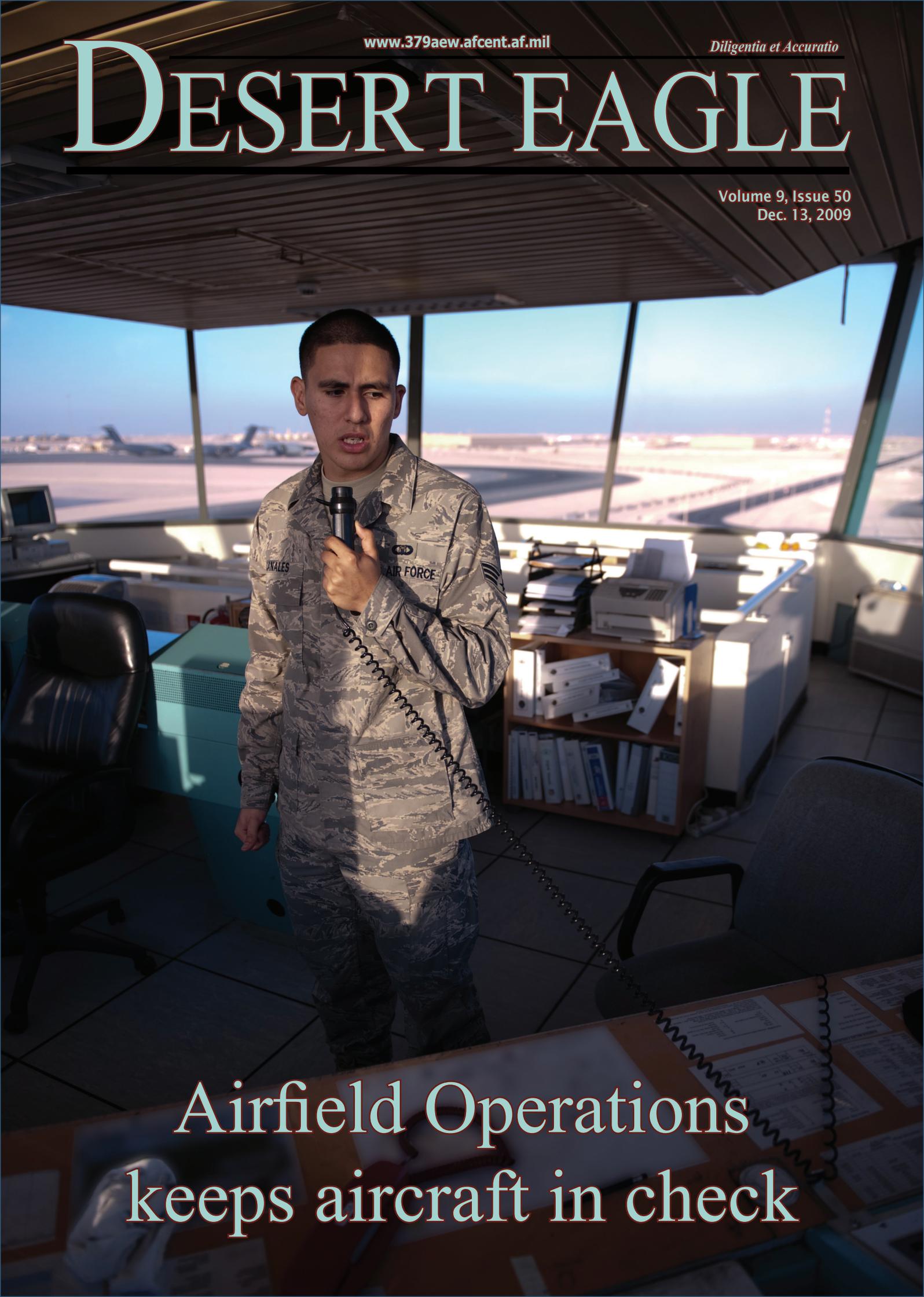


# DESERT EAGLE

Volume 9, Issue 50  
Dec. 13, 2009



Airfield Operations  
keeps aircraft in check

DESERT EAGLE

Volume 9, Issue 50

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All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

Commentaries and warriors of the week are scheduled according to a squadron rotation. Unit commanders and first sergeants are the points of contact for submissions.

For more information, call 436-0107.



Senior Airman Salvador Canales, 379th Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron airfield traffic controller, directs aircraft Wednesday. Airman Canales is an air traffic controller responsible for expediting all aircraft taking off, landing, and transiting through the airfield here. (U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Robert Barney)

# Deployments change people

By Maj. Apryl Cymbal  
379th Air Expeditionary Wing  
Force Protection Office

Imagine if you had never left home -- settled into a local job and never left your hometown except to go to Vegas or Disneyland once a year. The gypsy military lifestyle broadens the horizon -- everyone knows this. Most of the force is deploying constantly, performing hard, heroic, and sometimes, heartbreaking work. Everyone has incredible war stories to share -- sad ones that make you cry, ones that inspire, and those causing you to laugh till you fall off your chair. It is impossible to remain unchanged after exposure to such a staggering range of life experiences and cultures alien to our own. Above all, deploying has forced me to reconsider so many things that I thought I knew for certain.

