



OUR MISSION:

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

OUR VISION:

Experience, Expertise, Teamwork:  
Citizen Airmen employing  
diverse talents as game-  
raising mission partners

July 2018

# RABBIT TALES

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE 513TH AIR CONTROL GROUP



**Thumpers return to Europe  
for BALTOPS 2018**

(Story on page 8)

**INSIDE:**  
From the top: best of the best // AF transition to a single combat uniform



# RABBIT TALES

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## 513TH UPDATE

### We're back!

After a brief hiatus, the Rabbit Tales has made a grand come-back and will be informing and entertaining you for the foreseeable future. We're always looking for ideas, photos and news to include, so please pass anything you'd like to MSgt Andrew Stephens (andrew.stephens.1@us.af.mil).

### Mission, vision updates

The 513th Air Control Group's mission and vision statements received a facelift earlier this summer after a strategic planning event chaired by Col. Laurie Dickson. Three priority statements were also added.

#### Mission:

*To provide combat-ready  
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to Fly, Fight & Win.*

#### Vison:

*Experience, Expertise, Teamwork:  
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diverse talents as game-raising  
mission partners.*

#### Priority 1:

*Improve Combat Readiness –  
Be capable and prepared  
to execute wartime tasks.*

#### Priority 2:

*Create an environment and culture  
of consistency that makes well-rounded  
Airmen proud to serve at the 513th.*

#### Priority 3:

*Assure future relevance and value  
to the active component while retaining  
a Reserve identity.*

Vision: Experience, Expertise, Teamwork: Citizen Airmen employing diverse talents as game-raising mission partners

### Promotions

Congrats to our July promotees!



**SSgt** Brittany Willis  
(513th Operations Support Squadron)



**TSgt** Derek Byrd  
(513th Maintenance Squadron)

### Upcoming Events

August 4-5  
**August UTA**

August 5 – 1500 – Fannin Hall  
**513th ACG Commander's Call**

August 6  
**Moving day for ACG/OSS/AACS to Bldg 461**

### Fit to Fight MVPs

2d Lt Andy Cole  
Unit: 970 AACS  
Score: 100%



SrA Roderick Ward  
Unit: 970 AACS  
Score: 96.6%

# Thumpers prep for move into new facility

**By Master Sgt. Andy Stephens**  
*513th Air Control Group Public Affairs*

TINKER AFB, OK -- After six years of planning, the 513th Air Control Group – call sign “Thumper” – is getting a new home here this August. Tinker AFB’s AWACS Reserve Associate Unit will dedicate the new 30,000 square foot, two-story facility on August 16, with an open house of Building 461 to coincide with the base’s annual Reserve community family day during the September drill weekend.

“The new facility offers amenities and capabilities far beyond what is currently available to our Airmen,” said Col. Laurie A. Dickson, 513 ACG commander. “Presently, our headquarters, aircrews and life support are limited to 6,000 square feet in two sites two miles apart from each other at Tinker. This new facility will offer five times that area, improving the quality of training for all components of our operations elements, while being in closer proximity to our active-duty partners at the 552nd Air Control Wing. We’re grateful for the support for all the AWACS commanders and the commitment of the Air Force Reserve Command leadership that made this new facility possible.”

The path to the dedication day began officially on May 23, 2012, when Lt. Gen. Charles E. Stenner, Jr., then-Commander of the Air Force Reserve Com-

mand, gave his posture statement on the state of the Air Force Reserve to the Senate Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Defense. During the four years prior to this event, Stenner was a proponent of the associate unit concept as he recognized that active-duty squadrons were struggling to get younger pilots the experience and cockpit time needed to develop them into combat pilots, instructors and leaders while the Reserve had experienced mentors and flying schedule availability.

“The Air Force leverages the expertise of the Reserve Component through associate constructs in which units...share equipment and facilities to carry out a common mission,” Stenner said to the subcommittee. “We have established a wide variety of associate units throughout the Air Force, combining the assets and manpower...to establish Total Force units that capitalize on the strengths of each individual component.”

