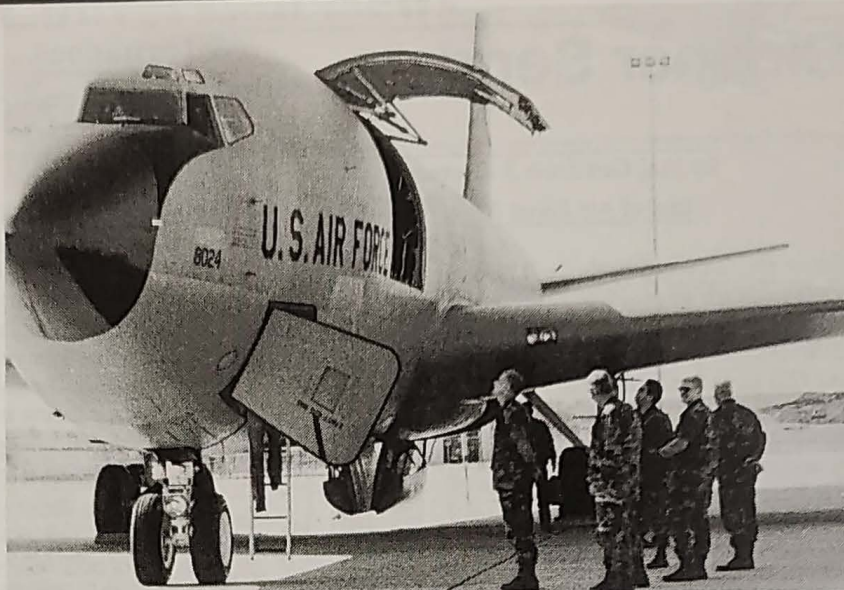


On- final

Vol 14 No 6 507th Air Refueling Group
June 1994 Tinker AFB, OK

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Maintenance members look over a KC-135R on the 507th ramp. (Photo by Capt. Rich Curry)

507th works hard to make its own silver lining

By Capt. Rich Curry

507th ARG Public Affairs

When the Air Force's Force Structure announcement was made last November, it brought with it a dark cloud of confusion about personnel cutbacks.

Thanks, however, to some hard work by the members of the 507th Personnel Working Group, that dark cloud is beginning to show a silver lining.

The PWG is part of the 507th Conversion Steering Committee, which was formed after the announcement, to direct unit efforts in the conversion using Quality processes. The PWG was created to work personnel aspects of the conversion by helping to develop the unit's new unit manning document for its KC-135 mission and to match "surplus" members to new jobs within the 507th.

According to the initial November 1993 announcement, converting from an F-16 Fighting Falcon unit to a KC-135R Stratotanker unit was going to cost the unit at least 170 drill and 92 civilian positions.

"That's pretty hard to deal with--telling people who've sacrificed years of their time supporting the Reserve that they're no longer needed," said MSgt. Geneva "Geni" McMahon, member of the PWC. However, McMahon said, due to a combination of actions by the 507th, showing reservists the door is rapidly becoming a mute issue.

(Continued on page 3)

"Closner Sends"

By Maj Gen John J. Closner
Chief of Air Force Reserve

There are indicators throughout the Air Force, including the Air Force Reserve, that maintenance readiness may be slipping.

We see this in reduced aircraft mission capable and increased cannibalization rates. The flying safety and maintenance record of the Air Force Reserve has been excellent, but with reduced funding we need to guard against complacency. We have made a number of organizational and procedural changes in the past two years that affect flight line maintenance, but our strategy consciously addressed the goal of no compromise in safety.

Although resources and manpower continue to decline, ops tempo has not. Flight lines and maintenance buildings are not places for shortcuts. Be careful, be thorough, and above all, be safe.



On- final



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Tornadoes...

Nature's violent storm

by Tsgt Paul D. Powell
507th Safety Office

Although tornadoes occur in many parts of the world, these destructive forces of nature are found most frequently in the United States east of the Rocky Mountains during spring and summer months. In an average year, 800 tornadoes are reported nationwide, resulting in 80 deaths, and over 1500 injuries. The average number of tornadoes in Oklahoma is 47 per year, causing an average of 3 deaths per year.

A tornado is defined as a violent rotating column of air extending from a thunderstorm to the ground. The most violent tornadoes are capable of tremendous destruction with wind speeds of 250 mph or more. Damage paths can be in excess of one mile wide and 50 miles long. Once, a tornado in Broken Bow, Oklahoma, carried a motel sign 30 miles and dropped it in Arkansas.

What causes tornadoes? Thunderstorms develop in warm, moist air in advance of eastward-moving cold fronts. These thunderstorms often produce large hail, strong winds, and tornadoes. A change in wind direction and an increase in wind speed with increasing height creates an invisible, horizontal spinning effect in the lower atmosphere. Rising air within the thunderstorm updraft tilts the rotating air from horizontal to vertical. An area of rotation then extends through much of the storm, often forming the funnel clouds which cause the most damage.

What to do in case of a Tornado. In Homes, the basement offers the greatest safety. Seek shelter under sturdy furniture if possible. In homes without basements, take cover in the center part of the house, on the lowest floor, in a small room such as a closet or bathroom. Keep away from windows.

