

# Commander's Call Topics



**August 9, 2012**

"Our Airmen have reinvigorated the nuclear enterprise, institutionalized remotely piloted aircraft capabilities into our service, [strengthened our support and our care for one another](#) and for our families, clearly demonstrated our committed to the joint fight and established a program of record for the long-range strike family of systems." – Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz reflecting on his time as Chief of Staff, July 24, 2012.

## ► CURRENT ISSUES

### [AF officer turned athlete shows Olympic mettle](#)

While Kelsey's third Olympics competition ended in disappointment, he still left London with much to celebrate.

### [AF CSA travel card transitions to GTC](#)

The terms and conditions for the Air Force's travel charge card are changing, but Airmen can hang on to their blue cards

### [Senate confirms General Welsh as next Air Force chief of staff](#)

Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, a 36-year veteran, will be the twentieth Air Force chief of staff, according to a Senate confirmation vote Aug. 2.

## ► PERSONNEL ISSUES

### [New AFSC merges certain gunners, engineers, loadmasters](#)

Some 924 enlisted aviators will find themselves with a new Air Force specialty code Oct. 31

### [Air Force officials release E-5 promotion list](#)

More than 13,400 senior airmen -- 40 percent of those eligible -- have been selected for promotion to staff sergeant.

### [President announces nomination for AF under secretary](#)

President Barack Obama announced Aug. 1 that he intends to nominate Eric Fanning to be the next Under Secretary of the Air Force.

## ► FAMILY, HEALTH AND SAFETY

### [Airman dies in off-base blaze](#)

An Airman assigned to Ramstein died in his private quarters in the community of Otterberg following a fire which broke out in the kitchen

### ['Air Force 101' gives spouses toolbox for life in Air Force](#)

A guide book has been developed to give spouses a "toolbox" of information, as well as a way to familiarize them with such things as the Air Force mission, organization, rank structure and traditions.

## ► ENVIRONMENT, SPACE, TECHNOLOGY

### [Air Force has role in Mars Rover success](#)

A 1/30-scale model of the aero shell configuration for the Mars Science Laboratory underwent aerodynamic atmospheric descent testing at AEDC's Hypervelocity Wind Tunnel 9 Facility.

### [Service leaders weigh in on BRAC, renewable energy](#)

Air Force, Army and Navy officials discussed renewable energy milestones, force structure changes, and the impact on military and surrounding communities affected by base realignment and closure here Aug. 6

## ► RESOURCES

### **AF.mil**

<http://www.af.mil>

### **Airman magazine**

<http://www.airmanonline.af.mil/>

### **Air Force Community**

<http://www.afcommunity.af.mil/>

### **Air Force Outreach**

<http://www.afoutreach.af.mil/>

### **Military OneSource**

<http://www.militaryonesource.com/>

### **Military HOMEFRONT**

<http://www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/>

### **Air Force Personnel Center**

<https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil>  
<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>

### **Air Reserve Personnel Center**

<http://www.arpc.afrc.af.mil/>

### **Department of Defense**

<http://www.defense.gov>

### **Department of Defense News**

<http://www.defenselink.mil>

### **Department of Veterans Affairs**

<http://www.va.gov>

### **TRICARE**

<http://www.tricare.mil>

### **U.S. Government Website**

<http://www.firstgov.gov/>

### **Employment Opportunities**

[www.usajobs.com](http://www.usajobs.com)  
[www.nafjobs.org](http://www.nafjobs.org)

### **Air Force Association Scholarships**

<http://www.afa.org/aef/aid/scholars.asp>

## ► "The future is now"

During recent visits to Air Force bases across the nation, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James A. Roy discussed issues ranging from AEF Next to resiliency to developing 21st century Airmen. Air Force leaders must ensure future enlisted leaders are skilled in things like leadership and communication – the Institutional Competencies that are essential to any career, Roy said.

"The future is now," he said.

Roy added that there are plans to reduce the average 10-year gap between Airman Leadership School and the NCO Academy.

"What we have found over the past few years is there's a huge gap in our enlisted professional military education," he said. "That time frame is very important for Airmen because that's the time in which they find themselves supervising others."

These issues led to the development of the evolution of enlisted professional military education, "EPME Next." The goal of the program is to provide development at an earlier stage in an Airman's career to better meet the Air Force mission requirements of the future, he said.

He also stressed the important roles NCOs and senior NCOs play in shaping junior enlisted Airmen into future leaders, and said training is only one piece of that responsibility. One major issue on which leaders must focus is face-to-face communication. Airmen at all levels too often rely on electronic devices instead of talking face-to-face and engaging in analog communication with people.

"Our Airmen today are the most highly skilled, trained, equipped and educated we have ever had in Air Force history," he said.

"We just have to understand that nothing can replace face-to-face interaction when it comes to supervising Airmen," he said. "Not now, and not in the future. ... Supervisors ought to be engaged with the Airmen they supervise and know their stories."

On resiliency Roy said it's all about knowing how to work through a very difficult situation, growing through it and using the experience to help others. The end-goal is for Airmen and their families to have the ability to work through difficult situations.

