

BAGRAM NEWS EXPRESS

START RIGHT, FINISH STRONG | VOL. 4 ISSUE 6, FEBRUARY 05, 2010

SecAF: Importance of joint mission can't be stressed enough in Afghanistan



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan--Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley tours one of the 455th Expeditionary Aerial Port Squadron cargo storage areas with Master Sgt. Alvin Dela Cruz, 455th EAPS, Chief Master Sgt. William Jackson, 455th EAPS, chief enlisted manager and Brig. Gen. Steven Kwast, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing commander, on Bagram Airfield, Feb. 2, 2010. Secretary Donley was in Afghanistan to meet with host nation counterparts and to visit the troops. (U.S. Air Force photo by/ Tech. Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross)

**By: Staff Sgt. Richard Williams
455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs**

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley spent time at Bagram Airfield, Feb. 1-2, 2010, as part of a week-long tour through the United States Central Command area of responsibility.

“One of the primary reasons for the trip was to monitor our efforts in training the Afghanistan National Army Air Corps,” said Secretary Donley. “Part of the U.S. mission here is to train the Afghan forces to take responsibility for their own country, and it is a

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challenge, but they are coming on strong. We have some specialized training teams here who are doing an outstanding job and we are also sending some of the Afghan forces state-side [for training].”

The visit was his third in the last 18 months and it gave Secretary Donley, as he phrased it, “A chance for me to get out and reconnect with the operational side of the area of operations and get a real time site picture as to what is happening here.”

At an open forum with 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Airmen, Secretary Donley fielded questions on a variety of topics to include one of the wing’s primary missions – supporting the warfighter.

“The importance of the joint mission cannot be stressed enough if we hope to achieve the overall success of our mission in Afghanistan,” said Secretary Donley.

The secretary said Air Force capabilities are a part of that “with the success of our MC-12 intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft, along with our airlift capabilities and close air support.”



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan--Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley tours a 455th Expeditionary Aerial Port Squadron cargo area with Lt. Col. Daniel Krall, 455th EAPS commander, Feb. 2, 2010. Secretary Donley was in the area to meet with host nation counterparts and to visit the troops. (U.S. Air Force photo by/ Tech. Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross)

During his visit, the secretary was able to meet with the members of Combined Joint Task Force-82 as well as Airmen from the 455th AEW to include the 4th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron, who fly the MC-12 aircraft. The secretary acknowledged the rapid impact this program has had.

“It is a really new capability that our Air Force has employed in the last year that went from no capability, no funding and no manpower to the first operational aircraft in the AOR in less than nine months,” he noted. “That is a testament to our ISR capabilities and the importance of the support we provide the combatant commanders.”

That support does not come without a cost, Secretary Donley acknowledged in responding to a question about current deployment rates, and noted that the operations tempo is not likely to lessen in the near future.

“With the Air Force’s commitment to the joint mission comes the responsibility of filling the requirements as we are able. It is all dependent on what your job is and how deep the Air Force is in your capability and what the joint requirement the joint team needs at that



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan--Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley is briefed by U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Josh Frizzell, 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, on Bagram Airfield entry control point procedures during a visit, Feb. 2, 2010. (U.S. Air Force photo by/ Tech. Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross)

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SecAF, cont.

particular time, kind of like an ebb and flow,” he explained. “We know that some careers are stressed and we are trying to take steps to alleviate that stress.”

“We are also focusing on the Year of the Air Force Family program,” he added, “and are trying to ensure that with the operations tempo being what it is, the

families are receiving the support needed to maintain matters at home while our Airmen are deployed.”

The secretary voiced his appreciation for their service and sacrifice in performing duties for the nation.

“The bottom line is that the most important part of our Air Force is the people,” Secretary Donley said. “The missions that you accomplish every day are essential to the long term success in Afghanistan, and I thank you for your commitment.”



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan--Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley visits with U.S. Army Spc. Eric Morales, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, deployed from Ft. Carson, Colo. who's a patient at the Craig Joint Theater Hospital here, on Bagram Airfield, Feb. 2, 2010. Secretary Donley was in Afghanistan to meet with host nation counterparts and to visit the troops. (U.S. Air Force photo by/ Tech. Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross)



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A tale of two brothers

By: Staff Sgt. Richard Williams
455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—For most people, deployment is a time to miss their family. Servicemembers pack their bags, get their affairs in order and finally that last word is uttered, “Goodbye.” A family is left behind.