In shopping centers, go to designated shelter area, (not to your parked car).

In office buildings, go to an interior hallway on the lowest floor, or designated shelter area.

In automobiles, leave your car and seek shelter in a nearby building. If a building is not close, lie flat in a ditch or ravine.

In mobile homes, seek alternative shelter. Mobile homes afford no protection against tornadoes.

Remember, tornadoes occasionally develop in areas in which a severe thunderstorm warning is in effect. Remain alert to signs of an approaching tornado and seek shelter if threatening conditions exist.



Conversion News

"Serving your informational needs"



507th makes its own silver lining

(Continued from page 1)

Manning for success

McMahon said that until recently, the unit has not had an accurate manning document to use in the conversion. "AFRES initially mirrored us after a Reserve unit at Selfridge AFB. But they're a host unit and we're a tenant. As a result our manning document had mega errors that touched every squadron, not just those such as operations and maintenance who are primarily affected," she said.

Dealing directly with AFRES Headquarters Personnel officials, PWC team members worked hard to produce a final product. Team members traveled to AFRES headquarters and assisted in entering changes and corrections for the UMD into the computer system there.

"AFRES personnel members were very impressed by our efforts," she said. In less than six months, the 507th PWC have produced a final UMD that, according to Brig. Gen. Wallace Whaley, Commander, 4th Air Force, has taken other units up to a year and a half to receive.

In addition, the unit's Medical Squadron, Communications Flight and Security Police Squadron are also going through unit tasking commitment changes that is increasing their manning.

"We did lose the transportation UTC (31 reservists) by going to Air Mobility Command. AMC has promised, however, to give that tasking back to us and in fact it should increase by two positions," she said. With all these changes, McMahon said the 507th will gain roughly 26 positions.

McMahon also said AMC has given the unit permission to overman for 18 months until the process settles out. "I don't think we're going to have to overman that much,"

McMahon said.

McMahon said the new unit manning document for maintenance and operations will be ready by the June UTA. "We'll be able to show everyone where the jobs are and help them cross train into new positions. Believe it or not, we even have vacancies in maintenance, they're just in different Air Force specialties."

Keeping a low profile

Prior to the November announcement, the 507th was already looking to the future as an 18 aircraft equipped F-16 unit. "All the announcements for force restructuring were showing

us that even if we stayed in the fighter business, we would go from 24 aircraft to 18, and lose positions in the process. We were planning for that, by keeping our manning low, around 95 percent instead of the maximum of 105 percent," she said.

The unit also placed a freeze on new recruiting last January. "That put a tough call on the recruiters telling them to hold off on bringing in new folks, but it helped us stabilize," she said.

She went on to add a number of members have put in for their 20-year retirements, further reducing the personnel crunch.

Geographics and timing a key

Geographically, the 507th was well-situated to weather the personnel aspects of the conversion. Located within commuting distance of several Air Force and Army Reserve and Guard units as well as opportunities in the Tinker AFB IMA program, afforded members the chance for transfer and continued careers.

By being one of the first Reserve units affected by downsizing, opportunities for transfers still existed, she said. "Between our new positions, retirements and transfers, we haven't had to 'force' anyone out of the unit. In fact, I don't think anyone will have to be forced out. We have jobs for everyone. They just need to cross train into them."

ARTS, civilians get help too

In regards to excess air reserve technicians and civilian employees, the 507th became proactive, engaging in dialog with Tinker AFB civilian personnel officials. The reduction of 507th civilian personnel could easily result in a Reduction In Force among the civilian employees across base. By working with Tinker officials, the chances of a RIF have been reduced.

At this time, McMahon stated there are roughly 50 or more positions (versus 92 originally predicted) that will be affected. Among those positions, she predicted many members will be offered voluntary downgrades or jobs elsewhere on base.

(Continued on page 4)

Because you asked

How can I get my rank back?

Q. I'm a master sergeant and need to take a voluntary downgrade to a staff sergeant slot to continue my career. Will I be able to get my rank back? What about my time in grade? Is that lost?

A. It may be possible to get your rank back and, no, your time in grade is not lost.

First, just to let you know that in spite of your new lower rank, you are still able to retire at the highest rank held once you reach 20 satisfactory years. To regain your rank requires several things to happen. There needs to be a higher ranking slots that you will eventually be able to promote into.

As far as your time in grade is concerned, you keep that. Let's say that as a master sergeant, you had four years time in grade as a staff sergeant, four years as a tech sergeant and two years as a master. By taking a staff slot you are credited with 10 years time in grade. This includes your previous time as a tech and master as well as staff sergeant. When a tech slot becomes available and you are moved into it you would be credited for 6 years. This includes your previous time in grade held as a tech and master sergeant. If a master sergeant slot becomes available and you are placed against it, you are credited for the previous 2 years you had.

Depending upon when you were promoted to master sergeant, you may find additional schooling requirements, now mandatory, which must be done before sewing your stripes back on. Prior to being promoted to master, enlisted members must complete (or have previously completed) NCO Academy or Senior NCO Academy either in-residence or via correspondence.