"The Air Force has to spend a lot of time and effort on this because people matter -- and not just Airmen and service members -- but their families as well," the chief said. "Families have to be resilient; we have to keep providing those resources so they can be."

Roy encouraged Airmen to maintain a resilient attitude, not only as Airmen but at home with family members. He said he believes equipping Airmen with the right coping skills could prevent suicide.

"We need to work through this," he said. "Suicide is a problem because human life matters; that's why we are so concerned about it. Airmen matter to us, their families matter to us and their lives certainly matter to their families."

As part of developing resilient Airmen, the Air Force has made some changes to the air expeditionary force system. "AEF Next" will not change the entire system, but it will refine the current way the Air Force does deployments, Roy said. It will give Airmen the ability to communicate within the joint community and the ability to deploy with leaders and teams with whom they have trained.

No matter what the future holds for the Air Force, Roy said he has faith that Airmen will continue to adhere to the service's core values

"It's not about just knowing the core values, it's about living them," he said. "Our joint and coalition partners rely on us to give them the absolute best, and our Airmen are up to those challenges because we are a professional force and the best Air Force in the world."

## ► THIS WEEK IN AIR FORCE HISTORY

**August 9, 1945** - The second atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki, Japan by B-29 "Bockscar."

**August 10, 1960** - The first operationally configured Titan I launched successfully at Cape Canaveral, Fla.

**August 11, 1906** - Mrs. C. J. S. Miller became the first woman in the U.S. to fly as an airship passenger. Her husband, Maj. Miller of Franklin, Pa., owned the 40-horsepower, 22,500-cubic foot airship.

**August 12, 1977** - The Space Shuttle Enterprise, a test vehicle designed to operate in the atmosphere, completed its first launch, descent, and landing from the back of a Boeing 747 at 22,800 feet above Edwards AFB.

**August 13, 1952** - Air Force officials ordered the Boeing B-52 Stratofortress, an eight-jet heavy bomber, into full-scale production.

**August 14, 1992** - As part of operation Provide Relief, U.S. airlifters began the move of more than 23,000 tons of food, water, medicine, and other relief supplies in 3,000 missions to Somalia. The supplies helped thousands of starving refugees, who suffered from a prolonged drought and civil war. The airlifters flew over 3,100 missions to deliver 34,400 tons of cargo in the operation. These missions lasted until Feb. 28, 1993.

**August 15, 1945** - After the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with atomic bombs, the Japanese government announced its intention to surrender "unconditionally," subject to an Allied agreement to maintain the monarchy. Washington declared a cease-fire immediately.

For more information on Air Force heritage, visit <http://www.airforcehistory.af.mil>.

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## ► Vision safety

*Vision safety is important, not just for when we use our vision, but how? Granted, from the moment we wake up each morning until we call it a day in the evening, our vision is being employed 100 percent of the time to read, to judge distance, to recognize others—to see! So, healthy, protected vision isn't an option. It's an imperative.*

*The Dangerous Days of Summer serve as a good reminder to take care of our eyes, which we so often take for granted. Here's how:*

1. *Choose protective eyewear to fit your sport. Some sports—racket sports, baseball, basketball, lacrosse and field hockey—have documented standards established by the American Standards of Testing & Materials (ASTM Standard F803). Sports eyewear should have, at a minimum, 3-mm polycarbonate lenses. They are the thinnest, lightest and most impact-resistant. They are also shatter-resistant and the filter 100 percent of UV light, helping to prevent radiation eye injuries.*

2. *Check with the American Academy of Ophthalmology ([aao.org](http://aao.org)) to learn how specific sports call for a particular structure of eye protection. For example, there's a difference between a football player's helmet with eye protection and that of a hockey goalie. The eye protection may be similar, but the structure of the device enabling the player to wear the protective eyewear is different.*

3. *Hobbies and Fix-up projects need good eyewear, too. Create a safe work environment for your painting, welding or woodworking project. Wear the proper eye and face protection. American National Standard Institute (ANSI) Z87 sets the universally accepted levels for eye protection based on the hazards at the site.*

4. *Whether it's hobbies, work or sports, make sure the eye protection fits the requirement. And make sure that it is in good condition and stays put, once you set it in place.*

5. *Shake it off. Brush, shake or vacuum debris, dust and other particles from hardhats, forehead, hair and the top of the eye protection before removing the protection. And don't rub eyes with dirty hands.*

6. *Follow the 20-20-20 rule when using the computer. According to AAO, we blink about 18 times a minute, except when we use the computer. So whether trying to get that project finished before taking off for a few days or spending time on the computer sending around pictures of your summer getaway, every 20 minutes look at an object 20 feet away for 20 seconds. It will ease eye strain.*

7. *Sun damage to your eyes isn't just a summer thing. The sun damage to eyes is a year-round threat, so it's important to purchase sunglasses from a source you can trust. Buy only sunglasses proven to block 100 percent of ultraviolet (UV) rays. Cataracts and macular degeneration can be caused or exacerbated by the sun, although there are many causes.*

**Bonus tip:** Many eyewear retail chains offer, two-for-one, back-to-school savings at this time of year, that might be right for you.