

December 2017

RABBIT TALES

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE 513TH AIR CONTROL GROUP



Reserve Gold wins flag football championship

Team continues 4-win streak for Tinker intramural title

INSIDE:

From the top: Are you ready? // Air Force announces BRS continuation pay

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Our Mission:

To provide combat-ready
AWACS Citizen Airmen to
Fly, Fight & Win

Our Vision:

Experience, Expertise, Teamwork:
The 1st Choice in AWACS

Rabbit Tales is a production of the 513th Air Control Group Public Affairs office.

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All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

513TH UPDATE

Upcoming Events

Nov. 30 – Dec. 5
UEI Capstone Inspection
(All 513th Buildings)

Saturday & Sunday – 0730-1530
Passport Photos
(970th Orderly Room)

Saturday – 1400
Green Dot Training
(552 MTF Auditorium, Bldg 230)

Sunday – 1300-1400
Sentry Aloha Spin-up Brief
(970th AACs Auditorium)

Sunday – 1300-1400
Green Dot Training
(970th AACs Conference Room)

January 6-7
January UTA

January UTA
513th ACG Change of Command
(970th AACs Auditorium)

Cover Photo

Flag football team Reserve Gold pauses for a photo after the base championship game, where they beat the 424th SCMS 13-0. Pictured on the top row, from left to right, are Dallas Smith, Zach Ludwig, Brett Nims, Jeremy Allen. On the bottom row are Reggie Davis, Joe Huizar, Jeff Inferred, Mike Rosenthal and Henry Pope. (Courtesy photo)



Promotions

Congrats to our December promotees!



SSgt Nichole Barragan
(513th Operations Support Squadron)

SSgt Dustin Tompkins
(970th Airborne Air Control Squadron)



TSgt Joshua Minton
(513th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron)

MSgt Wiley Warner
(513th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron)

Fit to Fight MVPs

Maj Jose Rodriguez
Unit: 970 AACs
Score: 99.8%



SSgt Brian Bogue
Unit: 970 AACs
Score: 98.8%

Are you ready?

I've been spending a significant amount of time on this question over the past few months. We've all been watching as the news reports on world events and the potential gathering of storm clouds. We've been the recipients of extra scrutiny on our deployment folders and have been scheduled for readiness events which had previously been changed to "just-in-time" training. I'd like to briefly provide you my perspective on this.

We have been very focused on the terrorist threat over the past 16 years, chasing them around the globe and bringing the fight to them. This has been a challenging problem requiring new technologies and new ways of thinking to be sure. We've had to consider who might be a combatant, how we can defend against him, and how we can pick him out and defeat him. But it has also produced a reasonably predictable schedule, with rotations into mostly uncontested airspace, while operating from bases relatively secure from large-scale adversary actions. It has allowed us to script out deployments and accomplish required training as part of spin-up preparations "just-in-time" to depart. For many of you, that has been your whole career and so it is what you know our job to be. For those of you who have been around longer, you may have just accepted this as the "new new" – i.e. the new way of doing business.

Today, however, we find ourselves refocusing... less on terrorists and more on the peer adversary, a state actor. That is a MAJOR difference. Now, we must consider that our adversary has the weapons, funding and organization to bring the fight to us. We must consider that he will challenge our ability to operate. We must consider that the skies will be contested. We must consider that our base could be the target of a sustained attack. Finally, we must consider that we may be called to fight not after we run our deployment checklist, but shortly after we receive the phone call to report for duty.

So, are you ready? Are you right now doing the things that you will want to have done if you're one day ordered to duty on short notice? Are you wringing everything out of your training sorties/sims? Are you asking questions in debrief? Have you completed TFAT, SABC, CBRNE, and CATM or made arrangements to do so? Is your mobility folder squared away, POAs and will up to date, family care plan current?

Readiness to face a peer adversary is different than readiness to face terrorists. Ideally the readiness of our forces will be sufficient to deter potential peer adversaries, but if it is not...I want **NOT A SINGLE ONE OF US TO HAVE REGRETS IN THE WAY WE PREPARED.**

Are you ready?



Col. Steven "Spoon" England
Commander, 513th Air Control Group

AF announces continuation pay rates



Air Force senior leaders publicize rates for continuation pay, similar to a retention bonus, as part of the new Blended Retirement System. (U.S. Air Force graphic by Kat Bailey)

Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs Office

WASHINGTON -- Air Force leaders recently announced the Air Force's continuation pay rates which are part of the new Blended Retirement System.

Continuation pay is a way to encourage Airmen covered by BRS to remain in the Air Force since it will be possible to leave with some retirement benefit prior to 20 years of service.