I served as a military liaison a few years ago for the Iraqi Police in the International Zone. Establishing a modern police force, loyal to the national government, was considered pivotal to Iraq's future stability. A police academy was stood up; new police gear, weapons, vehicles and facilities were acquired. It was an exciting time and I had no prior experience with this mission, so it took me a long time to notice the complexity. I realized, finally, that the people of the IZ simply had no expectation of fair and equitable police services. There was no steady flood of citizenry needing help or just wanting to complain. Many citizens had good reasons to be genuinely fearful of the government and carefully avoided contact. Ok, so in the U.S. government there are probably those who abuse their power, perhaps a little corruption,

**SEE DEPLOYMENT ON PAGE 3**



## Commander's Action Line

**Q:** Over the past several days I've been noticing at the BPC Chow Hall that flies are becoming an increasing nuisance. Last night is the worst I have seen it, while waiting for a sandwich I glanced up at the hanging lights over the short order line. I counted 12 flies on the electrical cords. I am pleased with the food services here at our installation, but the number of flies buzzing around the chow hall is unsatisfactory.

**A:** I think we can all agree we don't like flies in our DFACs. While Entomology, Public Health, and the 379th Expeditionary Force Support Squadron all work together to eliminate all flies and other insects through the use of air curtains, spraying, fly tape, and applying good sanitation standards, it's a constant struggle this time of year when the weather cools and insects seek indoor warmth. With that, 379 EFSS has taken further steps to ensure doors are shut tightly and the dock is only open during deliveries. While we all agree flies are unsightly pests, you should rest assured knowing our DFACs consistently receive high marks during their sanitation and health inspections and we have had zero food-borne illnesses for as long as records have been kept at AUAB. We hope that the additional steps coupled with colder weather will further minimize the spread of flies in our DFACs.

- **The Action Line is your direct link to Brig. Gen. Stephen Wilson, 379th Air Expeditionary Wing commander.**
- **Use it if you have questions or comments about the base that cannot be resolved by your chain of command or base agencies.**
- **Each question will be reviewed, answered and may be published on a case-by-case basis. E-mail [379aewactionline@auab.afcent.af.mil](mailto:379aewactionline@auab.afcent.af.mil).**



U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Robert Barney

## New Air Mobility commander visits 379 AEW

**Center, Gen. Raymond E. Johns Jr., Air Mobility Command commander, talks with 379th Expeditionary Maintenance Squadron servicemembers in the Centralized Repair Facility during his first visit to Southwest Asia as AMC commander, Tuesday. General Johns received a close-up look at AMC assets and spoke with personnel deployed to the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing in support of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.**

## Things I have learned on my deployments

### FROM DEPLOYMENT ON PAGE 2

nepotism or cronyism every now and then. Still, no one hesitates to dial 9-1-1. Imagine living in a place where you can't call upon the police or fire department if you need help. How would you ever feel safe?

I once tagged along behind a U.S. Army platoon as they searched an apartment building in Baghdad; they needed additional females to search the local women and children. The International Zone's only market and café had just been simultaneously bombed and tactical units were 'shaking down' the zone. In the middle of the night, cordons were thrown up around a huge apartment complex and Soldiers went to work, searching buildings. I watched the troops search both the families and their homes. To me it seemed horribly invasive, but every single person was incredibly docile. Not one person said "Hey, you broke my door, what the heck are you looking

for?" No one said "I don't deserve this." They seemed utterly resigned.

A couple of years later I deployed again to Iraq. By then the focus had shifted to establishing the Rule of Law in Iraq. The concept seemed cozily familiar to me because the Rule of Law encompasses the basic, inherent rights of every American. But I couldn't help wondering if the people of Iraq even had these expectations formed up yet?

In Baghdad, I worked on a child prostitution case -- a 13-year old with a thick stack of cash in her little backpack. The International Zone was locked down tight. We were mystified as to how a child was getting past the formidable IZ checkpoints. As it turned out her mother was walking her to the checkpoint and 'negotiating' her entry to the IZ so she could work. The family was one of many displaced because of the civil war. I stood next to the U.S. State Department interpreter, stubbornly judgmental and thinking the mother must be a bad

person. The interpreter listened to the mother patiently. Finally he said to me, you know the problem is there really are not enough jobs yet. This girl is the only member of her extended family with any reliable income at all.

I suppose if I had never left my hometown, I could have read books about hatred, poverty, scary places and the mindset of oppressed people. Servicemembers in the wartime military have the opportunity to learn these lessons firsthand.

Deploying has taught me the same simple lesson over and over -- Americans are inexplicably blessed. Right now, all the news is covering the shift from Iraq to Afghanistan. So many arguments! Luckily low-level employees don't need to worry too much about policy. No one I know sits around and debates strategy. I think most people are just hoping that by the time the job at hand is done, America will be safer and life will be a little better for the people of Iraq and Afghanistan.



U.S. Air Force photos/Staff Sgt. Robert Barney

**Staff Sgt. Lee Armstrong, 379th Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron, observes aircraft passing through Southwest Asia, Wednesday. Sergeant Armstrong is an air traffic controller who expedites all aircraft taking off, landing, and transiting through the airfield here.**

## Airfield management fast-paced job

By Senior Airman Michael Matkin  
379th Air Expeditionary Wing  
Public Affairs

The flightline of the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing, to include the taxiway and runway, is one of the busiest and most diverse airfield operations in the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility, with more than 5,000 take-offs and landings each month. These aircraft are performing missions vital to the success of operations downrange, whether they are transiting troops, providing air support or dropping vital supplies to forward operating bases. Without the airfield and the personnel who manage it, these missions would never even get off the ground.