Silver lining...

(Continued from page 3)

Tinker personnel officials have been regular participants in weekly "Town Meetings" held within the unit, advising members on the central skills program, how to get new jobs within their geographic preference, and helping counsel members on updating their records to help them remain competitive in civil service.

"We took the UMD and personnel issues personally and have been very proactive. Because of this, we've received our UMD at a greatly accelerated pace and our unit is providing answers not questions," McMahon said.

Commentary

Leaving your unit? Don't be so hasty

By SSGT. Jim Thomas

916th Air Refueling Group (Associate)

Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C.

Are you in a quandary about serving in the Reserve? Do you have thoughts about leaving your unit? With the downsizing of the military services under way you may want to think more than twice about it.

Winston Churchill said reservists are twice a citizen. We not only serve our communities but also our country.

That thought came to mind a few years ago after I left the 916th Air Refueling Group due to family and career obligations.

I didn't really want to get out, but the pressure at the time was more than I could handle. Later that summer, while standing for the national anthem at a Kinston Indians baseball game, it hit me that I was no longer "twice a citizen."

Surrounded by Marines from Camp Lejeune and airmen from Seymour Johnson, I felt a few inches shorter than I did when I was an active reservist.

I returned to the unit last spring. The opportunity to return was unexpected and only by the grace of God did it happen. What I learned may help others who have to balance family and career obligations with a desire to be a military reservist.

Don't be like me and opt for the most direct route -- a discharge. As with most things, time cures all problems one way or the other. There are alternatives to a final discharge.

Once you are out of the service through a discharge it is more difficult to get back in, if at all. I gave up my date-of-rank and slot in the unit, and gained 10 pounds because I wasn't following a stricter physical fitness regimen. Not to mention when I tried

to get back in I had to go through the entire enlistment process again to include testing and a physical. When you are 40-something that process can be pretty scary, particularly since the requirements are more stringent for that age group.

What I didn't realize at the time was that I could go into inactive Reserve status until my situation changed. The Reserve is the only job I know of that lets you put yourself in an inactive status while you sort out a troubling situation. If you genuinely want to leave but have obstacles that may be temporary, then see your career advisor for alternatives. At least make haste slowly -- your military career may be on the line.

Whatever your reasons are for being a reservist -- retirement, camaraderie, the money -- if you really want to serve, you can find a way. (AFRESNS)

June Schedule of Events

Date/Time	Meetings, Etc	Location
Fri, 3 June 1400	Pre-UTA 1st Sgt Meeting	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
Sat, 4 June As designated by unit	Sign-in	As designated by unit
0730-0745	Sign-in for Physical Exams	Base Hospital
0730-0930	Newcomers In-processing	Bldg 1043, Basement Classroom
0900-1000	3A0X1 Training	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
0900-1015	Newcomers Orientation	Bldg 1043, Basement Classroom
1000	Mobility Rep meeting	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
1015	Escorts Pick up Newcomers	Bldg 1030, DW Classroom
1030	First Sergeants Meeting	Dining Hall, Sun Rm
1300	Sexual Harassment Sensitivity Awareness Training	Bldg 201E
1300-1400	IG Complaint Period w/LtCol Shaw	Bldg 1030, CC Office
1300-1400	Immunizations	Bldg 1030, Break Rm
As designated by unit	Sign-Out	As designated by unit
Sun, 5 June As designated by unit	Sign-in	As designated by unit
0830-0930	Enlisted Advisory Council Meeting	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
0900	Supervisor Safety Training	Bldg 1030, Comm Flt Trng
0930-1030	Unit Career Advisor meeting	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
1300	CDC Course Exam Testing	Bldg 460, Rm 213
1300	Sexual Harassment Sensitivity Awareness Class	Bldg 201E
1400-1500	3A0X1 Training	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
1500-1630	MPF Closed for In-House Trng	Bldg 1043, MPF
As designated by unit	Sign-out	As designated by unit

Memorandum for the Record...

Subject: Food Drive - June UTA

Our boxes are empty...just one item from everyone can help fill the food pantry. Contact Family Readiness, TSgt Fuqua or TSgt Vandawalker at 734-7492 for any additional information.

Subject: AFRES Leadership Development Program (LDP) Graduates

The LDP Graduates from the April and May class will be receiving new diplomas showing a change from one to two college semester hours.

Subject: Ancillary Training for Newcomers

The program is under revision by the Unit Ancillary training managers. Newcomers Ancillary training will begin again on the August UTA.

Training Planner

June-July '94

June 94	
4-5	Primary UTA
4-5	403 CLSS overnight - Glenwood
5-17	MWRS-Dobbins AFB
5-19	MWRS- Moody AFB
6-10	SPS Quality Trng
19-28	SPS AT Hurlburt Fld
25 Jun-1 Jul	WICP AT
25	CS- Cannon AFB

July 94	
9-23	72APS AT-Anderson AFB
16-17	Primary UTA

August 94	
5-7	CS Cannon AFB
20-21	Primary UTA

September 94	
17-18	Primary UTA

BAQ Recertification Deadlines

If your Social Security Number ends with a 5 you have until *the end of the month of June* to recertify your BAQ or have it terminated. The reserve payroll office will forward a listing to Unit BAQ Monitors prior to the Feb UTA. BAQ Monitors are to return the listing complete with all BAQ recertifications to the Reserve Payroll office. Please complete AF Form 987 located at your unit.