The system is a blend of a 20-year retirement and contribution plan that allows service members to contribute to a Thrift Savings Plan account that is transferable after separation from the military.

"Continuation pay is a one-time direct cash payout, like a retention bonus," said Lt. Gen. Gina Grosso, deputy chief of staff for Manpower,

Personnel and Services. "Members will receive continuation pay at 12 years of service in return for a commitment of four years of service."

For active duty Airmen the payment rate is 2.5 times monthly basic pay. For the Reserve component Airmen to include, Guardsmen and Reserve, the payment rate is 0.5 times monthly basic pay, as if on active duty. For Reserve component Airmen on active Guard and Reserve orders, the payment rate is 2.5 times monthly basic pay. The rates and parameters for paying CP will remain in effect until changed.

"Modernizing the current retirement system into the BRS will ensure that the vast majority of uniformed service members receive a portable government retirement benefit," said Daniel Sitterly, acting assistant secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs.

"It will help make the uniformed services more attractive to new generations of American citizens by providing a retirement annuity with options on how to shape their retirement benefit."

The BRS was enacted into law in the Fiscal Year 2016 National Defense Authorization Act, and will go into effect Jan. 1, 2018. All currently serving members are grandfathered into the current military retirement system. However, those with fewer than 12 years of service as of Dec. 31, 2017, or Air Force Reserve component members with fewer than 4,320 retirement points may choose to "opt in" to the BRS during the designated opt-in period from Jan. 1, 2018, through Dec. 31, 2018.

For more information about the BRS please visit myPers from a CAC-enabled computer.

What is Continuation Pay (CP)?

 For more information: (CAC required) https://mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/32564



- A mid-career financial incentive paid to Airmen who are enrolled in the Blended Retirement System (BRS).
- It is in addition to any career-field-specific incentives or retention bonuses.
- You must elect to receive it before starting your 12th year of service.

How Much CP Will I Get?



$$\text{Monthly Basic Pay}^1 \times 0.5^2 \text{ or } 2.5^3 = \text{Gross CP} - \text{Tax Withholding}^4 = \text{Net CP}^5$$

¹Amount over 12 years; ²RC. Airmen serving on man-day orders or Voluntary Limited Period of Duty (VLPAD) receive the RC amount; ³AC or AGR. Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) Airmen receive the Active Component (AC) amount for CP; ⁴CP is eligible for Combat Zone Tax Exclusion (CZTE); ⁵What you take home.

What Must I Do to Receive CP?



1. You must elect to receive CP before you start your 12th year of service (according to your Pay Entry Base Date).
2. You must commit to serve an additional 48 months (concurrent with other service commitments). If you do not complete the obligation, you must repay all or part of your CP.*

How Will My CP Be Paid?

You can choose to receive a one-time payment or spread your payments to potentially save on taxes.

One Installment

Paid the first pay period after you start your 12th year of service

Two Equal Installments

First installment is paid the first pay period after you start your 12th year of service and the next installment is paid the following year

Four Equal Installments

First installment is paid the first pay period after you start your 12th year of service and the remainder in three equal annual installments



Which installment plan is right for YOU?

How much will you potentially pay in taxes on your CP? Remember, CP is subject to tax withholding!

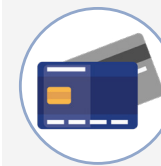
When Do I Need to Make My CP Election?



What Should I Do with My CP?

Your Airman and Family Readiness Center (A&FRC) Can Help You Plan!

The choice is yours and should be based on your current financial situation. Get a financial check up as part of the decision-making process. You can do one or more of the following:



Pay Down Debt!

Do you have credit card debt, student loan debt, or other kinds of debt? Are you paying more in interest than you can expect from savings or investments? Pay as many debts as you can, starting with those that cost you the most in interest.

TIP Add extra money to payments you make for a quicker payoff.



Save It!

Do you have an emergency or reserve fund in a savings or money market account? Set one up ... or top yours up.

TIP Check the annual percentage rate (APR) and terms of agreement before placing money into any account.



Invest It!

Are you looking toward a more prosperous future? Consider putting your CP to work in your Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) account, in an IRA or in a 529 college savings plan.

TIP Be aware of annual contribution limits on retirement accounts. Review your spending plan and talk to an investment professional before investing.



Spend It!

Will your CP fund a vacation, a vehicle, a big project, or the down payment on a house?

TIP Before you spend your CP, review your spending plan to ensure your savings goals are on track and your debt-to-income ratio is reasonable.



Gift It!

You can choose to gift or donate some or all of your CP. Depending on where you donate it, you may be eligible for a tax deduction.

TIP Review your spending plan to ensure your finances are in good order before you donate your CP.

