

455th gives support to Operation Mountain Lion

By Staff Sgt. Jennifer Redente
Editor

The 455th Air Expeditionary Wing and other Air Force units provided close air support for ground troops in Afghanistan starting April 12.

“The Air Force’s role in this operation is to support coalition forces on the ground as they disrupt insurgents’ activities, deny them sanctuary and prevent their ability to resupply,” said Brig. Gen. Bruce E. Burda, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing commander and Air Component Coordination Element director.

“We do this by providing close air support with our A-10 Thunderbolt IIs, B-52 Strato-fortresses, and F-15E Strike Eagles, electronic combat support with our EC-130H Compass Call and Navy EA-6B Prowlers and combat resupply with our C-130 Hercules and C-17 Globemaster IIIs. Although these platforms provide unique capabilities, our most important contribution to the fight is the professionalism and outstanding service of the Airmen deployed here.”

The mission of the A-10s is to



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jennifer Redente
Chief Master Sgt. Gary K. Lanham performs a joint airdrop inspection as he prepares to load pallets onto a 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron C-130 Hercules. Chief Lanham is the squadron’s loadmaster superintendent.

provide a “bird’s eye view” of the battlefield, communication and firepower.

“In Afghanistan, there is a real need for close air support,” said Lt. Col. Quentin Rideout, 355th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron. “Operations are conducted in very austere terrain, which means most ‘fire fights’ occur when opposing forces are within one kilometer of our troops on the ground.”

The C-130s helped prepare for the mission and are now dropping materials to equip the troops on the ground.

“Our crews positioned personnel and equipment to forward locations before the operation began even as our mission planners worked with other joint planners to determine suitable drop zones,” said Lt. Col. Thomas E. Lawrence, 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron commander. “Once the operation began, we capitalized on the C-130’s flexibility by delivering essential supplies to units in remote locations via airdrop and land air missions.”

The Royal Air Force GR-7 Harriers

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Red Horse hopes to complete new American Post Office in June

By Staff Sgt. Jennifer Redente
Editor

Work is progressing on the new American Post Office, being built by 16 Airmen here, which is estimated to open in June.

The 1st Expeditionary Red Horse

Group deployed here is responsible for constructing the new 14,066 square-foot facility.

The current APO has undergone numerous temporary repairs and additions, but the facility is only 3,350 square feet, said 1st Lt. David M. Rodriguez, 1st Expeditionary Red Horse Group architectural project engineer.

“The complete new building foot print will be 4.7 times larger than the original post office and will be fully equipped with indoor bathrooms,” the lieutenant said.

Since real estate is prime here, the building gained valuable square

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Camp Cunningham's



Top View

Commander shares importance of integrity, support of Airmen

By Lt. Col. Thomas E. Lawrence
774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron commander

Just after midnight on July 30, 1945, the USS Indianapolis, carrying 1,197 sailors and Marines, was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine. The heavy cruiser, on its way back to the Philippines after delivering components for the atomic bomb, went down in less than 12 minutes. Because of communications gaps and failure of leadership, no search was conducted for the missing ship. By the time the survivors were found three days later, by accident, only 317 were still alive.

As I read the book "In Harm's Way," by Doug Stanton, I was deeply moved by the intense account of the sinking of the USS Indianapolis and the many lives it touched.

I was also disgusted; because some people didn't do their job, many of their fellow servicemembers died.

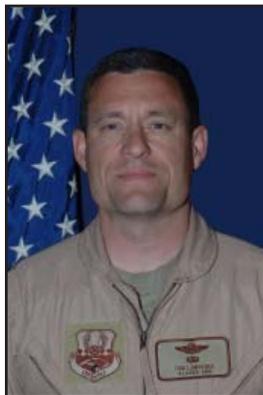
Even though the Indy sank more than 60 years ago, many of the book's themes still ring true here today. A mission shrouded in secrecy due to operation security concerns; young Sailors on their first deployment; seasoned veterans mentoring the next generation; and, the difficulty of communicating effectively in a combat environment. The book vividly portrays the "fog and friction" of battle and shows American servicemembers at their absolute best and worst – combat tends to do that to people.