NOTE: If you don't have dependents you do not need to recertify your BAQ.

July Schedule of Events

<u>Date/Time</u>	<u>Meetings, Etc</u>	<u>Location</u>
Fri, 15 July 1400	Pre-UTA 1st Sgt Meeting	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
Sat, 16 July As designated by unit	Sign-In	As designated by unit
0730-0745	Sign-in for Physical Exams	Base Hospital
0730-0930	Newcomers In-processing	Bldg 1043, Basement Classroom
0800-0900	Enlisted Advisory Council Meeting	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
0900-1000	3A0X1 Training	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
0900-1015	Newcomers Orientation	Bldg 1043, Basement Classroom
1000	Mobility Rep Meeting	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
1015	Escorts Pick up Newcomers	Bldg 201, Rm 11
1030	First Sergeants Meeting	Dining Hall, Sun Rm
1300	Sexual Harassment Sensitivity Awareness Class	Bldg 201E
1300-1400	IG Complaint Period w/Lt Col Shaw	Bldg 1030, CC Office
1300-1400	Immunizations	Bldg 1030, Break Rm
1300-1400	Ancillary Training Meeting	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
1400-1500	EST Manager Meeting	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
1500-1600	Unit Career Advisor Meeting	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
As designated by unit	Sign-Out	As designated by unit
Sun, 17 July As designated by unit	Sign-in	As designated by unit
0830-0930	Enlisted Advisory Council Meeting	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
0900	HAZCOM	Bldg 1030, Comm Flt Trng
0900-1000	3S0X4 Training	Bldg 1043, Rm 204
0930-1030	Unit Career Advisor Meeting	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
1300	Sexual Harassment Sensitivity Awareness Class	Bldg 201E
1300	CDC Course Exam testing	Bldg 460, Rm 213
1400-1500	3A0X1 Training	Bldg 1043, Conf Rm
1500-1630	MPF Closed for In-House tng	Bldg 1043, MPF
As designated by unit	Sign-out	As designated by unit

CDC and PME Course Exam Testing

UTA Sunday, 1300, Bldg 460, Rm 213
Wednesday, 1300, Bldg 1043, Rm 206

Names of personnel with tests on file are published in the "CDC COURSE EXAM LISTING" distributed each month to all Unit Training Managers prior to the UTA.

Trainees enrolled in mandatory CDCs will have a Test No Later Than Date of two UTAs from receipt of exam. Voluntary exams must be taken within 90 days of receipt. Course exams not taken within the time allowed will be destroyed.

The exceptions to this rule are 6E, 8E, and Officer PME course exams.

If a you are unable to test within the allotted time frame, contact your Unit Training Manager immediately.

If extenuating circumstances prevented you from taking your exam on or before the Test No Later Than Date, notify your Unit Training Manager as soon as possible, they will contact MSMPT to prevent possible distraction of your exam.

Contact **MSMPT**, 47075, to schedule testing on Wednesdays.

Ancillary Training Information

Disaster Preparedness Information

All personnel who normally wear contact lenses, attending Chemical Warfare training, will not wear them during training. Bring your New Mask, and spectacles if you have them. Personnel are to be on time for all classes, or be reported as "No Shows". **Ensure all personnel bring their Go-Bags with them to all classes.**

Supervisors may schedule Chemical Warfare training thru-out the year by calling the DW office at x45249, NLT 2 weeks prior to class requested. Units must report the names of personnel requiring training when scheduling training.

In order to utilize the go-to-war MCU-2A/P protective masks for training, TQT, ORE's and deployment; notify 507 LSS at extension 45335. Let them know **Two Weeks Prior** to your need for masks, the quantity of each size your organization requires. Specify when they will be returned to Base Supply. Personnel retrieving masks will sign an AF Form 1297 (Hand Receipt) for all of the masks you receive.

An MCU-2A/P guidebook will be provided to everyone signing for masks. The guidebook will cover the fitting, donning, cleaning, sanitizing, and inspection of the masks.

UCMJ Briefing

All first and second term enlisted personnel are required to have the UCMJ briefing. Second term enlisted personnel are due the UCMJ briefing within two UTAs of reenlistment. UCMJ briefing time is 1400-1530, Bldg 201, Sunday of UTA.

More What, When, Where

MPF Customer Service

Hours of Operation

Primary UTA Weekends

Saturday 0730-1630
Sunday 0730-1500

Closed Sunday for In-House Training from 1500-1630

Weekdays

Monday-Friday
0730-1630

Closed Thursdays for In-House Training from 0730-1230

Phone Numbers

MSM/MSMA/MSME/MSMD/MSMP
MPF Management, 47494
MSMAC...Customer Service, 47492
MSMPU...Personnel Employment, 47493
MSMAQ...Career Enhancement, 47494
MSMPT...Training & Education, 47075
MSMPR...Personnel Relocations, 47494

TDY & Reassignment Out-Processing

Personnel Relocations (MSMPR) is standing by to help with relocation processing, but they need your help.