New ACG Building Update



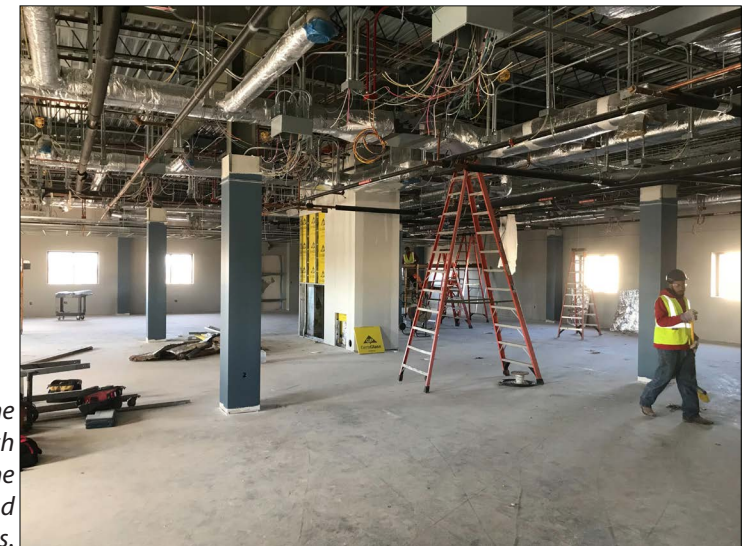
The main entry area, with the SARM desk yet to be installed in the opening at the bottom left.



The main 970th command section area, which will be filled with semi-permanent walls later on in construction.



The ABM section, located on the second floor. A section chief office will be located in the back corner.



The west end of the second floor, which will house the technician and surveillance sections.

Yellow Ribbon travel funding issue resolved

Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs Office

Air Force leaders have resolved a situation that temporarily limited how many guests the service could fund to accompany Reserve Citizen Airmen to Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program training weekends.

"I'm delighted we are going back to the way we've always done it," said Mary Hill, Yellow Ribbon program manager at Air Force Reserve Command headquarters, Robins Air Force Base, Georgia.

Yellow Ribbon promotes the well-being of reservists and their loved ones by connecting them with resources before and after deployments through a series of weekend training sessions around the country. It began in 2008 following a congressional mandate for the Department of Defense to assist reservists and National Guard members in maintaining resiliency as they transition between their military and civilian roles.

The Joint Travel Regulations that govern military travel designate that a service will provide transportation and food allowance for a Reserve Citizen Airman and up to two guests – called "designated individuals" – to attend Yellow Ribbon training. The law governing Yellow Ribbon, though, encourages wide family member participation. In the past, Hill said, "designated individuals" was considered a separate category of traveler allowed by law – for example, close friends of

an unmarried reservist – and has always been limited to two.

Last November, Air Force travel pay professionals brought the discrepancy to the attention of the AFRC Yellow Ribbon office by rejecting reimbursement of expenses submitted for more than two guests. Air Force Reserve leaders directed Yellow Ribbon to comply with this interpretation of the JTR for events through fiscal 2017 while they pursued a waiver to allow all DEERS-eligible children and one other guest to attend, as had been done in the past. The Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System is a computerized database of military sponsors, families and others worldwide who are entitled under the law to TRICARE benefits.

"We have always used DEERS to determine the children a member was able to bring to an event," Hill said. "If they are eligible for DEERS enrollment they would be included as eligible to attend with their military member."

Jeffrey R. Mayo, deputy assistant secretary for Air Force manpower and reserve affairs at the Pentagon, has authorized Lt. Gen. Maryanne Miller, chief of Air Force Reserve and commander of Air Force Reserve Command, to approve more than two designated individuals to attend Yellow Ribbon events with pre- and post-deployers. He did so in his role as the Air Force's Per Diem Travel and Transportation

Allowance Committee principal.

Hill said she thinks Mayo's decision will immediately increase the amount of attendees at events, which typically draw overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants.

"We didn't like it any more than they did and are glad we have a solution before our first event of the new fiscal year," Hill said. "We want everyone in the immediate family of a reservist preparing to deploy or returning from a deployment to attend this training. Those family members are the primary purpose of Yellow Ribbon."

On any given day, nearly 6,000 Air Force Reservists are serving on active duty worldwide in support of combatant commanders and other agencies and major commands. Each year, the Air Force Reserve Yellow Ribbon program trains 7,000 reservists and those closest to them in education benefits, health care, retirement information and more at the weekend training events.

AFRC continues to meet the needs of our Reserve Citizen Airmen and their families through the Yellow Ribbon Program and has announced dates and locations of Yellow Ribbon training in November and December. Due to security concerns, the Reserve doesn't share this information online. Deploying reservists should contact their unit Yellow Ribbon representative for specific details.