

Commander's Call Topics



April 26, 2012

"We have had a long-standing presence in the Asia-Pacific region. Our bases in Alaska, Hawaii and Guam, as well as our forward presence here in Japan and in the Republic of Korea, are critical to protecting our U.S. territories and interests and promoting [stability and security in the Asia-Pacific region](#)." -- Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley during a visit to Yokota Air Base, Japan.

► CURRENT ISSUES

[CSAF emphasizes readiness, teamwork at Kandahar](#)

The men and women of the 451st Air Expeditionary Wing and Kandahar Airfield welcomed Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz to Southern Afghanistan April 24.

[Incirlik identified Airman killed in accident](#)

Airman First Class Floyd Glover, 21, died at approximately 1 p.m. April 22 following an on-base motor-vehicle incident at Incirlik Air Base, Turkey.

[SecAF discusses force structure, 35 FW contributions during Misawa visit](#)

Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley met with Airmen and toured several 35th Fighter Wing units April 23 during a trip to Misawa Air Base.

► PERSONNEL ISSUES

[Officials implement flexibilities for third round of VERA/VSIP](#)

As the Air Force continues a civilian workforce restructure through voluntary retirement and separation initiatives, officials have instituted new flexibilities to help minimize the impact of downsizing and workforce shaping.

[Missing personnel records impact more than promotions](#)

When Senior Master Sgt. Randy Scanlan wasn't promoted to his current rank the first time his records met the board, he was a little confused.

[AF officials plan for scheduled downtime to upgrade MilPDS](#)

The Air Force Personnel Operations Agency here is upgrading and transferring the Military Personnel Data System to the Defense Information Systems Agency's Defense Enterprise Computing Center later this year.

[Air Force officials clarify Bronze Star approval process](#)

Recent heightened interest in the Bronze Star Medal has led Air Force Central Command and Air Force Personnel Center leaders to further explain the criteria and approval process for its recipients.

► FAMILY, HEALTH AND SAFETY

[VA chief visits joint base clinic, discusses progress](#)

The Secretary for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, retired Army Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, along with Rep. Jon Runyan, visited the Community Based Outpatient Clinic April 13 here.

► TECHNOLOGY

[ISR chief outlines future programs](#)

While visiting deployed Airmen April 15-18, Brig. Gen. John Horner addressed the future of intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance mission programs.

► 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

www.nafjobs.org

Air Force Association Scholarships

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

► 'FLY-BY-NIGHT' SCHOOLS TARGETING SERVICE MEMBERS

Airmen, both active duty and veterans, now have tools to protect themselves against unscrupulous schools and websites that target service members with promises of educational benefits that never materialize.

Lawmakers and Pentagon officials are looking at ways to eliminate aggressive recruiting by for-profit schools whose main mission is to profit from the GI Bill and Tuition Assistance Program, and deplete the lifetime personal benefit awarded each serviceman.

Veterans and active duty service members, who have access to tuition assistance through the Montgomery GI Bill and the Tuition Assistance Plan, are being especially targeted, according to the lawmakers. They note that some of the colleges promoted by these less-than-scrupulous companies offer little support for students after enrollment and award “degrees” that have little value in the job market.

Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., Chairman of the Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee, with committee members Sens. Daniel Akaka, D-Hawaii, and Mark Begich, D-Alaska, introduced the *GI Bill Consumer Awareness Act of 2012* in March.

If passed, the Bill will give service members and veterans access to information to help them make informed decisions about the schools and courses of interest to them. This bill would also require that the Veterans Administration and the Department of Defense develop a joint policy to curb aggressive recruiting and misleading marketing aimed at service members and veterans using the GI Bill and Tuition Assistance Plan, according to [Senator Murray’s Website](#).

Until new laws are written, the Air Force and Veterans Affairs have tools to help Service members choose a safe education path: The Air Force Virtual Education Center offers a [school search](#). The web page contains links to each school, which identifies whether they are registered with the [Associate to Baccalaureate Cooperative](#) program, or the [General Education Mobile](#) program, two Air Force-centric programs.

The Institute of Education Sciences, the research arm of the U.S. Department of Education, also offers a [school search option](#). By law, the IES’s activities must be free of partisan political influence.

For veterans, VA blogger Alex Horton offers [Six Ways to Maximize Your Education Benefits](#).

A good rule of thumb: If it appears to be a military website but has an email address ending in “.com,” be wary—very wary—of what it has to offer.

► THIS WEEK IN AIR FORCE HISTORY

April 26, 1945 - Eighth Air Force fighters raided over 40 Luftwaffe installations in Germany and Czechoslovakia and destroyed a record 747 German fighters in one day.

April 27, 1995 - AFSPACE declared its GPS satellites fully operational. This system provided accurate geographical coordinates.

April 28, 1958 - An inflight explosion on a B-47 caused the pilot and navigator to eject. While attempting to egress, the copilot, 1st Lt. James E. Obenauf, found the remaining crewman unconscious and unable to escape, so he stayed on the crippled, burning aircraft. From his backseat position, he flew the B-47 to a safe landing at Dyess AFB. He later received the Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions.

April 29, 1918 – [Lt. Edward V. Rickenbacker](#), who became the leading American ace of World War I, downed his first aircraft.

April 30, 1996 - The Air Force revealed the [Tacit Blue](#) aircraft that was secretly used until 1985 to test stealth technology. With its 56-foot wingspan, Tacit Blue furnished the technology used to produce the B-2 Spirit bomber.

May 1, 1943 - A bomber, with Sgt [Maynard H. Smith](#) as gunner, came under intense enemy fire while returning from a mission to enemy-occupied Europe. Smith, on his first mission, elected to fight a fire, administer first aid, man the waist guns, and fight intense flames alternately. For his actions, Smith received the Medal of Honor.

May 2, 1999 - Serbian ground forces shot down an F-16 over Yugoslavia during Operation Allied Force. It was the second and last U.S. aircraft lost in the operation. An MH-60 helicopter crew rescued the pilot.

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

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