TDY to school or reassignment out-processing can only be initiated through MSMPR during the times listed below:

Monday thru Friday: 0730-1530
UTA Saturday: 0800-1530

The schedule is for your convenience; times noted assure your access to agencies with processing responsibilities. Your cooperation in complying with this schedule is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please call MSMPR, x47494.

Chapel Service Information

Divine service held Saturday at 1515, Hospital Pharmacy. Sunday service held at 0730, Disaster Preparedness, Bldg 1030, flightline side.
Catholic Mass: Sat, 1700, Sun, 0940, 1220.

Tips for Faster MPF Service

ARTS, or Reservists on Mandays or annual tour can conduct personnel business any week day and avoid contributing to UTA congestion.

Avoid Saturday morning unless you have an appointment. Due to In-Processing activities, the Customer Service section is short handed until about noon on Saturday. Call ahead, find out how long the wait may be. Be sure you bring any required documents with you and avoid the need for a second trip to finish your business.

DD Form 93

Record of Emergency Data

This is the single most important source of information within your personnel record for dependent data and next of kin information.

If data is incomplete or incorrect, the Air Force cannot extend dependent benefits, nor can notification be made in the event you become injured, seriously ill or die while on duty.

You are the only one who can update this record. Remember there are no minor errors on a DD Form 93. Data accuracy is critical. You may be one of the lucky ones and escape injury or illness, but can you risk the alternative?

Check the form in your mobility folder, if it is wrong, come by MPF Customer Service and get it updated.

Hours of Operation for...

Pass & ID

Located in Bldg 590, is open on UTA Saturday, 1200-1600, for ID cards, fingerprints, vehicle registration and base decal.

Individual Equipment Issue (IEU)

Located in Bldg 469, is open on UTA Saturday, 0800-1530. Enter door #36 on the south side of the building. Check with your Unit Orderly room before you attempt equipment issue or exchange.

Medical Services Information

Immunization Monitors

All shot records that are mutilated and/or have no space left need to be brought to the immunization clinic located in the Hospital between 1000-1200 on Sunday of the UTA for new records to be made up and issued. Point of contact is Capt Livengood, x42487.

Physical Examinations

The 507th Medical Squadron is presently trying to catch up on the backlog of physicals. Therefore, the physical schedule is extremely tight. If you will be unable to meet an appointment, you must call TSgt Latta, x43151 and reschedule in advance of the UTA.

Random Drug Testing

Drug Testing is conducted at 0900 on UTA Saturdays. The names of those randomly selected for testing are released by Social Actions to Unit Commanders immediately after sign-in on Saturday. If selected, you should consume as much liquid as possible prior to reporting to the lab. You cannot be released until the required sample amount has been obtained. If you have questions about the Random Drug testing program contact Social Actions, x45019.

Military Pay: Ext 45016

File for pay Receive Direct Deposit on or before: by:

05 June	15 June
07 June	17 June
12 June	20 June
14 June	22 June
19 June	30 June
22 June	01 July
26 June	06 July
28 June	07 July
06 July	16 July
10 July	19 July
12 July	21 July
17 July	26 July

Dining Facility

Meal times are shorter, lines are longer: Plan ahead!

Breakfast	0600-0900
Lunch	1100-1300
Dinner	1530-1800

SGLI Increase Reminder

Beginning July 1, \$1,000 worth of coverage will cost 9 cents instead of 8 cents. That means the monthly premium for \$100,000 of coverage will increase from \$8 to \$9, and the premium for the maximum level of coverage, which is \$200,000, will increase from \$16 to \$18 per month. For more information call 734-7492, MSMAC.

AFR 35-10 Updates

There is no restriction on when to purchase or wear the new uniform. Members may wear it as soon as it is available for purchase. Mandatory wear date is 1 Oct 99.

When not wearing a service dress coat, you may mix and match the various new and old style tie/tab and/or new style chevrons with the old style trousers/skirt/slacks. Sergeants may wear the current 3 inch (Sergeant) or new 3 1/2 inch (Senior airman) short chevrons on the light blue/blue/sleeve shirt and blouse.

Battle Dress Uniform: Wear subdued 4-inch (Men) or 3, 3 1/2, or 4-inch (Women) sleeve chevrons halfway between shoulder seam and elbow when bent at 90-degree angle. Wear either the current or new style rank insignia. Sergeants may wear current sergeants stripes or new senior airman stripes.

Here and Now...The Air Force Reserve and You

Service as a member of the Air Force Reserve brings many hard-to-measure benefits, a sense of pride in knowing that you are helping your country and a wealth of exciting and challenging experiences. The Reserve offers many measurable benefits as well.

To ensure that your time with the Air Force Reserve is pleasurable and profitable, take these first important steps:

1. Complete all requirements so that you and your family receive the benefits you are entitled.
2. Know who to call if you or your family needs help or has an emergency.

Air Force and You cont'd...

3. Keep your employer informed as far in advance as possible about your training schedule.
4. Prepare yourself and your family for separations and emergencies by reading "What's Next?" given to you by your unit First Sergeant.