On the negative side, here's what jumped out at me. First, people didn't do their primary tasks, whether out of ignorance, apathy, confusion or lack of personal skill or equipment. One job in particular was simple, but vital: taking and passing messages. Communication is every bit as vital today as it was back then. In fact, many missions have been aborted, or ineffective due to poor communication. What can you do to tame the communication monster? How about listen, clarify intentions and instructions, and verify for starters; can you think of anything else? Next, people just

assumed things would turn out a certain way, such as the arrival of the ship. When the Indy was overdue at its next stop because it had been sunk, many people were either distracted or too busy to notice. Is there anything here you overlook or just take for granted because you've become complacent? Finally, in the aftermath of this huge naval tragedy, officials struggled to affix and properly accept blame. We'll get to that in a moment.

Thankfully, there is far more to this gripping story. We need the same moral and physical courage many of the men facing crisis displayed. For some of their key leaders, officer and enlisted alike, "service before self" was far more than a motto, it was a constant way of life – even in the midst of a deadly catastrophe. As we face discouragement, we need to draw on faith and hope to help us persevere, just as they did. The men survived horrifying conditions for up to four days adrift without food, water or shelter after their ship was sunk, because they didn't give up. Many wanted to, but their buddies wouldn't let them. Who can you encourage today as they face their own trials here? Put another way, who can you express appreciation to for the help or service they have provided you?

I'd like to leave you with a few final thoughts about the 25 percent of the Indy crew who survived. Their first hallmark was loyalty, both immediate and long term. Several members survived simply because a friend held their head out of the water when they had no more strength of their own; help those around you to keep their head up, when times are down. When their captain became the scapegoat for the entire chain of events causing the disaster, his crew members were unrelenting for more than 50 years in an effort to clear his name. Loyalty never falters. Finally, it encourages me to see who these men became. They were the sons, husbands, fathers, brothers, friends, business owners and community participants who rebuilt our nation once World War II and all of its tragic consequences began to fade from view. In your remaining time here and once you get back to the land of the big base exchange, what will you do personally and professionally to make ours an even greater generation?



Colonel Lawrence

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Things to know before going home

AF implements new cell phone restriction

By Staff Sgt. Matthew Rosine
Air Force Print News

The Air Force is implementing a new cell phone restriction for drivers.

As of Feb. 27, drivers are not allowed to talk on their cell phones while driving on Air Force installations without a hands free device. This policy is part of the Department of Defense's Joint Traffic Guidance.

This restriction also applies to all government owned vehicles at all times. No GOV drivers are permitted to talk on a cell phone while driving without a hands-free device on or off base.

"This is really a cooperative effort for everyone from the base populace to the base leaders," said Master Sgt. Gloria Ornelas, the superintendent of law enforcement for Air Force Security Forces. "I think it is long overdue. The DOD recognized that, and we are now in line with what some states and municipalities are doing to create a safer environment for drivers."

Joint Traffic Regulation, Air Force Instruction 31-218 (I), Motor Vehicle Traffic Supervision, will restrict the use of cell phones while driving. Only cell phones with hands-free devices will be allowed for use by drivers. This guidance also allows the Air Force to use portable breath screening devices as long as they conform to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration standards.

The Defense Department's joint traffic document states:

"Vehicle operators on a DOD Installation and operators of Government owned vehicles shall not use cell phones

unless the vehicle is safely parked or unless they are using a hands-free device.

"The wearing of any other portable headphones, earphones or other listening devices, except for hand-free cellular phones, while operating a motor vehicle is prohibited. Use of those devices impairs driving and masks or prevents recognition of emergency signals, alarms, announcements, the approach of vehicles, and human speech. DOD component safety guidance should note the potential for driver distractions such as eating and drinking, operating radios, CD players, global positioning equipment, etc. Whenever possible this should only be done when the vehicle is safely parked."

Using a cell phone while driving without a hands-free device will be considered a "primary offense." This means violators will be able to be stopped solely for this offense.

Drivers who violate this cell phone driving restriction will be given three assessment points against their driving records or an appropriate fine. Drivers should be aware that if two or more violations are committed, even on a single occasion, a ticket may be given to the driver for each violation.

"It was recognized at the DOD level that we needed some changes," Sergeant Ornelas said. "The winner here is the base populace. They will have more mobility while driving, a greater range of view — in short, a safer driving environment for all."

