

January 2015

RABBIT TALES

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE 513TH AIR CONTROL GROUP



Year in review
A look back at the 513th in 2014

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USAFE Base Changes // 513th Update // Dec. UTA highlights

RABBIT TALES

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

This Air Force Reserve online magazine is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military services, family, and friends of the 513th Air Control Group and its subordinate units. Contents of and the views expressed in the Rabbit Tales newsletter are not necessarily endorsed by the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force.

All photographs are Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

513TH UPDATE

Upcoming events

Saturday – 0900-1400 – Blood Drive
(Bldg. 1043 Bloodmobile)

Sunday – 1400 – SAPR Makeup Training
(970th Conference Room)

Promotions for January

Congrats to this month's promotees!

Senior Airman Raymond Baldwin
(513th Maintenance Squadron)

Tech. Sgt. Ronie Palec
(513th Maintenance Squadron)

Master Sgt. Brian Baldwin
(970th Airborne Air Control Squadron)

Master Sgt. Wendy Robison
(513th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron)

Master Sgt. Matthew Stark
(513th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron)

Fit to Fight MVP's

Fit to fight scores are unavailable until January 11 due to the fitness tracking system upgrade. Fit to Fight MVP's will return in the February issue of the Rabbit Tales.

The Forty & Eight

The Forty & Eight is a veterans organization focused on the welfare of children and fostering nursing training programs. It provides financial support to children and nurses in training by raising support through local and national fundraisers. Visit the official website [here](#) or the local voiture's group on Facebook [here](#).

Fit to Fight hall of fame



1.5-Mile Run

Men: **7:51** Men: TSgt Daniel McDonald
Women: **9:44** Women: TSgt Krystal Stalder

Pushups

Men: **110** Men: SrA Robert Duncan
Women: **65** Women: 2nd Lt. Lily Baker

Situps

Men: **109** Men: 2nd Lt. Michael Doughty
Women: **84** Women: 2nd Lt. Amie Inman

1-Mile Walk

Men & Women: **9:15** Men: MSgt Darrell Freel
Women: **13:57** Women: MSgt Elizabeth Staff

From the cover

The 513th Air Control Group stands at attention in front of an E-3 Sentry on Dec. 7 on the flight line at Tinker Air Force Base. The 513th is the only Air Force Reserve unit to fly and maintain the Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft. (U.S. Air Force Photo/Staff Sgt. Caleb Wanzer)



US Air Force's European consolidation results announced

By Capt. Sybil Taunton

U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces Africa Public Affairs

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany (AFNS) -- The Office of the Secretary of Defense announced the results of the European Infrastructure Consolidation (EIC) review Jan. 8, which will realign several missions in U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces Africa (USAFE-AFAFRICA) within seven years.

Under the EIC, the Defense Department will divest three installations in the U.K., including realigning missions from Royal Air Force Mildenhall to other installations in Europe, and consolidating intelligence centers at RAF Croughton.

As required by the 2014 National Defense Authorization Act, the DOD also used the EIC process to validate Lajes Field, Azores, Portugal, streamline efforts, previously approved and announced in 2012. The DOD has concluded the Lajes streamlining process should continue and is expected to complete by the fall of 2015. The Air Force will adjust the size of the unit to reflect the level of support required while keeping forces at the installation.

"We understand these changes will have substantial impacts on the local areas, but we are dedicated to working closely with our com-

munity neighbors, defense partners, personnel and families to ease the impact of these transitions as much as possible," said Gen. Frank Gorenc, the USAFE-AFAFRICA commander. "These infrastructure consolidations will allow USAFE-AFAFRICA to better meet alliance mission requirements."

The divestment of RAF Mildenhall will result in the move of currently assigned missions to other installations within the command. Upon completion of the realignment process, which is anticipated to occur after 2020, the Air Force is estimated to save \$125 million annually, primarily in infrastructure maintenance costs and facility upgrades.

While there will be no difference in operational capabilities, the divestment is also projected to reduce approximately 1,300 military, civilian and local national positions.