If for any reason you are unsure/unaware of the benefits and support services available to you and to your family as a member of the Air Force Reserve, please contact the Family Readiness office at 734-7492.

Family Readiness is a long over-due program that the Air Force Reserves is taking the opportunity to incorporate for its members. Single, married with/without children, retired, local, far away, we want you to know that we are here to find an answer through our information and referral program.

Implementation of New Educational Benefits Under the Reserve Montgomery G.I. Bill

As promised the following additional guidance is provided on the new educational benefits for the reserve GI Bill, Chapter 106. Current members who signed a six-year contract before 1 Oct 90, are still serving on that contract, and had their eligibility terminated due to receipt of a Baccalaureate degree, are immediately eligible for graduate assistance without further action. A working group convened at HQ AFRES early March 94, and out of that group came some questions and answers with respect to benefits to clarify policy change:

- Q** - will the monthly benefit be increased to cover graduate school?
A - monthly benefits remain the same. The maximum program limit for full time study is \$190 per month; three-qr time study is \$143; and half time study is \$95.
Q - will there be any addition to the current 36 month limit?
A - 36 months will remain the maximum number of months of assistance allowed under the chapter 106 program. In addition, when a member uses benefits under more than one VA education program, the total entitlement is limited to 48 months.

Training Communicator

Benefits cont'd

- Q** - if a member received a bachelors degree and still has remaining entitlements, would those entitlements carry over for pursuit of graduate school?
A - as long as a member is eligible and has remaining entitlements, they may use these entitlements for graduate education.
Q - if a member is pursuing a second bachelors degree, can they switch to a graduate degree?
A - a member may pursue a graduate degree if VA approves the program of study.
Q - are the amount of semester hours taken viewed the same as are undergraduate hours?
A - VA determines the level of program, i.e., full-time, three-qr time, half-time, according to the school's certification.
Q - can a member get a second graduate degree at the same level?
A - a member can get a second graduate degree at the same level provided the VA approves the course of study. A member may likewise obtain a degree above the masters level provided the VA approves the course of study.

To find out if you are eligible for the Reserve GI Bill, contact the 507th Base Training and Education office at 734-7075.

NCO Academy Class Dates for FY 94

Listed below are the FY 94 NCO Academy class dates. SSGts with 8 years satisfactory service, and TSgts are eligible to attend. Each squadron may submit 1 and only 1 nomination to MSMPT. Nominations must be endorsed by Unit Commanders. We have two quotas allocated to the 507th for the August-September 94 class. The selection for this class will be made on Saturday, 16 July at the First Sergeants meeting.

Class Dates NCOA	Nominations Due MSMPT
1 Aug 94-8 Sep 94	5 Jun 94
19 Sep 94-27 Oct 94	17 Jul 94

Contact MSMPT, x47075 if additional information is required.

Computer system opens possibilities

During the past month, a new local area network was activated in the unit.

According to Terry Miller, 507th computer specialist, the advantages of the new system are greater connectivity with all squadrons within the 507th as well as AFRES headquarters and other reserve units across the country.

Miller explained this wide-area network ability means users can send and receive messages at their desktop

computers from a broad range of DoD and other federal agency users.

Expansion plans call for the installation of fiber optic cable to all buildings that will also permit transmitting and receiving images and opens future possibilities of desktop video conferencing.

"We're all very excited about our new system," Miller said, "and we're working hard to complete the installation."

Miller has requested information about any computers in the 507th that

are not connected to the network but need to be connected.

"We think we have most of the computers hooked up now, but we need everyone's help to make sure," she said.

She also said any user having problems with the new system should contact her in Bldg. 1043, room 7 or call Ext. 4-3078.

Users having problems with PC-III either over the network or via modem should call Pam Brandt at Ext. 4-7494.

KC-135s fitted with new test pallet seats

by SSGt. Brian Orban

43rd ARW Public Affairs Office
Malmstrom AFB, Mont.

Aircraft operators and maintainers from Malmstrom AFB, Mont., recently invented a new way of putting airline-style passenger seats on KC-135s.

Officials at Headquarters Air Mobility Command, Scott AFB, Ill., tentatively approved the idea of loading the seats on cargo pallets. An engineering safety analysis is currently underway at the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center.

Engineers at the center said Malmstrom's idea may be the solution to palletizing passenger seats, but testing is required first.

Prior to the proposed solution, maintainers needed nearly 45 minutes to install or remove the airline-style seats from aircraft. Under the proposed system, technicians install 12 seats on a pallet, then load them onto the aircraft using a regular pallet loading vehicle.

"One of our goals was to make it safer than the current system and make it a lot more comfortable for the passengers," said MSgt. Doug Simmons, with the 97th Air Refueling Squadron and one of the people who developed the seat pallet proposal. "In our proposed design, it turns out that we've got more comfort than first class airline seats (on commercial aircraft) as far as knee space is concerned.

For example, the normal knee space in the coach section of a commercial aircraft is nine inches, while people in first class have 13 1/2 inches, said SSGt. Kerry LaCoste, design team member. The palletized seats will offer passengers nearly 15 inches of knee space, he added.