Brief Bullets

Flightline badges

Prior to departing, remember to return restricted area flightline badges to the 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron Pass and Identification office. For more information, call 231-2232.

Services calendar

Events are hosted by Services every night at 1900L in the Rec Tent. For more information, or to make a suggestion, contact Tech. Sgt. Hallett at 231-4360. This week's events are as follows:

Saturday: Texas Hold'em
Sunday: Bingo
Monday: Ping Pong
Tuesday: Dominos
Wednesday: Texas Hold'em
Thursday: Darts

Bugout bash

The AEF 9 and 10 Bugout Bash has been rescheduled for April 30. Air and space expeditionary force 9 and 10 will hold a barbeque and sports day as Airmen prepare to depart here. Events include an amazing race, volleyball, dunking booth, laundry cart race and much more. To volunteer, or make a suggestion, see your first sergeant, the Airmen Committed to Excellence council, Middle Tier Association or Top 3.

MTA meeting

The next Middle Tier Association meeting is scheduled for 0900L Wednesday in Rec Tent. The Middle Tier Association is for staff and technical sergeants who want to be involved in morale functions here.

ACE meeting

The next Airmen Committed to Excellence meeting is scheduled for 1500L today at the Oasis.

C-130s deliver supplies to ground troops

Mountain Lion

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are also providing close air support to servicemembers in contact with enemy forces.

“Our objective is to assist the coalition forces and Afghan National Security Forces in defeating the Taliban and al-Qaeda,” said Maj. Gen. Allen Peck, deputy Combined Forces Air Component commander. “The coalition employs airpower every day to support Afghanistan’s democratically elected government in establishing regional stability and long term economic and political development.”

“This operation is helping the government of Afghanistan set the security conditions so the democratic process can take root,” he said. “Our job is to bring airpower to bear on the anti-Afghan forces and support the coalition troops on the ground.”

Coalition leaders described the

operation as a comprehensive effort to kill, incapacitate or capture terrorists operating in the region. It will continue as long as necessary.

More than 2,500 coalition and Afghan National Army forces are involved in the operation.

Predawn air-and-ground assaults began April 12 in the Pech River Valley, an area notorious for terrorist activity.

Operations were initiated by coalition forces in cooperation with the ANA to establish security, deter the re-emergence of terrorism and enhance the sovereignty of Afghanistan. (Information from Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan Coalition Press Information Center and U.S. Central Command Air Forces Forward Public Affairs April 12 press releases were used in this story.



Airmen and Soldiers prepare an airdrop for ground troops supporting Operation Mountain Lion.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Jennifer Redente
Staff Sgt. John C. Ploucher drives a cargo loader into position to unload container delivery system pallets onto a 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron C-130 Hercules here April 15. Sergeant Ploucher is an air cargo transportation journeyman assigned to the 455th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron.

1st ERHG works in rain, snow to deliver post office on time

Post office

From Page 1

footage by going vertical, adding 4,688 square feet on the second floor for office space – 15 times greater than the current APO office space square footage, he said.

Additional improvements to the new facility include the metal framework and corrugated baked-enamel metal sheeting, which will endure the harsh elements here for many years as opposed to the wood frame and plywood sheeting of the current APO, Lieutenant Rodriguez said.

In spite of adverse weather and lack of material in the region, the 1st ERHG is determined to complete the facility on time.

“Even with weather delays, our Airmen have worked to overcome and meet the goals that have been set out,” he said. “They work long hours, have constant shift changes to work with the weather and are currently working 12-hour shifts, sometimes longer, in order to meet the construction schedule.”

Since construction began in late November, the builders have endured and overcome freezing temperatures, heavy precipitation and high winds.

“The adverse weather conditions have affected past and current stages of construction but will no longer be an issue once the facility is enclosed,” the lieutenant said. “Another issue, which has slowed down construction, is material shortfalls.”

With the exception of concrete, base course and sand, all material is flown in from elsewhere in theatre, Lieutenant Rodriguez said.

“The transportation has been, and will continue to be, a concern for materials since



Photos by Staff Sgt. Jennifer Redente

we are in constant competition for cargo space on aircraft,” he said. “Without the needed materials, setbacks can occur on the building schedule.”