Managing this airfield and keeping it safe for aircraft and personnel is the responsibility of the 379th Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron Airfield Operations Flight, which includes the control tower and airfield management.

The mission of the control tower is to provide safe air traffic and control services for all aircraft assigned to and transiting the base.

“Nothing happens on this airfield without it first going through us,” said Master Sgt. Scott Sojak, 379 EOSS chief controller, deployed from Yokota Air Base, Japan. “An aircraft cannot land, take off, or taxi without coordination through the tower. We are an integral part of an aircraft’s mission, from start to finish.”

First, there is the watch supervisor who ensures compliance with all local operating procedures for the base during their assigned shift.

“Regardless of rank or seniority the watch supervisor is in charge, which is unique to this career field,” Sergeant Sojak said.

The second duty in the control tower is the local controller who maintains surveillance of the base’s airspace and controlled movement area. As an aircraft approaches, the local controller visually acquires the aircraft, sequences it with any other inbound or departing aircraft, ensures the runway is clear of any aircraft or vehicular traffic that could impede its landing, and then clears the aircraft to land.

Once the aircraft lands, it is turned over from the local controller to the

ground controller, who taxis them to park, Sergeant Sojak said. The ground controller maintains surveillance of all aircraft movement to include taxiing aircraft and towing. It is also their responsibility to assist the local controller in maintaining surveillance of the movement area.

The duties of these three positions of air traffic control may be the same all over the world; however, their job here is different because they work hand-in-hand with the host nation controllers, Sergeant Sojak said.

“Working with the host nation is something new for all of us and sometimes communication can be a challenge, but we work through it with patience and understanding,” Sergeant Sojak said. “It has really been a great experience interacting with the host nation controllers and we have all learned from one another.”

Just as the air traffic controllers must work hand-in-hand with the host nation, they also must work closely with airfield management, said Capt. Joshua Pitler, airfield operations officer in-charge, deployed from Barksdale, AFB, La. The

control tower and airfield management are two separate elements, but they work together in unison to provide a safe airfield.

The mission of airfield management is to ensure the entire airfield and its surrounding areas are safe, efficient and effective for all aircraft operations.

All aircraft arriving to and departing from the base must file a flight plan with airfield management, who logs the information in accordance with local guidelines and ensures coordination with the host nation.

“We process more than 3,000 flight plans per month,” said Staff Sgt. Laribeth Matter, 379 EOSS deputy airfield manager, deployed from Shaw Air Force Base, S.C., “which is an easy way to view the difference in operations tempo from home station as we only process about 600 a month at home.”

Another difference from home station is that airfield management personnel are parking aircraft and ensuring their safety, Sergeant Matter said. This is a challenging experience for airfield management because there are relatively

few parking locations for the numerous types of aircraft assigned to the base, plus there are transient aircraft coming and going regularly.

To account for the transient aircraft, airfield management issues 20 to 30 PPRs or prior permission required, every day, which are approval numbers issued to transient aircraft. PPRs help airfield management ensure timing and parking availability and orchestrate the movement and flow of transient aircraft, Sergeant Matter said. Once they get notified a transient aircraft will be arriving on base, they immediately have to reconfigure the ramp space to ensure it is used at its maximum capacity, while also maintaining safety standards.

Maintaining safety on the flightline is a major role of airfield management. Personnel are constantly scouring the flightline to ensure it is free of any foreign objects or other hazardous materials that could damage the aircraft, Sergeant Matter said. A foreign object detection check is completed every two hours. This is to make sure the strong winds here or

aircraft have not blown any rocks onto the runway or taxiway, Sergeant Matter said. This is also done immediately after a large aircraft, or what they call a “heavy,” lands or departs.

The duties of airfield management personnel are all tied to maintaining flightline safety and it is for this reason that they are responsible for notifying base responders should an emergency situation arise.

“We monitor the flightline during emergencies to verify and ensure air traffic controllers can continue airfield operations while the emergency is in progress,” Sergeant Matter said.

“The mission of airfield management and the air traffic controllers go hand in hand,” Captain Pitler said. “It is quite the ballet to watch these two groups work together. They really work in sync to create a safe and efficient environment for aircraft operating on the ground and in the air. The end result of the control tower and airfield management personnel’s hard work is that aircraft can take off and land safely -- and these servicemembers make it happen.”



**Staff Sgt. Laribeth Matter, 379th Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron, ensures Staff Sgt. Nathan Gomard has a current Air Force Form 483 Flightline Driver’s Competency Card, Wednesday, in Southwest Asia. Sergeant Matter helps ensure the flightline here is safe and reliable for aircraft operations.**



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Robert Barney

## Commander visits with fellow Reservists

Center, Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner Jr., Air Force Reserve Command commander, visits with 746th Aircraft Maintenance Unit servicemembers during a base visit, Monday. General Stenner was traveling throughout Southwest Asia visiting Reservists deployed in support of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

## Promotion to E-8 to require resident Senior NCO Academy

By Daniel Elkins  
Air Force Personnel Center  
Public Affairs

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFNS) -- Completion of the resident Air Force Senior Noncommissioned Officer Academy or a sister service equivalent becomes a requirement for promotion to senior master sergeant effective Jan. 1, Air Force officials announced Wednesday as part of a policy change.

