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AEF 1/2 takes over as 9/10 rolls out of AOR

More than 2,000 Airmen move in and out of area during 21 day window

Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen
386th AEW/PA

Air Force/Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen

Incoming Airmen listen to Col. Timothy Hale, 386th Air Expeditionary Wing commander, speak during a Right Start briefing at the Rock Auditorium Friday.

Getting boots on the ground is Ali Al Salem's business, and business is good.

Airmen have been working overtime to get one rotation into the AOR and another one out of it with the ongoing AEF 9/10 to 1/2 swap out.

For members of the 386th Expeditionary Mission Support Group, this is their time to shine. They are charged with making sure the bulk of the change over is smooth.

"There's really about a 21 day window for movement," said Master Sgt. Terry Wint, installation deployment NCOIC with the 386th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron. "The first week of the window is for the senior staff followed by their support folks over the next two weeks."

During this timeframe more than 2,000 Airmen will swap out, including more than 2,100 tons of cargo.

"The challenge is being able to complete the mission as (our) personnel are swapping out," said Maj. Pearson, aerial port flight commander with the 386th ELRS. "(Because we need to get our) new folks trained up to performance levels so that the transition is seamless."

But moving people and cargo is really only one part of the swap. Maybe the tougher challenge is dealing with the details.

"Besides the logistical barriers that we have in getting people to and from (Kuwait City International Airport) we also have various customs issues," said Capt. George Henney, installation deployment officer with the 386th ELRS. "And we're constantly working with the AEF center on updates and we have to validate the (Time Phase Force Deployment Document) to make sure everyone has the proper overlap time."

Additional work is also created if people get in to the AOR after their required delivery date.

"Our biggest challenge is last minute shortfalls," Capt. Terry Russell, Personnel Support for Contingency Operations team chief for the 386th EMSG. "Usually it's because someone couldn't meet the required line remarks or waiver requests for delayed reporting because of a lack of airflow."

"One of our biggest issues is deviation letters," Sergeant Wint said. "If someone shows up late we have to deviate your predecessors orders and that can be a lot of work."

And while it may seem that things will calm down for the group after the swap out is complete, that's not really the case.

"The new folks come in and see it, but really it's a non-stop thing for us," Capt. Henney said. "Besides the regular AEF rotation we also have the C-130s that are on their own schedule ... and we also have the six month rotation which will be leaving in September."

The same is true for the PERSCO team.

"During the swap out we're extremely busy, but it doesn't really slow down too much," Capt. Russell said. "Because besides Ali Al Salem we also service Camp Arifjan, Camp Patriot, Camp Bucca and Camp Virginia."

During the entire four-month rotation more than 7,500 Airmen will move to and from their home station to the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing.

New engine repair shop saves time, money

Maj. Stephanie Bindemann
386th AEW/PA

Maintainers from the 386th Expeditionary Maintenance Group now have the capability to repair C-130 engines and propellers right here at Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait.

This new capability has cut down repair time and is key to getting the aircraft back in the air performing the mission.

"Our unit has gone from having nothing to having our own building, which houses more than 1,000 different parts to support our mission for backshop propeller and T-56 jet engine repair," said Tech. Sgt. Scott Schlie, C-130 base engine manager with the 386th Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron. "We have also obtained and secured more than 100 special equipment tools for propeller and jet engine repair. With this new process, our unit has been able to repair two C-130 propellers, which normally would have been airlifted back to Ramstein (Air Base, Germany) for repair."

Air Force/Maj. Stephanie Bindemann

Tech. Sgt. Scott Schlie, C-130 base engine manager with the 386th Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron, checks inventory at the new facility.

Repairing engines and props in house has freed up limited pallet space on C-130s and saved the Air Force money.

"We implemented this new process to save money, reduce down time for props and jets and keep our spare engine and propeller levels up," said Lt. Col. Dennis Dabney, 386th EMXS commander. "This allows us to decrease management tracking of parts in the area of responsibility."

In the past, if a propeller or jet engine was sent back to home station for repair it could take three to four weeks to get a replacement. With the new engine back shop, assets are back in serviceable condition in as little as two to three days.

"Recently, our shop was able to repair two propellers saving about $40,000," Sergeant Schlie said. "As the shop becomes more efficient, this number will grow a great deal ensuring our aircraft aren't grounded because we're waiting on a replacement prop or jet engine."

All Clear!

Air Force/Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen

Firefighters from the 386th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron evaluate engine number four on a C-130 after it landed early due to an in-flight emergency Thursday at Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait. The firefighers declared it safe and terminated the emergency.

HTNR

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Base councils provide Airmen more than just fun

All three groups strive to improve quality of life for deployed troops

Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen
386th AEW/PA

Air Force/SSgt. Jasmine Reif

Fight Night is just one of many programs and events put together by the professional councils on base. It was started by the Rock Bottom Airmen's Council from AEF 7/8.

Most Airmen deployed to Ali Al Salem Air Base, Kuwait, for their rotation want to remain busy 24/7 to make their time here move faster.