In addition, roughly 2,600 personnel are projected to be relocated to other locations in the U.K. as well as to Ramstein and Spangdahlem Air Bases in Germany.

"The U.K. remains an essential location for forward-based and ready forces," Gorenc said. "Our close relationship with the U.K. govern-



ment and integrated missions with U.K. forces remain integral to USAFE's ability to execute successful missions in support of our NATO allies."

Additionally in the U.K., intelligence and support elements located at RAF Alconbury and RAF Molesworth will consolidate. This will be an investment into a new intelligence complex at RAF Croughton to create efficiencies in operational mission support.

This consolidation will result in the divestiture of RAF Molesworth and RAF Alconbury in 2022 and the inactivation of the 501st Combat Support Wing.

It will also result in the projected reduction of approximately 200 military, civilian and local national positions from Alconbury-Molesworth and the relocation of 1,200 personnel to RAF Croughton.

The RAF Croughton site ensures continuation of the strong U.S. intelligence relationship with the United Kingdom and will result in an exponential increase in U.S.-NATO intelligence collaboration efforts," Gorenc said.

Not only will the consolidation of missions at RAF Croughton result in greater efficiencies and opera-

tional synergy, it will also allow the U.S. government to meet mission requirements in the most financially responsible way.

"The consolidation at RAF Croughton will realize savings of approximately \$74 million each year, with a return on investment of approximately four years," Gorenc said.

In addition to the changes within the U.K., the 606th Air Control Squadron at Spangdahlem AB, will be relocated to Aviano AB, Italy. The move of the squadron and its 300 positions is expected to save the Air Force approximately \$50 million in military construction funding.

Following the relocation of the 606th ACS, Spangdahlem AB will receive the 352nd Special Operations Group, currently located at RAF Mildenhall. This move will include about 10 CV-22 Ospreys and 10 MC-130J Commando II aircraft, and associated personnel.

An exact timeline for EIC movements is still being considered, though some relocation efforts are expected to start within a year. Larger efforts, which include consolidation and divestments, will take place after facilities are ready to receive the mission relocations. Divestments are expected to be complete within seven years.

"We took a serious and pragmatic look at how we can most effectively meet our commitments," Gorenc said. "These changes increase our ability to meet the needs of a new dynamic security environment in Europe. Our vow to NATO's Article 5 remains unbreakable and unwavering."

Air Force F-35 Squadrons Slated for RAF Lakenheath Basing

By Tech. Sgt. Jake Richmond

DoD News, Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON, Jan. 8, 2015 – Two operational squadrons of U.S. Air Force F-35 Lightning II joint strike fighter jets will be permanently stationed at the Royal Air Force Lakenheath facility in the United Kingdom starting in 2020, Defense Department officials announced today.

A considered and deliberative process led to RAF Lakenheath's selection as the first European base for U.S. F-35s, DoD officials said.

"This decision is just the latest example of the special relationship between the United States and the United Kingdom," Derek Chollet, assistant secretary of defense for international affairs, said today. "The presence of U.S. F-35s at Lakenheath will lead to new possibilities for collaboration with the United Kingdom, such as the potential for greater training and wider support opportunities."

The announcement was made at the same time officials released the department's plans for European Infrastructure Consolidation, a two-year effort designed to ensure long-term efficiency and effectiveness of the U.S. presence in Europe.

Enhancing Readiness With Reduced Funding

The EIC calls for the return of 15 sites to their host nations in Europe. Divestiture of RAF Mildenhall represents the largest reduction in U.S. personnel among the sites, but it will also pave the way for the F-35 units at RAF Lakenheath, Pentagon officials said. DoD officials expect a net decrease of roughly 2,000 U.S. service members and civilians in the United Kingdom over the next several years.

About 3,200 Americans will be relocated from RAF Mildenhall, and that will be offset by the addi-



Photo courtesy Lockheed-Martin

tion of about 1,200 personnel who will be permanently assigned to the F-35 squadrons at Lakenheath, officials noted.