As the deployment goes on, servicemembers keep in contact through every avenue at their disposal, longing for the moment when they get to step off the airplane to that joyful, sometimes tearful, reunion.

The reunion came not at the end of the deployment, but in the beginning for two brothers, one serving in the U.S. Army and one serving in the U.S. Air Force, both happy to be able to spend time together in Afghanistan.

U.S. Army Spc. Adam Hays and his younger brother U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Samuel Hays were overjoyed when they received the news of a potential rendezvous at Bagram Airfield.

“Initially my brother said to me jokingly, ‘Oh man, I thought I was going to have a good time on my deployment’, when I first told him where I was going,” said Airman Hays, a 494th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron, aircrew flight equipment technician.

“We were both pretty excited when we found out that we would be here together,” recalled Specialist Hays, a cook deployed from the 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, Hunter Army Airfield, Ga. “I knew I was supposed to deploy to Afghanistan but I wasn’t sure where. When I talked to my brother, he told me he would be at Bagram in January 2010, and I told him, ‘Yeah, that sounds familiar.’ I learned that I would be here as well and when we told our family, they were really excited that we would get the opportunity to spend time together.”

Airman Hays said that his mother was relieved to not only know that his older brother was going to be there to watch out for him but that they would be able to take care of each other.

“I hadn’t seen my brother in a little over two years before we got here,” said Airman Hays. “It is difficult because I am stationed in Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England and Adam is stationed in Georgia and we haven’t been able to make the commute to see each other.”

The brothers have not been able to coordinate any leave time to their hometown of Franklin, Tenn. since they joined the military, said Airman Hays, and with more than two years of time apart, they had plenty to talk about and some catching up to do.

Both brothers say that it is difficult to find time together because they are on different shifts, but that



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—(Above) U.S. Army Spc. Adam Hays, 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, cook, deployed from Hunter Army Airfield, Ga., prepares culinary delights at a dining facility on Bagram Airfield, Jan. 24, 2010. (U.S. Air Force photo by/ Staff Sgt. Richard Williams) (Below) U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Samuel Hays, 494th Expeditionary Fighter, aircrew flight equipment technician, inspects a pair of pilot’s night vision goggles on Bagram Airfield, Jan. 24, 2010. Spc. Adam and Airman 1st Class Samuel Hays are brothers and natives of Franklin, Tenn. (Screen Shot Courtesy American Forces Network)



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Brothers, cont.

doesn't deter them from getting as much family time as they can and competing in some of the same activities as when they were growing up to include basketball.

Specialist Hays said, "My brother was always more of an athlete than I was growing up. I gave it my best, but in the end my team lost to his."

"I may be the better athlete, but my brother is an amazing guitar player, and sometimes we will get together and he'll play," said Airman Hays.

Airman Hays said that there has been friendly rivalry between the two in the past, but the rivalry was common growing up in a family of 15 children.

"We used to wrestle and play around and things like that because we are family and that is kind of what we did," he said.

The rivalry even comes out when the two talk about their separate career paths, but most of the time Airman Hays says, "We pick a little about being in the

Army verses being in the Air Force but it never gets too brutal."

One of the nice things, Airman Hays points out, is getting together to contact family. "We try to get together every once in a while to video teleconference with our friends and family stateside and that makes communication with everybody a lot easier."

Being here together, they both understand that the time will not last, and they must enjoy it.

"My brother got here before me and he will be the last one to leave," Airman Hays, who is on a four-month deployment, points out. "I am on my second deployment; I went to Iraq last year, but when it's all said and done, Adam, who is on a 12-month rotation will still have more deployment time than me."

Specialist and Airman Hays find themselves in a unique, fortunate situation that most servicemembers could only hope for and the two brothers are grateful.

"It's one thing to be deployed with a friend; it is another thing to be deployed with my family," said Airman Hays. "and I am really thankful for that."