One way for them to do that, along with making a difference for the better, is to join one of the professional councils on base. Anyone in grades E-1 through E-9 are eligible to join and these councils are designed to build camaraderie and ultimately make the base a better place to live.

"We've had tremendous success with our professional councils and their accomplishments are evident around the base," said Chief Master Sgt. Brooke McLean, command chief master sergeant of the 386th AEW. "From legacy projects to changes to our promotion ceremony, the professional councils have made the Rock a better place to live and serve."

Younger troops looking to make a mark during their deployment and meet others are encouraged to join the Rock Bottom Airmen's Council, open to anyone from Airman basic to senior Airman.

"I would like to see any Airman who would like to be involved just come to a meeting, see what we have in mind and let everyone know what you would like to see accomplished around this base," said Senior Airman Tanisha Jackson, Rock Bottom Airmen's Council president and aerospace medical service technician with the 386th Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron. "The more people that we have, the bigger the brainstorming for new ideas can be."

The leadership of Rock Solid 5/6 invite every staff and technical sergeant join them at their weekly council meetings.

"E5s and E6s are the go-to individuals within our Air Force," said Tech. Sgt. Andrew Dapkins, Rock Solid 5/6 president and postmaster with the 386th Expeditionary Communications Squadron. "We manage, supervise, train, work and interact with all ranks of all branches of the armed services. But rather than recommending anyone to be a part of this council, I would like to challenge each and every one of us to step up and want to make a difference for our Airmen today; we always hear that the military is doing more with less, well here is our chance to do more for our Airmen."

Not to be outdone are the senior NCOs. Previous rotations of the Top Three Council have made many improvements to the base and this group is focused on doing the same.

"The goal of the Ali Al Salem Top Three Council is to provide leadership and foster unified esprit-de-corps and camaraderie among senior NCOs, junior NCOs and junior enlisted members assigned (here)," said Senior Master Sgt. Troy Gilliard, president of the Top Three Council and operations superintendent for the 386th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron. "I hope to unite senior NCOs from Ali Al Salem to ensure the unparalleled success of AEF 1/2 ... and expound upon the success of our predecessors.

Each club gets together weekly at the Rock Chapel. The Rock Bottom Airmen's Council meets Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m., Rock Solid 5/6 Wednesdays at 4 p.m. and the Top Three Council meet Tuesdays at 1 p.m.

The leadership of the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing encourages Airmen from across the base to attend their specific council meeting.

"Professional councils get Airmen involved and they provide everyone a chance to make things better at Ali Al Salem," Chief McLean said. "The councils provide a means to expand our knowledge of the Air Force, network with our peers, and develop leadership skills. We need people to take ownership of the Rock and councils provide a method for people to make this their home and be good citizens."

The three councils also plan to sponsor different events throughout the next four months. They are also always looking for new ideas to improve the quality of life here.

"The goals for our council are simple," Sergeant Dapkins said. "Work together to improve the morale and working environment for every rank with the Rock."

Air Force/Capt. Tom Crosson

CAMP BUCCA, IRAQ -- Tech. Sgt. Robert Rabjon, 586th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, off-base squad leader, and Maj. Jason Beers, 586th ESFS commander, talks to Lt. Gen. Gary L. North, U.S. Central Command Air Forces commander during his visit Monday. Gen. North and Chief Master Sgt. John Foran, CENTAF command chief master sergeant, visited the nearly 1,000 Airmen assigned to the 586th and 886th ESFS filling various security functions here.

(Left) Chief Foran meets with Senior Airman Hunter Harper, 586th ESFS heavy weapon gunner and Senior Airman Benjamin Harper, 586th ESFS entry controller during his visit to Camp Bucca. (Below) Gen. North chats with Senior Airman Norris Lewis, 386th Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron transient alert, prior to leaving for Camp Bucca.

CENTAF LEADERS TOUR CAMP BUCCA

Capt. Tom Crosson
386th AEW/PA

CAMP BUCCA, IRAQ -- Lt. Gen. Gary L. North, Commander, 9th Air Force and U.S. Central Command Air Forces and CMSgt. John P Foran, the 9th Air Force and U. S. Central Command Air Forces Command Chief Master Sergeant, traveled here Monday to visit the Airmen of the 586 and 886 Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, assigned to the camp's Theatre Internment Facility.

Nearly 1,000 Airmen are assigned to the TIF. They fulfill a variety of rolls, providing security inside and outside of the camp, as well as securing prisoners in the TIF and training Iraqi prison guards. They work hand-in-hand with the nearly 1,000 soldiers and sailors assigned to the camp.

The general and chief traveled throughout the camp to gain insight on the ESFS mission and to interact with Airmen to gain feedback about living conditions and other quality of life issues.

This was Lt. Gen. North's first visit to Camp Bucca since taking command in February. He said that the work that the 586 and 886 ESFS Airmen have accomplished during their current tour has been a striking example of how the Air Force has been able to successfully work with sister-services and coalition partners to get the mission done.