The APO processes approximately 25,000 pounds of inbound mail here and 6,000 pounds of inbound mail for Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, per day, said Army Capt. Patricia M. Tyrpin, APO postal company commander. Since March 15, the APO has processed more than 1.5 million pounds of inbound and outbound mail.

Left: Senior Airman Charles B. Pickle drills a hole into a board as he prepares a form for a sidewalk. Airman Pickle is assigned to the 1st Expeditionary Red Horse Group as a structural journeyman. He is deployed here from Holloman Air Force Base, N.M. **Below:** Senior Airman Aaron J. Yeager anchors a piece of corrugated metal onto the facility being built for the new American Post Office. Airman Yeager is assigned to the 1st Expeditionary Red Horse Group as a structural journeyman.



Personnel actions now available through CSS, vMPF

By Tech. Sgt. David D. Andres

455th Expeditionary Mission Support Squadron
Personnel Support for Contingency Operations NCOIC

Some of the Military Personnel Flight customer service actions have changed. The personnel community has handed some of the processes Airmen used to walk into the MPF to accomplish to commander support staffs and other actions have gone online.

This means better and faster service for Airmen, said Master Sgt. Dwayne E. Brown, 455th Expeditionary Mission Support Squadron Personnel Support for Contingency Operations team chief. The CSSs service a smaller population and are usually closer to duty sections than the MPF, eliminating unnecessary travel time to accomplish simple personnel actions.

Commander support staffs will now handle assignments, awards and decorations, promotions and formal training, Sergeant Brown said. Similar processes handled by the MPF will continue to be handed to CSSs well into 2007, with new releases every few months.

Personnel actions that went online are available around the clock with access to the Internet.

This new concept will happen in a series, each time-phased and released only when the systems and people are ready, in-place and tested. Virtual Record of Emergency Data, which most Airmen are familiar with now, works very well as a web-based application. This new concept is an extension of the vRED. The first of many additions to the vMPF will include retraining and correction to military records.

vMPF access

Log on to the virtual Military Personnel Flight at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/vs/>.

Once the user-name and password have been entered, click on the vMPF link; verify the e-mail address and phone number. On the left side there is a link for New Applications. That's where Airmen can see the new additions to the vMPF.

Deployed personnel who need to obtain a new password should call DSN 312-665-5000 or e-mail contact.center@randolph.af.mil.

MTA MOVIE NIGHT

The Middle Tier Association hosts **Movie Night 1900L Mondays at the MTA Snack Shack, if inclement weather should arise, the function will be moved in to the Rec Tent. Monday's movie will be Underworld: Evolution, starring Kate Beckinsale and Scott Speedman. Rated R. A war emerges between the aristocratic Death Dealers and the barbaric Lycans, werewolves, stemming from an ancient feud between the two tribes. Selene, the beautiful vampire heroine, and Michael, the Lycan hybrid, try to unlock the secrets of their bloodline. Their forbidden love takes them into the battle to end all wars as the immortals must finally face their retribution.**

MTA COMEDY NIGHT

The Middle Tier Association hosts **Comedy Night 1900L Thursdays at the MTA Snack Shack. Larry the Cable Guy, who has the catch phrase "Git-R-Done," will be shown Thursday.**

Comm tip of the week

Setting proxy server up:

- Tools>Internet Options>Connections>Lan settings
- Choose the option "use a proxy server for your lan"
- Choose the options "bypass proxyserver for local address"
- Address is 21.13.16.115
- Port is 8080

ENDURING FAITH CHAPEL

Weekly services:

- Muslim**
Fridays 1800L (1330Z)
- Jewish**
Fridays 1900L (1430Z)
- Seventh Day Adventist**
Saturdays 0930L (0500Z)
- Roman Catholic**
Saturdays 1945L (1515Z)
- Liturgical Protestant**
Sundays 0830L (0400Z)
- Protestant**
Sundays 1130L (0700Z)
- Latter Day Saints**
Sundays 1300L (0830Z)



- Church of Christ**
Sundays 1400L (0930Z)
- Korean Protestant**
Sundays 1545L (1115Z)
- Gospel**
Sundays 1730L (1300Z)

DFAC hours

Breakfast	Lunch
0530 to 0900L	1130 to 1330L
Dinner	Midnight
1630 to 2100L	2330 to 0100L

DCUs and Air Force physical training uniforms are mandatory when dining at any of the facilities here.