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—U.S. Army Spc. Adam Hays and his brother, U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Samuel, spend time together at the base exchange on Bagram Airfield, Jan. 24, 2010. Specialist Hays is deployed from the 603rd Aviation Support Battalion, Hunter Army Airfield, Ga. Airman Hays is deployed from Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England. (Screen shot courtesy American Forces Network)



455th AEW Warrior of the Week

Senior Airman Katie Hinson, 455th Expeditionary Medical Group
Emergency Department



U.S. Air Force photo by/ Tech. Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross

Senior Airman Katie Hinson provides the full spectrum of emergency medical treatment for U.S. service-members, coalition forces, civilian contractors, Afghan National Army/Police and local nationals. She is involved in caring for patients with injuries ranging from minor lacerations to major life-threatening traumas.

She helps receive patients from medical evacuation missions and provides stabilization in preparation for surgical procedures or transfer to the Intensive Care Unit and Ward. She also assists with the treatment of various medical complaints to include respiratory illnesses and chest pain.

In addition, Airman Hinson has stepped up to work beyond her primary duties by taking on the vital responsibility of Flight Infection Control Monitor. In this role, she oversees proper adherence to the infection control standards, conducts monthly inspections and briefings to ensure the safety of patients and 18 staff members.

"I am honored to be named as this week's warrior," said Airman Hinson. "We get our patients right off the grid. After they're field treated, we are the first stop for the injured."

Her leadership notes Airman Hinson exemplifies excellence in all she does. She is committed to performing her job to the best of her ability, and is extremely eager to learn new skills. She continually goes above and beyond in providing care for every patient she encounters.

She is a superb medic and a valuable asset to the Emergency Department and Craig Joint Theater Hospital. Her efforts are a key factor in protecting the health of personnel at Bagram and ensuring the delivery of life-saving care to wounded warriors.



Commentary: A positive attitude, a powerful tool

By: Master Sgt. Harold Firthsen
455th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, First Sergeant

Preparing for this deployment, I had several check-lists to follow to ensure I arrived on station ready and capable of performing the mission. My unit deployment manager aggressively reviewed my readiness; he even came over to my house to itemize the content of all my bags. As thorough as the process prepared me, one item was omitted from the list: a Positive Attitude.

Positive attitudes are free of charge and reap huge dividends. Some days we need to work harder at having a positive attitude than others, but I'm a firm believer that positive attitudes in the work place infect those around you and build unity, quell confrontations, and combat complacencies.

Positive attitudes can build unity with very little effort. Everyone knows or knows of an Airman who always comes to work with a smile. This particular individual seems to find the bright side of every situation. Their joyous attitude and cheery disposition makes me think of someone hyped up on grandma love. It's borderline annoying!

However, when these individuals arrive people relax and start communicating more clearly. The work place seems a little warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer. Then instantaneously whatever task you're working on appears to be more important and before you know it, a wingman is at your side helping you out. Suddenly there is a team instead of multiple individuals.

This amazing transformation results in a cohesive unit producing at unparalleled levels. When your production is up, regardless of your Air Force Specialty Code, then your Airmen are happy, your customers are happy, and your leadership is happy.

On a different front, positive attitudes quell confrontations. Ever notice a tense situation where two Airmen are locked in a heated argument over an issue. The issue itself probably isn't earth shattering, but the argument is a result of too many hours at work, being too far from home, and too little sleep. Sounds like a possible day in Bagram!

Then walks in Mr. Optimistic sporting his positive attitude and at first he is ignored as if he wasn't even there. But after a short while of his incessant ability to point out the rights as opposed to the wrongs of the

current situation, the two Airmen's brows unfurl and they begin to hear what each other is really trying to say. Soon the emotions subside and professionalism is restored. Then, voila, the issue is not an issue but an opportunity for success. The two succeed in growing as individuals; they solve the dilemma, and find it hard to argue anymore because of a little positive attitude interjection.

Positive attitudes combat complacencies and in return keep Airmen safe. With a short walk to the base exchange complex, we can easily forget we are in a hostile environment. Bagram is a place where complacency can kill Airmen. If we are not careful, we can find ourselves quickly spiraling into a work routine where we drown in repetition day after day for four, six or twelve months.

That is when we long for our friend, Airman Uppity. His positive attitude on the job livens up the work place. His humor and glowing remarks somehow chisel away the mundane and monotonous and replace them with excitement and intrigue. This in turn reshapes our outlook on the moment so instead of getting lost in the humdrum of business we are actually seeking ways to improve how we operate.

Then, just like dominos, your improvement affects the next person's work center, which enhances the mission and before you know it your tour is over and the job is well done.

