

# Heartland WARRIOR

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February 2013



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# Heartland WARRIOR

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U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

## On the cover...

Tech. Sgt. Bradley Green, left, and Senior Airman Frederick Beck, both with the 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, use a new E-Tool Lite here Feb. 5. Grissom is one of six test bases authorized to use the tablets with electronic reading capability that allows for easy navigation through more than 65,000 technical orders used in aircraft maintenance.

# AMC commander visits base



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

Gen. Paul Selva, Air Mobility Command commander, talks with Grissom Airmen during a visit to the base Feb. 5. Selva said he was proud of Grissom's global impact and that the base has a good reputation throughout the Air Force.

## By Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner Public Affairs staff

Grissom's local service and global impact is something a senior Air Force general said he was extremely proud of during a recent visit to the Hoosier base.

Gen. Paul Selva, Air Mobility Command commander, visited Grissom Feb. 5 as he tours AMC-gained Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard units.

"You put the 'global' in global vigilance, reach and power," said Selva during a town hall meeting with Airmen here. "You ought to be very proud about what you do because I certainly am, and I'm not bashful about boasting about it.

"Your unit has a huge reputation, and that's a good thing," the general continued. "People respect what you do and what you bring to the fight."

During his visit, Selva toured Grissom's Airman and Family Readiness Center, a KC-135R Stratotanker and the 434th Air Refueling Wing command post where he received a detailed mission briefing.

He also talked about key areas he is focused on which include mission accomplishment, Airmen care and training.

"There are three things that I spend a lot of times thinking about and the first one is get the mission done because, in the end, that's why we're here," the general explained. "You and your fellow Airmen in AMC do that every day and make it look easy, but it's not; it's complicated, it's hard work and it requires dedication and professionalism and without you the mission doesn't get done."

And while Airmen are key to mission success, taking care of those Airmen is vital to their success.

"Our mission is built on the foundation of every Airman giving 100 percent to that mission, which means you have to take care of making sure we do this from a caring and respectful workplace, that we all respect each other as Airmen, and that we all take care of each other as Airmen," Selva elaborated. "That means all of us have to be leaders, however old or

Please see 'AMC visit,' page 3

# James Cody appointed as top enlisted Airman

By Staff Sgt. David Salanitri  
*Air Force Public Affairs Agency*

JOINT BASE ANDREWS, Md. -- The Air Force appointed its 17th chief master sergeant of the Air Force during a transition and ceremony Jan. 24.

In his last official act before retiring, Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Roy relinquished the duties and responsibilities of the Air Force's highest enlisted leader to Chief Master Sgt. James Cody.

Looking across the airplane hangar, Cody addressed some of his main goals in his new position.

"We have to invest before we can reap rewards," said Cody, who was previously assigned as the command chief master sergeant of Air Education and Training Command. "We will continue to invest in the development of our Airmen in the most deliberate way possible, and we will ensure our force is ready to handle the challenges it will face in the future."

Cody said as the service's senior enlisted leader, his focus will be on helping Airmen be successful.

"We need to protect them by making sure they know how to deal with the stress that comes with military life," said Cody. "We will focus on strengthening relationships, taking care of one another, and holding each other more accountable for measuring up to the high standards we demand of every Airman."

Themes of innovation and critical thinking were reinforced throughout the ceremony with Cody calling upon Airmen to continue being efficient tacticians.

"As resources tighten, our nation will require more from each one of us. Airmen will meet that challenge through innovation as they always have," he said.

Though today's ceremony was a time to celebrate the retirement of Roy and the appointment Cody, leaders reminded the crowd that there's work to be done.

The Air Force's highest ranking uniformed Airman said he is ready to roll up his sleeves, alongside Chief and Mrs. Cody.

"Take a look around the hangar here," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Mark A. Welsh III. "This is your

Air Force. And all of us are now your Airmen. Lead us well."

During the ceremony, the Air Force debuted a new item for enlisted Airmen to be proud of -- the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force positional colors.

Today's ceremony contained great moments -- the transition of the service's 17th CMSAF and the unveiling of the positional colors. However, there was also a bittersweet moment as the Air Force said farewell to a great Airman.

Speaking to his character, one theme throughout Roy's farewell speech was relationship importance.

"Over the past few weeks I've spent a lot of time reflecting on my career," said Roy. "I've been thinking -- not about what we got accomplished, or what we didn't get accomplished -- but about relationships.

"Our 30 years in the Air Force allowed Ms. Paula and I to develop a lot of valuable relationships," he said. "We are thankful for each of these, and will continue to build on them as we move into the next chapter of our lives."

