human-centered design. It differs from other innovation and ideation processes, like Lean and Six Sigma, in that it's solution-based and user-centric rather than problem-based. This means it focuses on fast, iterative tests to solve the problem instead of the problem itself.

An example Harvard provides is that if a team is struggling with transitioning to remote work, the Design Thinking methodology encourages them to consider how to increase employee engagement rather than to focus on the problem – decreasing productivity.

"In my assessment, Design Thinking asks the question, 'What could be?' while Lean and Six Sigma methodologies ask the question, 'What is already here that could be better?'" said Ken Harris, the CI2 process manager with the Reserve's 932nd Airlift Wing at Scott Air Force Base, Illi-

nois. Harris recently helped spearhead the Reserve's first Design Thinking bootcamp to address the Reserve's problem of not converting enough CI2 green belt-trained Airmen to green belt-certified Airmen in processes for Lean and Six Sigma.

Harris explained that to be considered trained in CI2 processes for Lean and Six Sigma, a person has to complete 40 hours of computer-based training and pass a knowledge check test. To be certified, the person has to complete a capstone project where he or she leads a group through the eight-step problem-solving process, generating successful countermeasures and ensuring performance is improved. This can be a lengthy process that can take months or years for a traditional Reservist.

Harris and Thomas Jones from the Air Force Reserve's Transformation and Innovation Office (AFRC/A9) worked with the National Security Innovation Network to set up and run the bootcamp. NSIN is the Defense Department's problem-solving network that is committed to building a more agile and adaptive DoD to meet the unpredictable threats of the future.

"In these times of growing uncertainty, the strategies that have served us for nearly 100 years have become insufficient and unsustainable," NSIN says on its website. "NSIN and its programs serve to develop a new alliance between defense, academia and venture communities whose collaboration is imperative in the service of our national security."

NSIN program manager Kelly Schulte worked with Harris and Jones to set up the Reserve's first Design Thinking bootcamp. He brought in Nic Meliones, chief executive officer of Navi, and the Navi team to

YOUR IMPROVEMENT ★ ★

— By Bo Joyner



facilitate the event. Navi is a private contractor that helps people learn innovation skills, solve mission-critical problems and bring new ideas to life.

"Design Thinking is user-centered problem solving," Meliones said. "The biggest risk in innovation is building something that no one needs – it does not solve a painful enough problem. Design Thinking addresses this risk head-on by emphasizing talking to users and running fast, iterative tests to learn where you are on the right track and where you need to adjust."

Meliones said the core elements to a Design Thinking bootcamp are: framing the hypothesis, talking to users, framing the solution, delivering first value and generating buy-in. In a bootcamp, participants learn core Design Thinking principles, investigate a mission-critical challenge statement, identify a slice of the challenge statement to focus on, craft a solution and test it, and create a pitch and generate buy-in from senior leaders during out-briefs.

Harris said the Design Thinking bootcamp he helped set up was an eye-opening experience, and he can definitely see how Design Thinking can be an invaluable tool in meeting the AFRC commander's strategic priority of Transforming for the Future and associated line of effort, Fostering Continuous Improvement and Innovation across the Enterprise.

"Design Thinking trains Airmen to use human-centered methods to evaluate and analyze problems," he said. "It also teaches them how to take those solutions and communicate

and pitch effectively and persuasively." Harris said Airmen who learn and practice Design Thinking generally become better listeners who are more observant, more empathetic, more creative, more persuasive and stronger critical thinkers.

The bootcamp was divided into teams and generated six separate first-value pitches to brief to AFRC leadership. Harris is currently on a team of members throughout AFRC who participated in the NSIN bootcamp and have volunteered to work on evaluating constraints of the proposed countermeasures that were selected for pursuit, and then draft proposed execution plans for AFRC leadership to consider implementing.

"That work has really kicked into gear this spring and we expect it to produce fruit this summer," he said.

Harris said another great thing about the NSIN bootcamps is that they provide Airmen with a special experience identifier that looks great on their resume.

"A9 really deserves a lot of credit for their role in this first bootcamp," Harris said. "From introduction to NSIN to launch took less than 30 days. Additionally, along with all the work that went into coordinating and determining the scope of the event, the team at A9 worked the logistics required to enable any Airmen participating to qualify for the 91D (Design Thinking) special experience identifier."

Harris went on to say that NSIN provides its Design Thinking bootcamp program for free to DoD entities.

"That's what is so amazing about this process," Harris said. "Whether you are a group, or a squadron or a wing, if you have a problem you need help with, NSIN will bring in the experts and run the bootcamp to see if Design Thinking can help you come up with the best solution."

"All you need is a sponsor, at least 15 people and a problem," Schulte said. "NSIN provides the Design Thinking experts free of charge. On the back end, we ask that you have at least an O5 (lieutenant colonel) or civilian equivalent to receive the final out-brief – someone who can make a decision on the proposed solutions."