Whether you are starting right or finishing strong, make a decision right now that you're going to strive to maintain a positive attitude. Some days will be harder than others, but if we are committed wingman working together, then someone is sure to be on point at all times.

Be the positive attitude everywhere you go and build unity, quell confrontation, and combat complacency to make Bagram Airfield a better place for all Airmen.



455th EAMXS keeping them flying



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan--(Left) U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Kelly Kollmar, 455th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, repairs an F-15E engine on Bagram Airfield Jan. 23, 2010. Kollmar is deployed from Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England, and is from Buffalo, N.Y. (Above Right) U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Victoria Bader, 455th EAMXS, checks an F-15E for cracks. Bader is deployed from Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England, and is from Atoka, Tenn. (Below) U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. William Hopson, 455th EAMXS, repairs the hydraulics on an F-15E. Hopson is deployed from Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England, and is from Baltimore, Md.



455th AEW Legal Office tax filing service now available

Courtesy of 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Legal Office

Taxes may be the last thing on your mind while serving in a deployed environment and, fortunately, the IRS understands. The requirement to file and pay taxes by April 15 is automatically extended for military personnel serving in a combat zone. You have up to 180 days from the date you leave the combat zone to file your taxes. For additional details on this extension, visit the IRS website at

<http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=101265,00.html>.

But why wait for that refund? The 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Legal Office is now offering free income tax preparation and electronic filing for military members by appointment. If you decide to file here at Bagram Airfield, simply bring the following to your tax appointment:

- Social Security numbers and birthdates for you, your spouse, and dependents, if applicable
- Your wage and earnings statements (W2s, available on the My Pay website)
- Interest, mortgage, and capital gains statements (1098 and 1099 forms)
- Bank account and routing numbers for direct deposit (a copy of a check will do)
- Proof of day care expenses, with provider's tax identification or social security number
- Other documents showing student loan interest, educational expenses, etc.

Due to limited resources, the Legal Office can only provide services for basic income tax returns. If you are single with no dependents, this service is made for you. If you own rental property and have a small business on the side, you may need to take advantage of that extension and see a tax professional when you return home.



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Justin Clutter, 455th Expeditionary Security Forces, prepares his federal income tax return assisted by U.S. Air Force Maj. Scott Boehne, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Staff Judge Advocate, at Bagram Airfield, Feb. 4, 2010. Tax assistance is open to all military personnel at Bagram. (U.S. Air Force photo by/ Staff Sgt. Richard Williams)

Free “do it yourself” federal tax preparation and e-filing are also available through Military One Source, www.militaryonesource.com.

To make an appointment or for more information, contact the Base Legal Office at 431-3251. The Legal Office is now located on the second floor of the old Russian Tower.



455th Air Expeditionary Wing: A brief history

By: Tech. Sgt. Scott Gaitley
455th Air Expeditionary Wing Historian

The 455th Air Expeditionary Wing originated its proud history during World War II, when it was activated on June 1, 1943, entitled 455th Bombardment Group (Heavy), and stationed at Alamogordo Army Air Field, N.M.

As the group made preparations for air operations against the Axis Powers, they first relocated to Kearn Army Air Base, Utah, followed by Langley Field, Va. until Dec. 13, 1943, when the flight echelon began its transition to Tunisia, North Africa in January 1944. Here the group began training operations until Feb. 1, when it joined up with its ground personnel.

On Jan. 14, 1944, the ground echelon arriving from the United States, established its base at San Giovanni, Italy where it remained until Sept. 9, 1945.

While serving in the Mediterranean Theatre, the 455th served under the Fifteenth Air Force from February 1944, to April 1945. They engaged primarily in bombardment of strategic targets such as factories, marshalling yards, oil refineries, storage areas, harbors, and airdromes in Italy, France, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Austria, and the Balkans.

The 455th received a Distinguished Unit Citation for a mission on April 2, 1944, when the group contributed to Fifteenth Air Force's campaign against enemy industry by attacking a ball-bearing plant at Steyr, Austria. Although meeting severe fighter opposition and losing several of its bombers on June 26, 1944, the group proceeded to attack an oil refinery at Moosbierbaum, Austria, receiving a second DUC for this performance.

In addition to strategic missions in the Balkans, the group bombed troop concentrations, bridges, marshalling yards, and airdromes during the fall of 1944, in attempt to hamper the enemy's withdrawal from the region.