Other design team members included A1C Eric Tilton and SSGt. Mike Brooks from the 91st Air Refueling Squadron at Malmstrom.

The design team was formed after Lt. Gen. Walter Kross, 15th Air Force commander, tasked the wing to see if they could come up with the palletized seat idea and a prototype.

A three-person team from the 91st ARS brainstormed the idea and brought in machinists from the 43rd Maintenance Squadron's metals technology shop there who made the needed parts for the prototype.

The team was restricted from altering the actual pallet so they couldn't drill holes into or weld parts onto the pallet's metal frame.

The team finally decided to put aluminum strips on the pallet to hook the seats. Passengers' feet rest on wooden planks that separate the aluminum strips. A set of locking pins and brackets holds everything securely on the pallet. Cargo straps hold the pallet in place in the cargo bay.

In the prototype's initial assembly, designers took roughly 30 minutes to put the seats on the pallet and load it onto a tanker -- less time than it takes to pack a pallet with regular cargo, Simmons said. If the seats are already set up, the pallet can be loaded onto an aircraft and locked down in roughly five minutes.

Job skill books readied

The 507th ARG recruiters are preparing Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) Information Binders which will be available at the listening post areas beginning June 4.

These binders will list all enlisted Air Force Specialties the 507th ARG is currently authorized.

Included in the listing will be a short description of the specialty, length and location of tech schools, and qualifying requirements for entry into the specialty such as aptitude scores, physical profile, and special skills or abilities.

The binders will also contain a point of contact in each functional area who can be contacted for more specific details on how the AFSC is utilized within the 507th ARG. 507th Recruiters state these binders are intended to serve as a quick reference for AFSC data on all enlisted specialties authorized in the 507th; they are not designed to provide job vacancy information.



Bivouac taps talent

by SSgt. Shawn Sones
507th Civil Engineering Squadron

The April UTA found the 507th Civil Engineers performing their annual bivouac at the Glenwood Training Area.

The bivouac exercise focused training and preparations for two separate CE team deployments: to Westover ARB, Massachusetts and Tyndall AFB, Florida, for Silver Flag training.

Specific areas of training included Rapid Runway Repair, airfield damage assessment and plotting, special vehicle and heavy equipment training, site preparation and surveying, contingency logistics management, and airfield lighting.

In addition to CE, members of the 507th Security Police, 507th Services (Prime Ribs), and the Army National Guard conducted training operations that weekend.



TOP: SSgt. Candace Romani, left, and other members practice rapid runway repair by laying down temporary AM2 matting.
ABOVE: SrA Shawn Evans prepares to turn on a hydrant.
RIGHT: Crews work an auge, digging holes for powerline poles.

(Photos by MSgt. Tom Clapper)



GAO recommends tougher fitness standards

WASHINGTON -- Physical fitness training standards for some reservists and the recordkeeping of all results may get tougher if Congress adopts General Accounting Office recommendations.

The GAO published a 76-page report in March for the House Armed Services Committee's Subcommittee on Readiness.

The purpose of the report was to review "the adequacy of the medical and physical fitness policies and practices for reserve forces of the Department of Defense."

A main objective was to determine if DOD had corrected a readiness problem from the Persian Gulf War when some troops had been identified as being unfit for deployment.

According to the report, the services are required to test reservists' general fitness levels, not whether they possess the physical skills for their military mission.

Air Force training and medical officials told GAO that more mission-specific physical fitness testing would be appropriate for reserve forces who perform missions that require more advanced physical skills than those currently tested. These reservists have missions requiring additional muscular strength and stamina, such as bomb

loaders, aviators, fire fighters and runway repair personnel.

According to the report, DOD plans to revise its policy to require an annual report describing services' physical fitness programs, program strengths and weaknesses, and planned changes to program.

Government stance focuses on tougher standards, better records keeping

However, the services would not have to maintain specific fitness information to assess fitness of forces. DOD's policy would not require the services to separate people who continually fail tests.

GAO recommends:

- Revise DOD's medical retention policy to require reservists be medically able to deploy worldwide;
- Direct the services to adopt mission-specific physical fitness testing programs, and;
- Improve controls over physical fitness testing and reporting.

GAO staffers say DOD's plan doesn't go far enough. They advocate a policy of requiring the services to include in their annual assessments data on the number of active and reserve component personnel taking tests, and number of people passing and failing the tests. They also want to know the number failing two or more consecutive tests, personnel actions taken against those who fail tests, and number of people excused from testing and reasons why they were excused.

Another recommendation is for DOD to direct service secretaries to separate people who repeatedly fail either mission-specific or general physical fitness tests. GAO also wants to see controls implemented to prevent fitness test scores from being inappropriately changed. (AFRESNS)



Blood drive set for June 4

Officials say Desert Storm vets ok to donate blood

The 507th will hold a blood drive June 4 on the ramp outside Bldg. 1030.

According to 507th Blood Drive Coordinator, Dave Mugg, all reservists are encouraged to participate in the drive.

"Nationwide, blood supplies are low due to flu epidemics and all eligible donors are encouraged to donate. Currently there is only a two-day supply of blood, which would be quickly depleted if there was a national emergency," Mugg said.