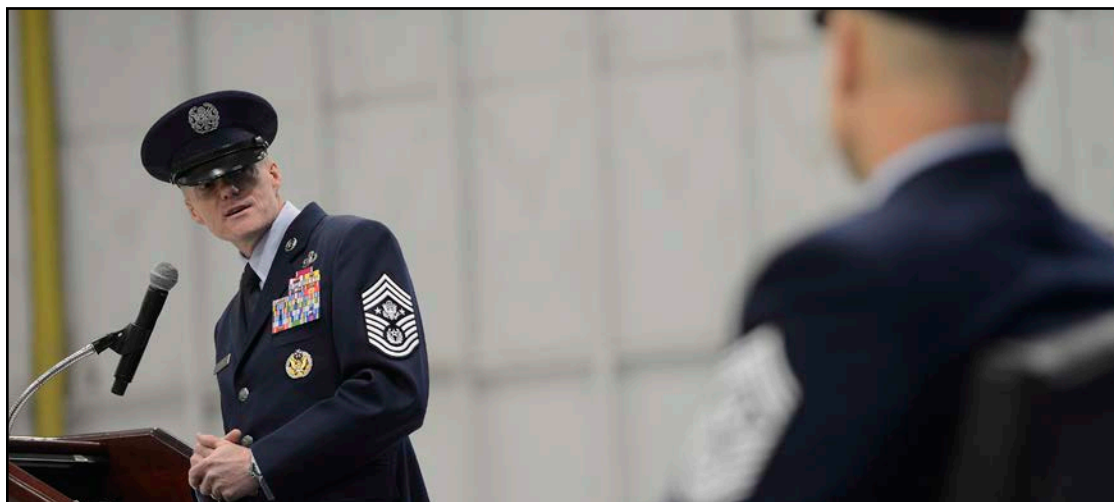
Roy's three and a half years as chief master sergeant of the Air Force was marked by building relationships with Airmen. A staunch advocate of face-to-face communication, Roy traveled about nine months out of each year to meet and interact with Airmen of all ranks.

Cody said he will continue that legacy.

"To ensure continued success, leaders at all levels must focus on our Airmen and their families," said Cody. "We look forward to getting out to the bases and meeting our Airmen, listening to their stories, understanding their challenges. And we're committing to you we will bring those back and work those issues hard here on the staff."

After closely working together the past six months, Roy and Welsh have bonded over a common denominator -- caring for Airmen.

"Chief Roy, there's just no way to properly say thank you for what you've given to our Air Force ... but thank you," said Welsh. "Take care of yourself 16, and wear the number proudly. You've earned it." (AFNS)



The newly appointed 17th Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Cody thanks a freshly retired Chief Master Sgt. of the Air Force James Roy for his years of friendship and guidance during a transition and retirement ceremony, Jan. 24, 2013, on Joint Base Andrews, Md. Cody said that he will continue to focus on investing in Airmen by training and preparing them to meet the challenges of the future.

# Walorski gets close look at Grissom

By Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner  
Public Affairs staff

As a key player in the nation's defense, as well as the local economy, there is a lot that goes on at Grissom, and one U.S. representative recently got a close-up look at the base and its mission.

U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski got such a behind-the-scenes view of Grissom as she toured the base and met Airmen and civil servants of the 434th Air Refueling Wing.

Walorski was recently elected to the U.S. House of Representatives by Indiana's 2nd District, where Grissom partially resides.

The congresswoman, who serves on the House Armed Services, Budget and Veterans' Affairs committees, said she visited the base to learn



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

**U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski gets a unique view of her district from Grissom's new \$7.4 million air traffic control tower during her recent visit to the Hoosier base.**

more about Grissom's key strategic value as well as the estimated \$149.5 million impact it has on Indiana's economy.

"Grissom Air Reserve Base plays an integral role in our nation's national security and is a significant contributor to the local economy," said Walorski. "As a member of the House Armed

Services Committee, it is critical that Hoosier servicemembers continue to have access to resources needed to protect our country."

During her visit, Walorski received mission briefings as well as visited Grissom's new \$7.4 million air traffic control tower, radar approach control facility and din-

ing facility, where she had lunch with Grissom leadership and several community leaders.

Members of the congresswoman's staff were also able to tour the Grissom Fire Department and learn more about its value to both the base and the surrounding community. That visit also allowed Grissom's new explosives ordnance disposal unit to showcase some of its state-of-the-art technology.

Although the visit was brief, the congresswoman said she left with a greater appreciation for how Grissom fits into the national defense strategy and offered her support.

"I want you all to know that I'm here to support you," she said, adding that she hopes to come back later this year to take part in an air refueling mission.