The change in the professional military education requirement will supersede the current policy that requires Air Force SNCOA completion for promotion to chief master sergeant.

"The goal is to provide enlisted (professional military education) at correctly targeted career points," Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force James A. Roy said. "By providing PME earlier and more evenly spaced over an enlisted Airman's career, we ensure enlisted leaders have the tools they need to be successful sooner and at more relevant periods of their career."

The idea for the policy change origi-

nated from the 2008 Enlisted Professional Military Education Triennial Review that examined enlisted PME attendance across an Airman's career. A proposal from the review called for earlier attendance to produce more capable NCOs.

By requiring SNCOA completion for promotion to senior master sergeant, master sergeants will acquire increased knowledge and leadership skills as they sew on their next stripe and take on increasing roles of responsibility, said Chief Master Sgt. Mark Long, the Air Force's enlisted promotions, evaluations and physical fitness chief. This policy change will also align the Air Force with its sister services enlisted PME requirements, reduce the time span between NCO academy and SNCOA attendance by approximately two years, and increase the return on the investment for attending advanced PME, he said.

Airmen selected for promotion to senior master sergeant but unable to attend or complete resident SNCOA before their line number increment will require a promotion waiver for PME attendance. The

Air Force Personnel Center Enlisted Promotion and Military Testing Branch will provide a list of E-8 selects to base military personnel sections so they can notify commanders that a waiver may be necessary.

Airmen with approved waivers must attend the SNCOA within 179 days of their effective promotion date. Those with approved waivers who are unable to attend due to deployment must complete their PME within 90 days of their return.

Master sergeants who are time-in-grade eligible are still required to complete the SNCOA either by correspondence or in residence to be eligible for senior rater endorsement, Chief Long said.

Master sergeants without a line number for promotion will continue to have the opportunity to attend the academy in residence using existing selection criteria.

"This change in policy supports a key goal by Air Force leadership to develop our Airmen," Chief Long said. "Better preparing our senior NCOs in these challenging times underscores the importance of properly caring for the primary weapon in the Air Force arsenal - our Airmen."

**Staff Sgt. Amanda Lindsey**

379th Expeditionary Medical Group  
Health Service Management

**Home station:** Minot Air Force Base, N.D.

**Arrived in AOR:** July

**Deployment goals:** Finish school, learn a new job within my career field and meet new people.

**Best part of the deployment:** Both the people and experience have made this deployment awesome.

**Hobbies:** Cooking and hanging out with family and friends.

**Best Air Force memory:** Probably would have to be working in the emergency room at Lackland AFB, Texas. I worked with great people and got a chance to learn and see a lot of neat things.

*Nominated by Master Sgt. Thomas Boyd: "Sergeant Lindsey is the backbone of our 24-hour customer helpdesk. She achieved an incredible on-time work order completion rate of 98 percent. She maintains 30 radios guaranteeing medical response for more than 9,500 deployed personnel. She also maintained 367 Automated Data Processing Equipment items. During her deployment she has helped certify 747 Individual First-Aid Kits."*



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Jason Edwards

**Senior Airman Katrina Mitchell**

379th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron  
Expeditionary Theater Distribution Center

**Home station:** Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash.

**Arrived in AOR:** July

**Deployment goals:** Perform in at least two details for Honor Guard each month, volunteer as much as possible to help the greater good as a whole and finish psychology to be one class closer to finishing my CCAF degree.

**Best part of the deployment:** Co-workers and the 379 AEW Honor Guard.

**Hobbies:** Reading.

**Best Air Force memory:** Receiving my first Achievement Medal for outstanding achievement while deployed to Iraq; also when I was selected for Senior Airman below-the-zone.

*Nominated by Master Sgt. Scott Harris: "Senior Airman Mitchell is always eager to improve the work center by going above and beyond what is expected from her, whether it be creating a new program or revamping current ones. She is also willing to volunteer for whatever activities she can and tries to convince others in the shop to volunteer as well."*



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Robert Barney

**Staff. Sgt. Alanda Respress**

Host Nation Coordination Cell  
Host Nation Coordination Cell Liaison

**Home station:** Hurlburt Field, Fla.

**Arrived in AOR:** October

**Deployment goals:** Study for technical sergeant and to get fit and healthy.

**Best part of the deployment:** Being able to work in a different job other than my AFSC. Working with immigrations has proven to be a very unique and interesting job.

**Hobbies:** Playing squadron sports and spending weekends on the boat.

**Best Air Force memory:** Being part of the first Services Squadron in Iraq.

*Nominated by Maj. Docia Buchanan: "Sergeant Respress normally expedites aircrew and passengers at the air passenger terminal and resolves visa and deportation issues. When a co-worker had to return home on emergency leave, while another co-worker was already on leave, she volunteered to come to the HNCC Immigrations Office and quickly learned Foreign Clearance Guide entry requirements in order to assist customers with questions. She has been a tremendous asset to HNCC."*



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Jason Edwards



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Jason Edwards

The Harlem Globetrotters take on the Washington Generals in an exhibition game for deployed personnel here, Monday. The Globetrotters performed here courtesy of the Armed Forces Entertainment while touring six countries in Southwest Asia.