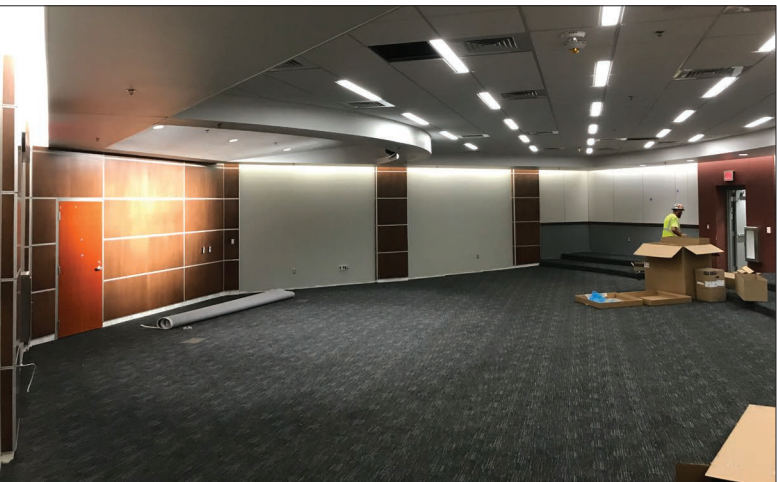
Prior to his testimony, Stenner had visited many reserve associate units across USAF, including Tinker’s own 513 ACG. Recognizing that better facilities would lead to improved training and mentorship for Team Thumper, he started the process for construction to begin on reconstructing Building 461, an aged, long-storied structure at Tinker that had most recently been the headquarters for the host com-

mand of the base, the 72nd Air Base Wing. With \$13 million in congressional appropriations gathered, matured and ready, on Feb. 26, 2016, a contract was awarded to begin the reconstruction of Building 461.

Joseph Wade, 507th Civil Engineering Squadron’s Director of Facilities, said this project wasn’t a renovation of the existing structure, but a removal of the previous structure with the construction of a new building in its entirety, complete down to underground utilities that had to be modified to maintain a state-of-the-art structure appropriate for a 21st-century AWACS mission.

“We encountered several challenges and delays, but we overcame all of them,” said Wade. “Our people worked together over long months, but we’ve built an outstanding home for the 513th Air Control Group that can stand proudly for decades to come, supporting future generations of Thumpers.”

The new facility is more than just an aesthetic interior – the 30,000 square foot structure features a 250-person auditorium, a small fitness room with adjoining men’s and women’s showers, separate workrooms for aircrews, flight engineers, mission planners, air surveillance and communications technicians; locker rooms; and a heritage room to highlight the history of the ACG going back



to 1944 and capturing the ancestral unit’s role in the Berlin Airlift. Paintings by local Air Force artist Darby Perrin will be featured on the walls of the heritage room, providing an appropriate reminder for the AWACS Airmen of tomorrow of a legacy to live up to everyday. The new structure will not, however, be open for visitors on an everyday basis as a key card access will keep the facility secure.

“This new facility represents more than an investment in the AWACS mission, but also in the Airmen who stand ready to provide command of the air through airborne command and control to US forces our allies and coalition partners,” said Lt. Col. James Matthey, 970 AACCS Director of Operations. “We’re also very excited because over the next several months as the 513th will install a next-generation

spatial computing collaboration environment that ties together three key aspects of C2: situational awareness, collaboration and support of rapid decision-making.”

The Thumpers will begin the move into the new building during the August 2018 drill weekend and the commander said all ACG personnel should do their part in relocating into the new structure.



# 513th returns to BALTOPS for 2018 exercise

**By Lt. Col. James J. Matthey**  
Director of Operations,  
970th Airborne Air Control Squadron

“Fight as one” has an added meaning for the 513th Air Control Group this year with the completion of the BALTOPS 2018 exercise.