"Taken together, these decisions on our force presence in Europe will enhance our operational readiness and mission posture at reduced funding levels, all toward the objective of maintaining a strong transatlantic alliance and meeting our common security interests," Chollet said.

looking back

513th manages difficult year,
looks forward to brighter 2015

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Caleb Wanzer



LOCAL NEWS**LOCAL NEWS**

The 513th Air Control Group had both a challenging and exciting year in 2014, dealing with news of potential deactivation while at the same time continuing the mission, sending Airmen on missions anywhere from Saudi Arabia to South Korea and everywhere in between.

Col. David Robertson, the 513th commander, couldn't be more proud of everything the only airborne warning and control system unit in the Air Force Reserve has accomplished this year.

"The reserves are about family, mission and excellence," Robertson said. "In facing probably the most challenging year in our history, the 513th has continued to perform its mission at peak levels while maintaining our culture of family that keeps us coming back year after year."

Proposed Deactivation

March brought difficult news for the 513th, with the proposed 2015 budget including a deactivation of the group and a reduction of the E-3 Sentry fleet by seven.

"Most of us in the group were surprised to read in the newspaper that we would be closing at the end of the budget year," said Chief Master Sgt. Jeff Davis, the group superintendent. "This was a tough time for the unit and we did not have a lot of answers. As the process played out we received a crash course education on the force structure realignment."

While Congress wrestled with the defense bills over the summer, the group's leaders were hard at work, making sure that the Senate and House both understood the expertise and cost effectiveness that the 513th brings to the AWACS community.

On May 1, Robertson and Davis traveled to Capitol Hill to meet with two U.S. Representatives and two Senators from Oklahoma who were all very supportive of the AWACS Reservists.

"When we met with our representatives we learned that they were on our side and that they were going to do everything they could to



save the 513th," Davis said. "Due to budget constraints, Congress had to save money. The reserves as a whole are less expensive to operate than an active-duty unit and already bring to the table everything the Air Force needs: experience, capability and reduced cost."

As the defense authorization and spending bills made it through their respective subcommittees and committees on the Hill, each time Congress voted to keep the 513th in the fight.

After the process was complete and the differences between the House and Senate versions were resolved, Congress committed to keep the 513th and all of the E-3s in the inventory. The president signed the 2015 defense bill along with 11 other spending bills on Dec. 19.

"We always knew that the 513th is the best, hands down, at what we do," Davis said. "We have proven that throughout our existence. Our maintenance sets the bar on the flight line and our operators have

tons of experience."

"They won't be able to find any group of Airmen that can do the job better than us," Davis said.

Mobile Training Teams

Even in the middle of deactivation talks, the 513th stayed active, sending Airmen from the 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron to the Republic of South Korea and Saudi Arabia to train allied air forces on their respective AWACS fleets.

"It was great to be able to help our partner nations," said Lt. Col. Doug Lomheim, an air battle manager with the 970th and one of the instructors who trained airmen with the Royal Saudi Arabian Air Force. "We were able to quickly upgrade their AWACS capability so they could perform missions like anti-terrorism sorties."

The training came with plenty of challenges, Lomheim said. Delays caused by aircraft maintenance and real-world missions forced him and the other instructors to stay flexible and come up with creative ways to



use the downtime.

"We had only one jet with no backups available," he said. "Sometimes that aircraft would be needed elsewhere, so we ended up doing other training on the ground."

The opportunity for training allied air forces doesn't come around often, so Lomheim was excited to be a part of the four-man mobile training team, which included one active-duty Airman from the 552nd Air Control Wing.

By taking on the foreign training task, the 513th was able to free up 552nd Airmen to fulfill other requirements, he said.

Rim of the Pacific 2014

More than 60 reservists from the 513th Air Control Group spent nearly two weeks flying missions last July to support the Rim of the Pacific 2014 exercise at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii.

The 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron flew the only E-3 Sentry Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft in the exercise, accord-

ing to Lt. Col. Brent Vander Pol, the 970th commander and the detachment commander for the trip.

"What we were able to accomplish was huge," Vander Pol said. "We were able to get our secure link up and running, providing all of the other allied assets with everything we could see. For us to get and stay connected to the Navy, that's a huge win for us."

Navy communications Sailors flew on the E-3's first mission and worked directly with aircrew members to set up Link 16 capability.