The 455th Bombardment Group also supported ground forces at Anzio and Cassino in March 1944; knocked out gun positions in preparation for the invasion of southern France Operation Dragoon in August 1944, and assisted the final Allied drive through Italy in April 1945 by hitting such targets as bridges, gun positions, and troop concentrations.

At the end of World War II, the 455th was inactivated in Italy on Sept. 9, 1945. They served as a Reserve training unit, from March 1947 to June 1949.

The unit was activated as a fighter group in July 1956, but was only in the process of manning when inactivated on July 1, 1957. Then, it was consolidated on Jan. 31, 1984, with the 455th Fighter-Bomber Wing, which was established on March 23, 1953.

It was renamed the 455th Strategic Missile Wing, which they prepared for operational capability with intercontinental ballistic missiles, November 1962 through March 1964. The first missile arrived on Sept. 6, 1963, and was emplaced three days later. The 150th missile was emplaced in its silo on Feb. 26, 1964, and by late March 1964, the wing became combat ready.

The 455th maintained combat readiness until replaced by the 91st Strategic Missile Wing in June 1968. It was returned to active duty as the 455th Air Expeditionary Group, and converted to provisional status, on Dec. 4, 2001, then redesignated as the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing, on July 30, 2002, and assigned to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Throughout its history, the 455th has received a number of campaign streamers from WWII such as: Air Offensive, Europe; Naples-Foggia; Anzio; Rome-Arno; Normandy; Northern France; Southern France; North Apennines; Rhineland; Central Europe; Po Valley; Air Combat, Euro-African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal.

The units decorations include: two Distinguished Unit Citations: April 2, 1944 and June 26, 1944. Two Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with "V" devices for valor, have been earned during Nov. 1, 2001 to Sept. 15, 2002 and again Sept. 16, 2002 to Sept. 15, 2003. A total of four Meritorious Unit Awards have been earned for the periods: Sept. 16 to Sept. 30 2004; Oct. 1, 2004 to Sept. 30, 2005; Oct. 1, 2005 to Sept. 1, 2006; and Oct. 1, 2006 to Sept. 30, 2007.



NEWS BRIEFS

IMMUNIZATIONS: Are your immunizations up to date? Active-duty members are required to stay current on all immunizations during their deployment. Report to your nearest medical treatment facility to check your status and get vaccinated. For questions, contact Task Force Medical Public Health, 431-4426.

NEWCOMERS INPROCESSING: All Air Force members are required to inprocess with PERSCO. The inprocessing will start your combat pay entitlements. If you have been in the area of responsibility for at least 30 days and you are not receiving combat pay, visit Finance in the crow's nest tower on Camp Cunningham. If you know for a fact that you did not inprocess with PERSCO, visit PERSCO located in Bldg. 700 near the passenger terminal. Call 431-2070/4409 for more information.

COMBAT O: Combat Orientation is every Friday at 0130Z/0600L at the MWR Clamshell. Uniform is Air Force PT uniform for fitness assessment. This is a mandatory briefing for all Air Force personnel assigned to Bagram Airfield. Accountability is tracked and will be forwarded to the first sergeants.

NEW BAF MAIL INSTRUCTIONS: BAF residents, please ensure individuals sending mail have your most current contact information. This alleviates any delays in you receiving your mail. Below is the current contact information required for individuals to receive mail.

NAME - (Eg. Jane Doe; no rank)
UNIT - (Eg. 455 ECS/SCXK)
Bagram Airfield or BAF
APO AE 09354



455th AEW Safety tip of the week

The wear of a reflective belt (any color but pink) is mandatory from dusk until dawn while in duty uniform. When worn, the reflective belt will be positioned around the waist, not diagonally across the shoulder, EXCEPT when operating an all terrain vehicle. Personnel who do not have a reflective belt or reflective vest shall get one immediately, and will carry an operational flashlight (turned on) during hours of darkness or reduced visibility until they have the required reflective gear. Reflective gear will not be worn during tactical operations. If you have questions, please contact the Safety Office at 431-4743.

Did You Know:

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Every 150 seconds, someone is
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Always take a Wingman

If you are interested in becoming a
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DSN: 318-431-4060
455aew.sarc@bgab.afcent.af.mil



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