BALTOPS is an annual multinational maritime-focused exercise. It’s designed to improve training, enhance flexibility, interoperability, and demonstrate resolve among allied and partner forces in defending the Baltic Sea region. This year’s exercise was the first true Total Force effort between the 513th ACG and the 552nd Air Control Wing.

“We are one Air Force,” said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III on the continuing expansion of reservists into active duty operations. “We’re committed to this idea, and it’s foundational to the way we present our capabilities. We’re not going to be operationally successful any other way.”

BALTOPS 2018 was the second Baltic joint naval operations mission the 513 ACG had supported in approximately 20 years, having completed BALTOPS 97 just months after the 513th’s activation ceremony on July 13, 1996. To accomplish the

mission, 152 Airmen--reservists and active duty alike--deployed to Geilenkirchen Air Base, Germany; from this NATO base, Tinker’s AWACS supported a 14-nation NATO task force of 40 ships, 60 aircraft and 5,000 Airmen, Sailors, Soldiers, Marines and Coast Guard. By training together, learning how others fight and instilling confidence in partner nations that NATO stands ready to defend the Baltic region, the combined force demonstrated a united resolve against potential Russian hostilities.

The 513th ACG’s role in this multinational exercise was to provide command of the air though expert air-to-air surveillance, battle management and provide a vital data link picture allowing the NATO task force to execute missions such as fleet defense, live-fire training, anti-surface, anti-submarine, maritime, mine countermeasures and amphibious operations.

“This year [BALTOPS 18] we will be practicing our ability to dominate the maritime battlespace and demonstrate how NATO partners can come together and fight as one,” said Naval Striking and Support Forces NATO Chief of Staff Royal Marine Col. Garth Manger before this year’s exercise began.

Each year the dynamics and additions to BALTOPS gets more complex for one simple reason. Since Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014, Moscow has forcefully redrawn borders in Eastern Europe, intimidating and attacking its neighbors, and launching disinformation and cyber campaigns against the West and engaged in military buildups on its western frontiers. Former UK Secretary for Defence Michael Fallon said in February 2015 that there is a “real and present danger” of Russia trying to destabilize the Baltic States. Three years later, NATO nations of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia have seen an exponential increase of Russian military maneuvers and offensive cyber operations.

“If you want to talk about a nation that could pose an existential threat to the United States, I’d have to point to Russia,” said Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, U.S. Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford on July 9, 2015. “And if you look at their behavior, it’s nothing short of alarming.”

With the general’s words in mind, the 513th ACG and 552nd ACW paired up their best personnel for BALTOPS 18 this summer. As a director of operations of the Air Force’s only reserve AWACS unit, and DETCO,



A U.S. Air Force E-3 Sentry Airborne Warning and Control System aircraft assigned to Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma, takes off in support of Exercise Baltic Operations at NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen, Germany, June 6, 2018. BALTOPS involves maritime, ground and air forces so as to strengthen combined response capabilities necessary to ensure regional stability. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Christopher S. Sparks)

I saw our C2 professionals--seasoned, experienced operators and maintainers--work side-by-side with a relatively young active-duty AWACS team, sharing expertise and knowledge at all levels.

“This type of total force integration allows us to work with our reservist counterparts on a much more direct level of maintenance,” said Tech. Sgt. Allan Lamb, E-3 AWACS electrical, environmental systems crafts-

man, assigned to the 963rd Airborne Air Control Squadron. “An exercise like this allows us to understand how their [reserve] structures work and more effective ways to complete tasks with groups of people we haven’t worked with previously.”

BALTOPS is a vital exercise to practice multi-force integration and sends a strategic message, one of unity and solidarity. The men and women of the 513th ACG once again expertly

planned and executed another major NATO exercise, bringing credit upon our unit, Tinker AFB and our country. By proving U.S. power projection, we demonstrate that we are “Reserve Citizen Airmen - an agile, combat-ready force answering our nation’s call...always there!”

Congratulations go out to the 513th ACG on another hugely successful deployment with a big thank you to all our friends at the 552nd ACW.