The Link 16 connectivity provides all the ships, aircraft and other coalition units the ability to exchange tactical data that enhances their situational awareness," said Navy Lt. David Hogg, a joint interface control officer with the Navy's Third Fleet, who flew on board the AWACS.

The link also allows the air operations center to see everything the AWACS radar detects in real time, he said. This allows U.S. and allied forces to share the same information

securely.

Vander Pol said that the staff members of the air operations center were surprised by the amount of data that the E-3 provides.

"There was a huge gasp on the floor of the center when this massive amount of data they hadn't been seeing appeared on the displays," he said. "Everyone has to play his or her role in the exercise, and it was really good to see what we could provide."

Commander's Inspection Program

The 513th's mission doesn't stop at maintaining and flying the E-3 Sentry AWACS. Keeping nearly 400 Reservists at the top of their game requires training and vigorous inspections to make sure each task is being completed correctly.

Maj. Gregory Hutto, the 513th's director of inspections, oversaw a major overhaul of the Air Force's newest inspection system, now called the Commander's Inspection Program.

"Transitioning to the CCIP came with a huge learning curve," Hutto said. "We've been used to preparing for inspections from outside agencies, but now it's our job to be the inspectors."

Hutto and his team finished implementing the new program well ahead of schedule, a full four months ahead of the October 2014 deadline.

They also performed 9 inspections under the new program, checking different areas of the 513th and leading to one outstanding, three highly effective and five effective scores for the year, he said.

Block 40/45 upgrade

The 970th Airborne Air Control Squadron started a new chapter in its history this past year by certifying

one crew on the newest modification to the E-3 Sentry fleet, the block 40/45 upgrade.

"Block 40/45 improves the jet's ability to identify and track land, sea and air targets," said Lt. Col. Louis Fournier, the assistant director of operations at the 970th. "It also improves the human and machine integration by using a modern, Windows-based system."

The upgrade to the Air Force's fleet of E-3s has been ongoing, reaching initial operational capability last July. The upgrade is scheduled to be completed to the entire fleet in fiscal year 2020, Fournier said.

The 970th's first crew finished certification on block 40/45 in August during a training mission to Colorado Springs, Colorado. Fournier said this crew will now be able to certify their fellow aircrew members, increasing the flexibility of the squadron.

"This certification keeps us on the forefront of the fight," he said. "We're now able to use all jets on the ramp and aren't limited to the shrinking pool of 30/35 aircraft."

The 970th's active-duty sister squadrons in the 552nd Air Control Wing are also undergoing the same transition, but are faced with more personnel turnover that makes training on the new system more difficult.

"Now we're able to help the active-duty squadrons with training and currencies," Fournier said. Once aircrew members are certified to fly a block 40/45 system, they must maintain currencies on both the old and new systems.

"It can be a challenge for our traditional reservists to find time for the certification," he said. "They need

a week for in-house classes and then one to four check rides, and that can be difficult."

Despite the challenge, the 970th plans on having three full aircrews certified on block 40/45 by March and completing the process by August.

Maintenance

Even though the 513th as a whole wasn't tasked with a deployment this year, the 513th Maintenance and Aircraft Maintenance squadrons still provided nine Reservists who spent a combined 49 months deployed to Southwest Asia. The maintainers worked hand-in-hand with active-duty Airmen from 552nd, supporting the fight against ISIS as well as other mission in the region.

"The maintenance troops of the 513th have once again demonstrated their exceptional professionalism this year," said Lt. Col. Alan Priest, the chief of maintenance for the 513th.

"Despite budget issues, the threat of inactivation and other obstacles, 513th maintenance personnel successfully supported all deployments, exercises, and any higher-headquarters missions that were assigned to the E-3."

The two maintenance squadrons also continued to work closely with the 552nd at Tinker to support the busy flying schedules for training and other local missions.

"Even with the E-3 flying some of the highest monthly flying hour totals in recent memory, the 513th maintainers played a key role in being able to still meet and exceed the majority of the maintenance indicator standards established for the E-3," Priest said.