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Jason Edwards

Base servicemembers work together to fill sandbags, Wednesday, on the south side of base. Nearly 15,000 sandbags are being filled to surround base facilities in preparation for the upcoming rainy season.



Tech. Sgt. Christin Foley, A forms for an audience of d day. Sirocco is deployed fr and performs throughout mote troop morale, and di tion communities.

Right, Master Sgt. Jason B port Squadron first sergea 379th Expeditionary Medic to deployed servicememb Tuesday. The birthday me dence Hall Dining Facility servicemembers serving in and Enduring Freedom.



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Robert Barney

**AFCENT Band Sirocco vocalist, per-deployed servicemembers Wednesday from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, Southwest Asia to positively pro-plomacy and outreach to host na-**

**aty, 379th Expeditionary Force Sup-  
nt, and Master Sgt. Christina Kibler,  
cal Group first sergeant, serve dinner  
ers who have December birthdays,  
eal is held monthly at the Indepen-  
to celebrate birthdays of deployed  
support of operations Iraqi Freedom**



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Jason Edwards

**Senior Master Sgt. John Turner, 379th Expeditionary Communications Squadron first sergeant, reads a passage from a 1941 Soldier's Manual for Chief Master Sgt. Scott Dearduff, Air Forces Central Command command chief, at a going away gathering in his honor, Wednesday. Chief Dearduff served the past two years in this position and is heading to Shaw Air Force Base, S.C. to serve as 9th Air Force command chief.**



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. Jason Edwards

# Thrift Savings Plan provides multiple options

By Senior Airman David Dobrydney  
379th Air Expeditionary Wing  
Public Affairs

In these economic times, saving for the future is important. Servicemembers and other federal employees have an opportunity other civilians don't have – the option to invest in the Thrift Savings Plan.

Members who enroll in TSP set up payroll deductions that are tax-deferred and can be spread among multiple investment funds.

Vonda Ware, 379th Expeditionary Force Support Squadron Airman Readiness Center team lead, said that benefits of beginning TSP deductions while deployed are the same as doing it stateside.

“Many times people who deploy will increase their contributions because they're making extra money,” Ms. Ware said.

Senior Master Sgt. Durand Phillips, 379 Expeditionary Comptroller Squadron superintendent, said members can contribute any percentage of their basic pay, up to 100 percent, as well as any special pay such as reenlistment bonuses or hazardous duty pay. A deployed member can contribute up to \$49,000 of tax-exempt pay per calendar year. However, contributions must be made through payroll deductions and cannot come from personal bank accounts. Additionally, all mandatory deductions from a member's pay will be collected prior to any voluntary TSP deductions.

The TSP funds include:

**The Government Security Investment, or G Fund.** Considered the safest of the five TSP funds, it consists of treasury bonds and federal-backed investments. The other funds offer riskier investment strategies, but potentially higher yields.

**The Common Stock Index Investment, or C Fund.** The C Fund offers the opportunity to earn a potentially high investment return over the long term from a broadly diversified portfolio of stocks of large and medium-sized U.S. companies. The objective of the C Fund is to match the performance of the Standard and Poor's 500 Index, a broad market index made up of stocks of 500 large to medium-sized U.S. companies. There is a risk of loss if the S&P 500 Index declines in response to changes in overall economic conditions. Earnings consist of gains (or losses) in the prices of stocks and dividend income.

**The Fixed Income Index Investment, or F Fund.** The F Fund offers the opportunity to earn rates of return that exceed those of money market funds over the long term, with relatively low risk. The objective of



U.S. Army photo/C. Todd Lopez

the F Fund is to match the performance of the Barclays Capital U.S. Aggregate Index, a broad index representing the U.S. bond market. The risk of nonpayment of interest or principal is relatively low because the fund includes only investment-grade securities and is broadly diversified. However, the F Fund has market risk and prepayment risk. Earnings consist of interest income on the securities and gains in the value of securities.

**The Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment, or S Fund.** The S Fund offers the opportunity to earn a potentially high investment return over the long term by investing in the stocks of small and medium-sized U.S. companies. The objective of the S Fund is to match the performance of the Dow Jones U.S. Completion Total Stock Market Index, a broad market index made up of stocks of U.S. companies not included in the S&P 500 Index. There is a risk of loss if the Dow Jones U.S. Completion TSM Index declines in response to changes in overall economic conditions. Earnings consist of gains (or losses) in the prices of stocks and dividend income.

**The International Stock Index Investment, or I Fund.** The I Fund offers the opportunity to earn a potentially high investment return over the long term by investing in the stocks of companies in developed countries outside the United States. The objective of the I Fund is to match the performance of the Morgan Stanley Capital International EAFE (Europe, Australasia, Far East) Index. There is a risk of loss if the EAFE Index declines in response to changes in overall economic conditions or in response to increases in the value of the U.S. dollar. Earnings consist of gains (or losses) in the prices of stocks, currency changes relative to the U.S. dollar and dividend income.

**The Lifestyle Fund option, or L Fund.**

The L Fund takes all the diversification work out of the contributor's hands. It distributes money among the five funds and adjusts the distribution over time. The L Fund automatically places money in the risky, but potentially higher-yield funds, early on and moves them to more secure, conservative investment options as the participant nears retirement.