No bags, purses or backpacks are allowed in any of the dining facilities.

Plausible Denial

By Jurgi



3 OUT OF 30,000--KEEP SHOOT'N
BAF - BIRD MIGRATION

Camp Cunningham residents who have rights to the shared drive can access other Plausible Denial cartoons at S:/SHARED FILES/PLAUSIBLE DENIAL.

Safety reminds Airmen to wear eye armor

By Senior Master Sgt.
William M. Caskey
455th Air Expeditionary Wing
ground safety craftsman

As reminiscent and unforgettable as fingernails scratching the surface of a chalkboard, experienced Airmen are likely not to argue an eye injury is one of the most painful experiences a person can have. Close callers, or those individuals who survive an eye injury near miss, now swear by their eye or possibly life saving shields – now dutifully dubbed, eye armor.

It wasn't until the late 19th century that the first use of soft body armor in the United States was recorded. Before that time, the military explored the possibility of using soft body armor manufactured from silk, then wood and finally metal to protect themselves from injury in combat and other dangerous situations. Historically, the United States continued to work toward upgrading and providing some of the most creative types of personal protective equipment available.

Today's shatter proof eye armor sunglasses are no different. No, they're not Oakley, Maui Jim or Bolle,



172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team courtesy photo

First Lieutenant Anthony Aguilar wears his authorized protective eyewear list-approved eye protection after an improvised explosive device threw high velocity shrapnel into the hull of his armored vehicle. A piece of shrapnel is still attached to his eye protection. Lieutenant Aguilar was deployed to Iraq with the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team.

which can be purchased at the local Post Exchange. They're definitely not the knock off name brand glasses purchased at the local bazaar, which should never be purchased for wear in a deployed environment. The fact is

they are much better.

First Lieutenant Anthony Aguilar, an infantry platoon leader deployed to Mosul, Iraq, was fortunately utilized the authorized protective eyewear list and selected PPE sunglasses, which met standards and were approved by the Army's clothing and individual equipment product manager who continuously evaluates commercially available eyewear suitable for soldiers in the field.

In February, Lieutenant Aguilar's patrol was struck by a massive improvised explosive device. High-velocity shrapnel was launched toward his vehicle throwing Lieutenant Aguilar into the hull of his armored vehicle. As Lieutenant Aguilar gained his composure, he discovered his APEL approved lenses prevented a shard of shrapnel from contacting his face, saving his eyesight, preventing serious injury and possibly saving his life. Fortunately for this soldier, he utilized that APEL and wore his military issued eye armor instead of

purchasing a cool set of sunglasses, which would likely have shattered, only adding to his probable injury and possibly increasing the 16 percent of coalition casualties, which are directly attributed to eye injuries.

Eye armor tidbits

Fashion fact - If glasses don't have the American National Standards Institute stamp on the lens, frame or ear-piece, then they aren't impact resistant glasses.

Field fact – Airmen must wear APEL eye glasses while riding in open air vehicles, such as a Gator, Polaris or John Deere, or performing field tactical operations, training or situations where there's a risk of

combat. All commercial eyewear products listed in the APEL meet stringent ballistic protection standards. The Provost Marshall will write a citation for those who aren't wearing the proper PPE.

Bagram's Best

STAFF SGT. BRIDGET R. CRUDDEN



Sergeant Crudden, above, is deployed here as the explosive ordnance disposal equipment noncommissioned officer in charge for the 755th Expeditionary Mission Support Group EOD flight. She is deployed here from the 90th Civil Engineer Squadron, F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyo.

The Pottsville, Pa., native hopes to improve the EOD career field so future EOD technicians are better trained and equipped for the changing EOD mission.

Airman Beck, below, is deployed here from the 355th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska. He is assigned to the 455th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron as an aircraft armament specialist.

The Mooresville, Ind., native hopes to complete his Community College of the Air Force degree shortly after finishing his deployment here.

SENIOR AIRMAN. NEAL S. BECK