"I've seen that Airmen here have a great capability to work in a joint environment. They've done it well." Lt. Gen. North said. "This team is an example of how Airman can take any mission and do it better."

New service dress prototypes peak interest

Master Sgt. Mitch Gettle
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON -- Based on feedback received during visits with Airmen across the Air Force, the Air Force Uniform Board is reviewing several notional concepts that Airmen have suggested regarding the appearance of the service dress uniform.

Some of the informal feedback about the current service dress includes Airmen wanting to revamp the service dress to look more military, like the other services. One senior airman said, "the current uniform resembles a cheesy business suit." Another staff sergeant said, "think world's most dominating air power, not CEO," and another described it as a "cheap leisure suit."

Other comments have suggested that the uniform needs to reflect the Air Force's history more. On an Internet message board an Airman recently wrote, "I want to look good and be proud of my AF heritage." Another Airman wrote that the dress uniform pales in comparison to any of the other services. "We need something that distinguishes us as proud members of the U.S. military."

The Air Force began exploring these ideas by producing several prototypes that reflect a combination of ideas that have been gleaned from comments, suggestions and informal surveys conducted over the past several years.

Air Force/SSgt. Staff Sgt. C. Todd Lopez

Brig. Gen. Robert Allardice and Senior Master Sgt. Dana Athnos show off prototypes of the Hap Arnold heritage coat in the Pentagon on Monday, May 19, 2006.

A more formal survey soon will provide additional opportunities for Airmen to provide feedback and comments.

"We've been getting informal feedback on our current service dress uniform for several years, and what we consistently have heard from many Airmen is a desire for a more 'military,' and less 'corporate' look and feel, something more reflective of the Air Force's heritage, and its role as a professional military organization," said Brig. Gen. Robert Allardice, director of Airman development and sustainment, deputy chief of staff for manpower and personnel.

"The Uniform Board has come up with some options to explore these concepts and the initial prototypes are direct descendants of our heritage, rooted in Hap Arnold and Billy Mitchell's Air Force," General Allardice said.

The survey will provide a more formal opportunity to collect feedback on whether or not Airmen want a new service dress, and if so, what changes, likes, or dislikes they have about the prototypes.

"We believe we need to respond to the force and the constant flow of feedback we receive on the service dress is driving this initiative. We see this as an opportunity to do so, along with a chance to reflect on our rich history, as well as the image we wish to portray in uniform," said General Allardice. "We want to make sure our uniforms, all combinations, meet our current and future needs."

This process will use the standard Air Force Uniform Board process and as with the Airman's Battle Uniform, Airmen are encouraged to take the opportunity to directly contribute to how their new service uniform might look.

The Air Force will present options based on feedback received on possible service dress designs through the uniform board process.

Uniform Tip of the Week

AFI 36-2903 USCENTAF Supplement 1

Table 2.6. (ASAB ADDED) Line 10. Headphones and Earphones. Headphones and/or earphones are authorized while wearing the official PT uniform and within the confines of "The Rock" (to include an MP3-type player.)

Headphones/earphones are not authorized when operating a motor vehicle.

Right

Wrong

386th Air Expeditionary Wing Rock Solid Warriors

Airman First Class Brian M. Delventhal

886th ESFS, Charlie Flight
Detainee Operations Compound
Entry Controller

Home unit, base: 60th SFS, Travis AFB, Calif.

How do you support the mission here? As an Entry Controller I share in the immense responsibility of safeguarding detainees within the largest interment facility in the world.

How many times have you deployed and what makes this one unique? This is my first deployment. It's unique for me because I'm working in a joint environment at an Army camp. And it's also unique in that my duties involve detainee operations in Iraq.

How does your job differ in a deployed environment vs. home base? My job back home doesn't involve the safeguarding of detainees. As an armorer back home I account for and safeguard weaponry. The responsibility I have here is much greater and the duty more dangerous than at my home unit.

Staff Sgt. Gasie Crow

386th EMSG
PERSCO
Manper B Operator

Home unit, base: 96th MSS, Eglin AFB, FL

How do you support the mission here? My primary responsibility is personnel accountability and casualty reporting for six different locations here in the AOR. We are tasked to account for all assigned and transient personnel. Transients include all AF personnel arriving and forward deploying to various locations throughout the AOR. PERSCO also ensures the correct faces are in their right places. Additionally, we report all AF injuries and casualties, hostile and non-hostile, to AF Casualty.

How many times have you deployed and what makes this one unique? This is my first deployment.

How does your job differ in a deployed environment vs. home base? Providing the needed support to get the mission done. Enabling Air Force personnel to deploy and redeploy in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Inprocessing/outprocessing, forward deploy, redeploying personnel to home station. Each day here in the AOR is always a new challenge, instead of performing the same daily tasks. Which makes being deployed a rewarding rotation when it's your turn to support the mission and your fellow Airmen who are always at risk.