Senior Airman Keyontae Triplett

Unit: 513th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

Job title: Crew Chief

Hometown: Del City, Oklahoma

Favorite part of your job? Fixing stuff.

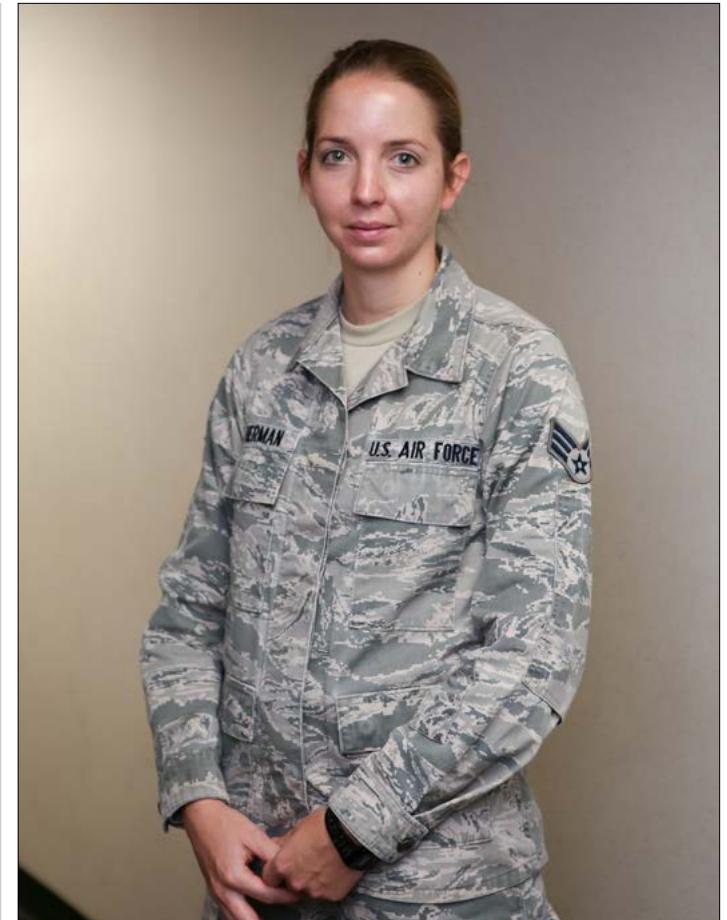
Do you have any New Year's resolutions? Be better than I was last year.

What did you want to be when you grew up?
An astronaut.

Little-known fact about you: I was born in the Phillipines.

Favorite memory from your time in the 513th? Going TDY to Spokane, Washington.

If you had superhero ability, it would be: Teleporting.



Senior Airman Haley Sherman

Unit: 513th Operations Support Squadron

Job title: Intel Analyst

Hometown: Cushing, Oklahoma

Cowboys or Sooners? To be honest, I do not care about choosing teams. I love to play sports, but I am not a sports team follower.

Favorite part of your job? All the amazing people I get to meet, which is kind of funny because most people annoy me. But I have met some really amazing individuals because of my job.

What did you want to be when you grew up?
At first I wanted to be a veterinarian, then a photographer, but finally I realized my true calling was to be a teacher. Children are our future and I want to be in a position to help set children up for success.

Little-known fact about you: I am a twin.

Highlights from the December UTA

Reservists from the entire group ventured out to the flight line Dec. 7 for the first group photo since 2012. Despite the fog and chilly weather, the 513th OSS still managed to stick around after for a more “relaxed” style of squadron photo. To see the rest of the photos, email Staff Sgt. Caleb Wanzer at caleb.wanzer@us.af.mil or find the 513th on Facebook at www.facebook.com/513thaircontrolgroup.



More than 160 Reservists and their family members enjoyed a night out Dec. 6 for the 513th Christmas party. Many thanks to

1st Lt. Lily Baker and all of the other volunteers who made this one of the best Christmas parties yet!

If you'd like photos taken dur-

ing the party, email Staff Sgt. Caleb Wanzer at caleb.wanzer@us.af.mil or find the 513th on Facebook at www.facebook.com/513thaircontrolgroup.