“It's wise for folks to diversify their portfolio and that's always something we recommend,” Ms. Ware said. “They need to create a portfolio that reflects when they want to retire. For example, if they are closer to retirement they might want to contribute to funds that are less risky.”

For those who are nearing retirement, another additive to the program is Catch-Up Contributions. Sergeant Phillips said catch-up contributions are supplemental tax-deferred employee contributions that employees age 50 or older can make to the TSP beyond the maximum amount they can contribute through regular contributions. The amount of the catch-up will not exceed the annual limit of \$5,500 in 2009 and 2010.

Ms. Ware said that TSP contributors also have the ability to decide for themselves which fund their money is in and can shift money in and out of funds up to twice a month if they wish.

Additionally, with TSP more of the contributors' money is put to work. “One of the good things about TSP is when you're looking at avenues for investment the percentage that goes into your investment versus the amount that is taken over by the company to manage the portfolio is very, very low compared to some other programs,” Ms. Ware said.

For more information about TSP, go to [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov).

*(Airman 1st Class Staci Miller, 52nd Fighter Wing Public Affairs, contributed information for this article.)*

# Why is Union Jack sometimes at half mast?

By Squadron Leader Bruno Wood  
Royal Air Force 83rd Expeditionary Air Group

Servicemembers may see the Union Jack flag at Memorial Plaza flying at half mast from time to time. This is an act of respect to a British servicemember or civilian who has died in action.

Union flags, commonly known as the Union Jack, and ensigns, such as the RAF Ensign, are lowered to half-mast as a sign of respect in the event of a death. The general situations when this is required includes the death of a member of the royal family, a key minister or serving military person.

The situations which may lead to the half-masting of flags are if a British servicemember or UK Ministry of Defence civilian dies in action, irrespective of the circumstances. The Union flag will be half-masted as a matter of courtesy whenever flown in company with another nation's flag which is at half mast.

In the event of a death in-theatre, half-masting will occur immediately but, in respect to families, only once next of kin have been informed. Because of the informing process, flags may be half-masted the day following a servicemember's death in-theatre.



Photo courtesy Squadron Leader Bruno Wood

## This Week's Caption Contest

Photo No. 153

### The winner is...

**"Are you sure this is potable water?"**

- Senior Airman Tommie Crutcher,  
379th Expeditionary Force Support  
Squadron

### Honorable mention:

**"Give kids an inch..."**

- Tech. Sgt. Monte Caldarelli,  
746th Aircraft Maintenance Unit



Photo No. 154 (next week's photo)

Do you have what it takes to make the base chuckle? Submit your made-up caption for the photo below to **379AEW.PA@auab.afcent.af.mil** by Wednesday. If your caption is the best (or second best), it will appear in the following week's paper.

Can't come up with a caption but have a funnier photo than we've been using? Submit it to **379AEW.PA@auab.afcent.af.mil** and we may use it.

# Tour for the Troops 2009 stars vis

By Senior Airman David Dobrydney  
379th Air Expeditionary Wing  
Public Affairs

A 'kid' kept servicemembers entertained for hours Dec. 6 at Memorial Plaza -- Kid Rock that is.

With logistical support provided by Air Force Reserve Command, the triple-platinum recording artist brought his Twisted Brown Trucker Band, along with comedian Carlos Mencia and singer songwriter Jessie James, here as part of Tour for the Troops 2009.

"This is a real concert, just like one that you would get back home from us," Mr. Mencia said. Although this is his third time participating in Tour for the Troops, "I don't feel like it's a big deal; it's the least we can do," he said when asked why he joined the tour. "With the sacrifices made by these troops, I'd do it any time they ask."

As a comedian, Mr. Mencia sometimes has hecklers in his stateside venues. Not so with military audiences, he said. "I've never been heckled out here, because these guys are just so

happy that we're here. These are the best crowds I've ever performed in front of," Mr. Mencia said.

Those crowds included Master Sgt. Frank Sills of the 379th Air Expeditionary Wing Command Post. "This is my sixth deployment to the [area of responsibility] and will by far be the most memorable one," Sergeant Sills said. This tour is Kid Rock's fifth supporting the troops in Southwest Asia. "That says a lot about his character and support for the military," Sergeant Sills said. "My hat's off to all of them."

In order to make the concert a memorable one, the 379th Expeditionary Force Support Squadron coordinated with Air Force Reserve Command for months prior. In addition, the talents of multiple base organizations were called upon to set up equipment, provide security and ensure a smooth arrival and departure for the tour. "As a force support squadron, it's our job to plan the entertainment and recreation programs for the wing, but it takes effort from the entire wing to make it become a reality and a truly successful event,"

said Chief Master Sgt. Vatemala Ivy, 379 EFSS superintendent. "The tour would not have been as successful if it had not been for a lot of planning, hard work and involvement from squadrons like civil engineers, security forces, communications squadron and logistics readiness squadron."

Jessie James appreciated the opportunity the tour allows to give back to the troops for all their hard work. "If [the troops] were not here, I don't think I would be able to perform back in the U.S. because I don't believe any of us would have the freedoms we have if these [servicemembers] were not over here," she said. "It's really rewarding to come out here and thank them personally."