Patrol caps will be worn with nametapes placed on the back using Velcro or sewn on. Officer rank will be sewn on the front of the hat and centered ½ inch above the visor.

T-shirt will be Tan.

Name and USAF tape embroidery will be spice brown thread.

Right Sleeve (max. 2 Velcro patches) Subdued U.S. Flags are mandatory and will be centered at the top of Velcro.

The following patches are approved to be worn under the US Flag:

Higher headquarters (HHQ) subdued cloth patch, Directorate subdued cloth patch, Inspector General identification subdued cloth patch, or subdued cloth patches/badges of awarded campaigns/combat while assigned to the awarding unit.

Left Sleeve (max. 2 Velcro patches) Organizational unit of assignment subdued cloth will be centered at the top of the Velcro area unless one of the following patches are worn:

Duty Identifier Tabs, or Joint qualification tabs may be worn, (e.g., Army Ranger, Sapper, Airborne, Air Commando, SERE, EOD) above the unit patch.

Right or Left Sleeve The following patches will be worn on either sleeve in place of either the HHQ or organizational unit patch:

Weapons Instructor Course patch (graduate or instructor), USAF Test Pilot School and School of Advanced Air patch, Space Studies patch, Critical Care Air Transport Team patch, Test Pilot School graduate patches or other completed equivalent schools

Boots will be Coyote Brown.

## TIMELINE

2018

1 OCT

Serviceable OCP's may be worn.

Airmen can purchase OCP's at the following AAFES locations: Aviano AB, Charleston AFB, Shaw AFB and MacDill AFB

2019

1 APR

Expansion of in-store AAFES sales locations continues

Tan T-shirt must be worn (Desert Sand is authorized until this date)

OCT

Online sales projected to be available

2020

1 JUN

Coyote Brown boots must be worn (Tan is authorized until this date)

DLA Issued green socks must be worn (Desert Tan, Tan authorized until this date)

2021

1 APR

OCP Mandatory Wear Date

## BENEFITS

- The OCP works in all climates and across the spectrum of missions we perform

- Over 100,000 Airmen have been issued and/or are already wearing OCPs. This includes Air Force Central Command, Air Force Special Operations Command and our Air Force Global Strike Command Defenders

- The OCP will bring back Air Force heraldry with unit patches

- The OCP celebrates our joint warfighting excellence and close ties with the Army

# AF transitions to a single combat uniform

Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs

WASHINGTON, D.C. (AFNS) -- Air Force leaders announced the service will move to a single combat utility uniform, adopting the Operational Camouflage Pattern, or OCP, already in use by the Army and Airmen in combat zones and in certain jobs across the Air Force.

Starting Oct. 1, 2018, Airmen who have serviceable OCPs may wear the uniform, and Airmen can purchase OCPs at Army and Air Force Exchange Services at the following locations: Aviano Air Base, Italy; Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina; Shaw Air Force Base, South Carolina; and MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. These initial locations will allow uniform manufacturers to produce additional stocks for other locations, eventually outfitting the total force in the coming months.

The service will fully transition to OCPs by April 1, 2021.

Air Force leaders decided to transition to the OCP following feedback from Airmen that it is the best, battle-tested utility uniform available. It will also eliminate the need to maintain two separate uniforms – one for in-garrison and one for deployments – and it is a visible re-

minder of the service's identity as a joint warfighting force, Air Force officials said.

"We looked at all utility uniforms currently in our inventory to find the best-of-breed," said Chief of Staff of the Air Force Gen. David L. Goldfein. "We spoke to and listened to Airmen on this, and the OCP was the clear choice."

"The uniform works in all climates—from Minot to Manbij—and across the spectrum of missions we perform," Goldfein added. "It's suitable for our Airmen working on a flight line in Northern Tier states and for those conducting patrols in the Middle East," he said.

More than 100,000 Airmen have been issued or are already wearing OCPs or equivalent two-piece flight suits—from Airmen deployed to Air Forces Central Command, to those serving in Air Force Special Operations Command, and most recently, aircrews in Air Mobility Command and defenders in Air Force Global Strike Command.