"Any command or Airmen interested in participating in a bootcamp to solve unit challenges and build problem-solving proficiencies should not delay reaching out to NSIN to set something up," Harris said. "Current success of the program has them booking six to nine months out."

Harris said it is imperative that the Air Force Reserve and other DoD organizations use tools like Design Thinking to improve the way they operate.

"The wars of the future are not going to be won by the biggest bombs, but by the most creative minds," he said. "Our adversaries don't follow the rules of war the U.S. has ordained, and that for too long our service members have been schooled in. If we don't adjust the way we approach problems, big and small, we risk losing."

If you would like to learn more about Design Thinking, check out the NSIN website, NSIN.mil.





DOVER RESERVISTS HEAD WEST FOR OFF-STATION READINESS TRAINING

— Story and Photos by Senior Airman Shayna Hodge

Clockwise from above: Tech. Sgt. Jordan Prochaska marshals a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft before it takes off in Honolulu, Hawaii, in March. Senior Airman Johanna Gannaban practices CPR. Staff Sgts. Keo Roth and Saleeha Artis wrap a splint around the arm of a fellow Airman during the Aloha Bunny exercise. Prochaska performs a check on Tech. Sgt. Audrey Derbyshire to ensure her Mission Oriented Protective Posture gear is properly fitted.

With readiness at the forefront of their minds, more than 40 maintainers from the 512th Airlift Wing traveled from their home at Dover Air Force Base, Delaware, to Honolulu for off-station readiness training this spring.

The group, comprised of members from the 512th Maintenance Squadron and the 512th and 712th Aircraft Maintenance Squadrons, spent two weeks at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, honing their maintenance skills on C-17 Globemaster II and C-5M Super Galaxy aircraft.

“The goal for our off-station annual tour was to give maintainers the opportunity to perform aircraft maintenance in a location with a higher operations tempo in order to increase proficiency in their Air Force Specialty Codes,” said Maj. Jason Lowrey, 512th MXS commander.

Ranging in rank from senior airman to senior master sergeant and representing more than 10 AFSCs, the 512th MXG accomplished training, working alongside several host units at the joint base.

On the flightline, 512th MXG members worked with the 735th Air Mobility Squadron to repair C-5s and C-17s. Other Reservists executed sheet metal and commander support staff operations with the 15th Maintenance Squadron and the 154th Wing of the Hawaii Air National Guard.

During training, maintainers working on the flightline took the lead on

repairing unscheduled aircraft that had to land at Hickam.

“All we needed to know was where the tools are, and we were on the job,” said Chief Master Sgt. Omari Colas, 512th AMXS senior enlisted leader.

Staff Sgt. Vernon Miller, a 512th AMXS crew chief, said operating at Hickam was a great experience.

“Working with new Airmen, following different practices and procedures and working under different leadership helped up pick up different skills,” he said. “And it’s made me realize that operating out of the norm isn’t always a bad thing.”

Before the end of their annual tour, the Reservists from the 512th MXG participated in the Aloha Bunny exercise with fellow Airmen from Dover’s 326th Airlift Squadron.

“The goal of the exercise was to test our chemical defense and ability to survive and operate competencies while conducting real-world maintenance in a simulated, contested environment,” said Capt. Brandon Bermudez, 512th AMXS director of operations, who planned the exercise with Colas and Master Sgt. Jason Jones, 712th AMXS communication and navigation craftsman.

They designed the exercise scenarios to push maintainers to think outside the box and create solutions, leveraging Multi-Capable Airman concepts.

Aloha Bunny took 15 hours to complete. Exercise players reacted to scenarios that required them to respond to threats wearing various levels of Mission-Oriented Protective Posture gear, perform post-reconnaissance sweeps and provide aid to wounded Airmen.

Master Sgt. Erin Esquer, 512th AW readiness exercise coordinator, observed how maintainers responded to the various exercise challenges and supplemented the evaluations from the four-member wing inspection team.

“The exercise tested MXG’s and the 326th’s ability to operate and execute mission-essential tasks,” Esquer said. “Even though the units have their respective work, it’s important for them to be able to come together as a force and complete a mission. If they’re able to accomplish cohesiveness in training environments, that cohesiveness will transfer over to real-world and high-stress missions.”

Lowrey and other MXG leaders said the exercise went well.

“I couldn’t have been happier,” Colas said. “As far as I could see, our proficiency was there. I hope maintainers grasped a better understanding of what it’s like to operate in an austere environment and learned we have the capability to work efficiently even with limited resources.”

(Hodge is assigned to the 512th Airlift Wing public affairs office.)



Parting Shot: Tech. Sgt. Diego Weithoener, 445th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron medical technician, directs Air Force critical care air transport teams back to the aircraft to offload mannequin patients at the Cincinnati Municipal Airport in April. The CCATTs trained with the 445th AES on trauma and critical care aboard an aircraft as part of the Center for the Sustainment of Trauma and Readiness Skills program at the University of Cincinnati Medical Center. (Master. Sgt. Patrick O'Reilly)



CITIZEN AIRMAN

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