Ms. James understands the military lifestyle, having spent her childhood with a father in the Air Force. "I've traveled to so many different places and lived in 14 different spots," she said, "everything's influenced my music."

Enjoying the music among the more than 4,000 fans were two busloads of servicemembers from a nearby Army



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Robert Barney

**Carlos Mencia, Jessie James and Tour for the Troops 2009 headliner Kid Rock, visit Soldiers from the 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade deployed here, Dec. 6. The performers were on hand to entertain deployed military servicemembers as part of Tour for the Troops 2009, which is sponsored by the Air Force Reserve Command.**

# it Grand Slam Wing, hold concert



U.S. Air Force photo/Tech Sgt. Jason Edwards

**Kid Rock performs for a live audience of deployed servicemembers in Southwest Asia, Dec. 6.**

post on rest and relaxation passes from various units throughout the U.S. Central Command AOR.

The R&R program is geared to help servicemembers have a brief respite from the rigors of combat so they can effectively accomplish their mission when they return to their units.

Among the R&R members was Army Master Sgt. Renee Anker. Sergeant Anker is on R&R from Joint Base Balad, Iraq, and a fan of Kid Rock. "He's so multitalented with the different genres he covers," she said. "He's also from Michigan, which is close to home for me."

Army Staff Sgt. Priscilla Sanchez, NCO in charge of the R&R program, said that trips to see concerts like this are a great surprise for the servicemembers. Sergeant Anker agreed. "I didn't expect it," she said as she cheered Kid Rock on, "but I love it!"

**Right, Carlos Mencia visits with Sailors from the Patrol Squadron 1 during a flightline tour, Dec. 6.**



U.S. Air Force photo/Staff Sgt. Robert Barney



**VICTORY CHAPEL**

Open seven days a week,  
24 hours a day,  
'And overtime on Sundays'

**WORSHIP  
SCHEDULE**

**Protestant  
Saturday**

7:30 p.m., Contemporary, Chapel

**Sunday**

9:45 a.m., General Protestant,  
CAOC 1st Floor conference room

9:45 a.m., Contemporary, Chapel

11:30 a.m., Traditional Service,  
Chapel

Noon, Church of Christ,  
BPC Fellowship

1:30 p.m., LDS Service, Chapel

4 p.m., Liturgical, Chapel

7 p.m., Church of Christ,  
Multi-purpose room

7:30 p.m., Gospel, Chapel

**Roman Catholic Mass**

6 p.m., Monday-Friday

Blessed Sacrament Chapel

**Saturday Mass**

6 p.m., Mass, BPC Mall area

**Sunday Masses**

8 a.m., Mass, Victory Chapel

11 a.m., Mass, CAOC 1st floor  
conference room

6 p.m., Mass, Victory Chapel

**Earth Religions**

**Wednesday**

2 p.m., CC Ministry Center

**Jewish**

**Friday**

9 p.m., Multi-purpose room

**Muslim**

**Buddhist**

**Orthodox**

See Chapel staff or call 437-8811 for  
more information.

**Time of both light, darkness**

By Chaplain (Capt.) Mark Juchter  
379th Air Expeditionary Wing Chapel

Happy Holidays! With the advent of December, that expression has become more and more common the world over, and our corner of Southwest Asia is no different. I've been hearing "Happy Holidays" since just before Thanksgiving, and I hear it more often each day as we get closer and closer to Christmas. The chapel, of course, is beginning to get busier planning activities for people of many different religious backgrounds, for this is a significant time for people from all faith groups. Even for those with no particular religious background or for whom there is no religious holiday this month, December has become a time of gathering with family and friends, a season of celebrations loud and quiet, private and public.

Not everyone, however, will experience this season as one of joy and celebration. It could be the stresses of deployment, the physical separation from family and friends, or the absence of a loved one who has died in recent years, that is making the holidays harder this year. Even the shorter days and longer nights we experience in this season darken not just the hours but hearts and minds as well.

If you find yourself, or someone else, experiencing a lack of "holiday spirit" this year the most important thing to recognize is that this is completely normal. Just because it is a time of year usually set aside for celebration doesn't make feelings of grief, loss, or depression wrong or abnormal. It can, and does, happen to anyone, during any time of the year. It is completely natural to reflect on those who are not here this year sharing in the holidays or to feel more keenly the distance from loved ones.

These feelings serve a purpose. Often they are a part of grieving, the normal process through which we find healing after loss. Denying or burying them can cause harm and inhibit the healing process, and can prevent mental, emotional, and spiritual healing.

Seeking the company of groups



of people to help make it through the season works well for some, and there are plenty of opportunities in our squadrons, around base, and at the chapel to do just that. But remember -- don't force yourself, or someone else, to celebrate! This may not be the answer for everyone. Some might need to spend the time more quietly, honoring the season in a different way. Just as grief takes many forms, so too there are many ways to heal through grief. Each person must seek the best way to heal.

No matter how you chose to participate in the celebrations of the season, should you have difficulty with emotional or spiritual distress this year, don't hesitate to reach out for help. Likewise, if you see someone in distress, be a good wingman and reach out, or encourage him or her to seek help. There are people and agencies here on base ready to help just as the clinic would help. The chaplains, mental health, good friends and wingmen are all standing by to assist with an open door, a listening ear, and skills and tools that you can use to not only make it through the season but also to heal in the process.