### Preserving service & squadron identity

As with the Battle Dress Uniform, or BDU, worn by all services until about 10 years ago,

the OCP Airmen wear will have distinctive Air Force features. The name tape and Air Force lettering will be a spice-brown color, and T-shirts and belts will be tan. Most rank will also be in spice-brown thread.

Squadron patches will also be worn on the OCP, said Goldfein. Bringing back squadron patches was among the recommendations made by Airmen as part of the ongoing effort to revitalize squadrons.

"Unit patches express squadron identity and heritage – something our Airmen are incredibly proud of and want to celebrate," he said.

Unit patches and special functional identifiers (Security Forces, Fire, Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Tactical Air Control Party, Combat Controller, etc.) will be attached to Velcro fabric on the sleeves. All patches will be in subdued colors; headquarters patches and the U.S. flag will be worn on the right shoulder, and unit patches and authorized duty identifiers will be worn on the left shoulder.

Airmen can find guidance for proper wear of the uniform in the coming months via an Air Force Guidance Memorandum, followed by updates published in AFI 36-2903.



## From the top: the best of the best

Wow! My first 6 months here has flown by in a whirlwind of training, TDYs and getting to know the members of the 513th Air Control Group. I can say, with no uncertainty, the men and women of this organization are the best of the best when it comes to flying, maintaining and training.

While at BALTOPS, I have seen first-hand that this organization has what it takes to get the job done and does it better than anyone else. There is no other organization quite like the 513th in 10AF or in AFRC. And that is what makes this unit special. We are “one of a kind!”

Every day I witness what makes this unit special....

when the first sergeants come to the rescue of a sick crew member while TDY, or when senior NCO's put their airmen first, or when members steps up without batting an eye when the 552nd requests Independence Day support.

Our focus must remain on successfully getting the mission done and taking care of our Airmen while being good stewards of the taxpayers' money.

I charge you to continue this

tradition of family and a culture of excellence and keep up the great work!



## CMSAF announces change to SMSgt promotion requirements

*CMSAF Kaleth Wright posted the following to his Facebook page on July 5:*

One of the first questions at one of my first all calls after taking the seat was from a young Airmen who wanted to know when “the Air Force” was going to update the Enlisted Force Structure. I assumed by “the Air Force” she meant me, so I told her we’d look at it. And then the question came up again and again.

But we had a few bigger rocks to crush, so I put my energy into the things our Airmen needed right then. But our team didn’t forget about that Airmen or any of the others who asked. So, here it is. You asked, we listened. This is considerably different than the previous version - first, it’s now a handbook, not an AFI. Also, it now includes our officer and civilian force structures. It’s a quick read, but one we think is important.

One of the biggest changes you’ll see, one that we’re also working to codify in our other AFIs, comes in para 3.1.3.1. An Associate’s Degree from the CCAF is no longer a promotion requirement. Instead, the verbiage now reads “MSgts must complete an Associate’s Degree or higher from a regionally accredited academic institution, if not already earned, to become eligible for promotion to SMSgt.”

## June in review

*The 970th's two newest air battle managers, 2nd Lts. Josh Grijalva and Sara Webb, graduated from training at Tyndall AFB on June 29. Also pictured are Lt. Col. Brian Hard, 513th Operations Support Squadron Director of Operations, Capt. Dicky "Un" Guerrero, Chief ABM for the 970th, and 1st Lt. Sarah Williams, the former administrative assistant to Renee Witten. (Courtesy photo)*



*Master Sgt. Angela Leddy, the 513th Maintenance Squadron's first sergeant, makes herself comfortable on board a C-17 aircraft on the trip home from Geilenkirchen Air Base, Germany, on June 15th. (Courtesy photo)*



*(Left) On June 8 former 513th Group Commander Col. Steve Seaman stopped by to visit the current Commander Col. Laurie Dickson.*

*(Right) On July 10 the first-ever 513th Group Commander retired Col. Ken Suggs stopped by for a visit.*