Mugg said one reason for the national slump in blood donations, is the mistaken belief that donors might somehow become infected by disease while donating.

"There's absolutely no way this can happen," Mugg said, adding that each donation is drawn from a new, sterilized needle, which is destroyed after the donation is received. Mugg also addressed a new fear expressed by the American Legion concerning Desert Storm veterans.

"The American Legion recently has been discouraging Desert Storm Veterans from donating blood because it suspects biological warfare materials may have been used against U.S. troops in the conflict," Mugg said. "However, the American Association of Blood Banks says it views those who have been in the Persian Gulf as acceptable donors as long as they meet the regular donor criteria. Department of Defense officials and the AABB say there is no reason veterans of the Persian Gulf war cannot donate blood.

Oklahoma Blood Institute officials agree, stating they can see no justification for not accepting these donors. Officials say OBI will certainly continue to accept these donors as long as they meet the same health standards we use for any other donor.

The donor screening and tests performed on every unit of blood donated are adequate to ensure the safety of the nation's blood supply, says the AABB.

Reserve News

Changes "bury" reservists

WASHINGTON -- Reservists who serve 20 "good" years toward retirement pay, either solely or primarily in a reserve component, can now be buried in one of 114 national cemeteries operated by the federal government.

Congress gave final approval in April to amend the U.S. Code covering burial, and President Clinton signed the bill May 4.

As previously, reservists with at least two years of active-duty service along with their spouses and certain family members are entitled to burial and headstones. Reservists who die on active duty also have been eligible for burial in the cemeteries. (AFRESNS)

Danger lurks in summer fun

Summer is usually the most dangerous months of the year for military personnel, so be careful, state military officials.

According to AFRES statistics, the off-duty fatality rate for reservists is almost as high per capita as the active force.

AFRES annually averages about four ground mishap deaths involving reservists signed out during training periods. The active force, with six times as many people, has about 33 off-duty deaths per year. (AFRESNS)

Crosby reports to 926th FG

ROBINS AFB, Ga. -- First Lt. Leslie DeAnn Crosby is the Air Force Reserve's first woman fighter pilot.

Crosby graduated May 6 from the Air National Guard's 162nd Fighter Group F-16 Fighting Falcon training course in Tucson, Ariz. She is also the first woman to complete the seven-month course and was one of five graduates in her class.

She will report to the Reserve's 704th Fighter Squadron, Bergstrom ARS, Texas, in June. (AFRESNS)

To "Sir" in six weeks

Those pursuing a commission through the Deserving Airman Commissioning Program, will receive more classroom time.

Starting in October the course increases from two weeks to six weeks, and classes move from Maxwell to the Air Guard Academy at McGehee Tyson. (AFRESNS)

C-141s in Bosnia

The AFRES role in Bosnia literally got bigger last month (May) when Charleston flew five C-141s to Rhein Main to support Provide Promise. A C-141 can carry 13 pallets of cargo, compared to six on a C-130. About 150 active and reserve crews and support people from Charleston deployed. (AFRESNS)

Postage free for AMEX fees

A new policy change authorizes the use of appropriated funds to mail bill payments resulting from official travel charges made on the government issued credit cards (American Express card) issued under the travel and transportation expense program established by the general services administration.

The return address on the payment envelope must be an official government address not a personal one. This applies only to the government issued credit cards and the return address must be your complete official address.

Eye vanity could end career in a blink

ROBINS AFB, Ga. -- Active-duty and reserve bluesuiters who opt for eye surgery so they can toss unwanted glasses or contact lenses may be chucking their military career at the same time.

According to Air Force medical officials, Air Force people who undergo radial keratotomy or photorefractive keratoplasty cannot be on flying status, inducted, commissioned or enlist.

People found to have had a PRK are disqualified for continued military service.

Air Force reservists identified as having had an RK procedure before March 1994 will be placed on a P-3 profile where they can participate in unit training assemblies only.

Those identified as having the procedure after March 1994 will be placed on a P-4 profile and will be prohibited from participation for pay or points. To restore their status, these reservists will have to undergo a complete ophthalmological examination.

Their status will remain P-3 or P-4 until Reserve officials determine if the reservists are fit for continued military service.

Any aircrew members discovered to have had RK will be immediately and permanently grounded, and evaluated for

continued military duty. Air Force will not consider waivers for continued flying duty.

Col. (Dr.) John A. Burkins, a flight surgeon in the directorate of health services at Headquarters AFRES, cites several reasons why the Air Force disapproves of these procedures.

"There can be loss of night vision, severe glare problems in sunlight and severe day-to-day fluctuations in visual acuity," said the chief of the professional services management division.

Other dangers include additional scarring to the cornea causing an increased deterioration of vision instead of improvement and possible clouding of the cornea.

"The cornea is weakened by these procedures which increases the possibility of evisceration (loss) of the contents of the eye during any physical trauma," Burkins said. "There is also possible retinal detachment during any drop in external pressure."

Reserve medical units have been informed of the Air Force's policy concerning RK and PRK, said Burkins. He recommends reservists contact their local reserve medical unit if they have any questions about the policy. (AFRESNS)