December is a time of both light and darkness when, during the shorter days and longer nights, we gather to find strength and hope through celebrations both sacred and secular. As the world moves into winter and darker days, so too will it eventually move into spring and summer. With a little help we, too, can move through the darker days to find emotional and spiritual healing.

**Follow the happenings of the 'Grand Slam' Wing at <http://379aew.dodlive.mil>, on Facebook at '379th Air Expeditionary Wing' and on Twitter @379AEW**

### **Tobacco Cessation Classes**

The Tobacco Cessation Program will have sessions from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.: Dec. 15, 22, 29 and Jan. 5. The sessions will be held at the Mental Health Clinic located in Bldg. 10090 in the Coalition Compound. Participants must complete all four modules. The program focuses on the behavioral changes needed to increase long-term abstinence from tobacco products. It is a group process-centered class that incorporates behavioral change with nicotine replacement therapy. To sign up, call Master Sgt. Lisa Ware at 437-8767.

### **BDOC ribbon-cutting**

All base personnel are invited to the Base Defense Operations Center ribbon-cutting ceremony, Thursday at 10:30 a.m., to be held in Bldg. 6881 (adjacent to the Wing Operations Center). For more information, contact Master Sgt. Kenneth Shean at 436-0421.

### **Right Start, Right Finish - Plan Early**

Due to the holidays and the fact Right Start and Right Finish briefings are cancelled Dec. 25 and Jan. 1, a supplemental Right Finish briefing only has been scheduled at this time, to be held Jan. 2 at 5 p.m. in the CC Theater.

### **No Gift-Wrapping Items**

Post Office personnel are required, per DoD 4525.6M, to complete a 100 percent parcel inspection on all mail sent from the AOR. Patrons are asked not to gift wrap any items in the box. This will help prevent items from being confiscated by host nation customs. Direct all questions to MSgt George Flaig, AUAB Postmaster, at 437-8717.

### **Footwear Regulations**

AUABI 36-2903 states that athletic shoes are the primary footwear when wearing the PT uniform. Crocs, sandals, water shoes or "five fingered shoes" are not considered athletic shoes for purposes of this instruction.

### **379 ELRS Arming Requirements**

The following items must be presented to the 379th Expeditionary Logistics and Readiness Squadron Armory to be issued a firearm and ammunition: A current AF Form 522 (Weapon Qualification Card), DD Form 2760 (Qualification to possess firearm or ammo), a copy of CED orders and an authorization letter to bear firearms

signed by an authorizing official. For more information, contact the Armory at 437-5125 or 437-6082.

### **U.S. Currency in AOR reduced**

The Air Force Central Command commander recently signed a memo reducing U.S. currency in the AFCENT area of responsibility. To ensure compliance, check cashing limits with the 379th Expeditionary Comptroller Squadron are reduced to \$100 per month. In addition, Airmen may receive up to \$100 in U.S. currency per month as a debit from their EagleCash card. These actions reduce fraud and risk to servicemembers. If you have any questions, contact Finance at 437-7086.

### **Fire Extinguisher Tags**

The 379 ECES Fire Prevention Office received a new shipment of fire extinguisher tags and have them available for issue. Stop by the Fire Prevention Office at Fire Station 3 (Bldg. 10130 in the BPC next to the hospital) or call 437-8771 or 437-5505 for any questions. As a reminder, please ensure fire extinguishers are being inspected monthly as required by AUABI 32-2001, AFOSH Standard 91-501, and NFPA 10.

### **Medical Appointments Trial Basis**

In an effort to enhance customer service, the 379th Expeditionary Medical Group has begun to offer a limited number of primary care appointments on a trial basis. Same-day only appointments can be made by calling 437-4216 and are available Monday through Saturday from 7:20 a.m. to 5 p.m. Appointments should only be made for urgent care, not routine or follow-up care. As a reminder, patients can continue to be seen on a walk-in basis at the clinic, 24/7.

### **Uniform Disposal**

The proper disposal of military uniforms is a force protection issue. The 379th ELRS transit shipping point has established an unserviceable uniform disposal program. Four locations are available to drop off uniform outer garments; however, boots, PT gear or civilian clothing is not permitted. Uniforms can be taken directly to the TSP (Building 3718 near the wash rack). They can also be dropped off at collection boxes located by Jack's Place, the Coffee Beanery in the CC complex and outside of the BPC BX. For questions, contact TSP at 437-2352.

### **Off-Base Travel Reminder**

In accordance with AUABI 10-6008, personnel may wear the duty uniform off-base when conducting official business. However, when traveling in uniform, uniform blouses must be removed upon departure from installation, and replaced upon arrival at destination; flight suits should be unzipped and folded at the waist upon departure and zipped upon arrival at destination; only the T-shirt should be visible. For more information, contact 379th Air Expeditionary Wing Force Protection at 436-0198.



**Right, Chaplain (Capt.) Kenneth Moore, 379th Air Expeditionary Wing Chapel, visits with Marine Lance Corporal Nicholas Cannon, who is passing through Southwest Asia, Dec. 5. Chaplain Moore works in the 8th Expeditionary Air Mobility Squadron passenger terminal, ministering to those traveling throughout the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility in support of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.**