## AMC visit, from page 2

young we are or whether we wear a uniform or not.

"We all have to take responsibility for the quality of our workplace, which means we don't put up with prejudice, we don't put up with discrimination, and we don't put up with treating each other without respect," he added.

The third focus of the general was about making sure Airmen are trained to do the right things going forward.

"Training you to do things right, we're pretty good at, but we have to train you to do the right things," he said before discussing how upcoming budget cuts will force the Air Force to refocus on how and for what it trains its Airmen.

There will be a huge change in the amount of money available to complete an essential mission, so

the Air Force is going to have to reprioritize and get back to its roots, he added and asked all Airmen to help by submitting their ideas through their chain of command to help save money.

Despite the upcoming challenges with budgets, Selva said he remained convinced the Air Force will be even better in the end.

"We've got to navigate to the end of this challenge, and that's all it is, a challenge; It's not the end of the world, it's not even close," the general said. "We are and have been the best Air Force on the planet... and there has been nobody that's come anywhere close, and we don't intend to let that happen now.

"So, we've got to stay ahead of the competition, and that means if we have to get a little smaller and trim around the edges, then we're

going to do it," he concluded. "But, I will promise you, when we get out on the other side of this we will be the best Air Force on the planet because we can accept nothing else."

AMC's mission is to provide rapid, global mobility and sustainment for America's armed forces. The command also plays a crucial role in providing humanitarian support at home and around the world. AMC is made up of regular Air Force, AFR and ANG Airmen who provide aerial refueling, airlift, special air mission and aeromedical evacuation capabilities to the U.S. armed forces and allies.

The general was accompanied by Brig. Gen. Roy E. Uptegraff III, Air National Guard assistant to the AMC commander, and Chief Master Sgt. Richard Kaiser, AMC command chief.

# Bowen retires after 32-year Air Force career



*U.S. Air Force photos by Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner*

**Col. Betty Bowen, 434th Mission Support Group commander, thanks her husband, Bradford, for his support of her 32-year military career during her last commander's call here Jan. 6.**

**By Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner**  
*Public Affairs staff*

Mission support Airmen are those who serve behind the scenes, making sure operations, maintenance and other Airmen are taken care of so they can focus on completing the Air Force mission, which is "To fly, fight and win in air, space and cyberspace."

In a fitting tribute to a career dedicated to that service, Col. Betty Bowen, 434th Mission Support Group commander, was surrounded by family, friends and those who she served during her final commander's call Jan. 6. She officially retired on Jan. 31.

During that commander's call, Bowen thanked several people, including her husband Bradford and son Mark for the sacrifices they made to support her.

According to Bowen, her husband sacrificed his own military career and was never able to retire as he supported her, moving around the country each time she took a new assignment. To honor that sacrifice, the colonel presented her husband with a certificate of appreciation, a Military Spouse Medal and a military shadow box, something he would have received had he been able to retire.

During that same commander's call, Bowen recalled her entire career and many accomplishments, which she attributed to those with whom she served.

Bowen received her commission in 1980 through Officer Training School after graduating from West Chester University, Pa., with a Bachelor of Science degree in health and physical education and was assigned to the 3700th Personnel Resources Group, Lackland AFB, Texas.

In 1984, she transferred to the Air Force Reserve where she has supervised the mobilization and demobilization processing of over 4,700 reservists during Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

She has also coordinated logistical and security sup-

port for 15 President of the United States visits, and was hand-selected to orchestrate a solid base realignment and closure plan at General Mitchell Air Reserve Station, Wisc.

In her role as the 434th MSG, Bowen was responsible for supporting the mission of the largest KC-135R Stratotanker unit in the Air Force Reserve Command through a variety of functions including infrastructure, services, logistics, personnel, communications, contracting and security.

"The thing I'm most proud of is the teamwork we found here as people pulled together and became one big team instead of small little diverse areas within the support group," said Bowen, who came to the 434th MSG in 2008, shortly after the support group had not performed well during an operational readiness inspection.

"In 2005, there were nine marginals and five unsatisfactories during the ORI," she recalled. "We were still answering right ups when I got here."

But, Bowen didn't let that get her or her people down as she rallied the troops and focused on team building.

"I said, 'OK guys, we're going to rebuild,' and that's when people got energized and they saw how important their jobs really were," she recalled. "And, I think we really became a family when people started to realize how important they were within the wing."

Bowen's strategy proved itself in the 2010 ORI with every 434th MSG unit receiving a passing grade or higher.

"I think the thing I'll take away the most is the teamwork," she said. "We have twelve different entities and everybody was doing well in their specific areas, but we all really came together as the support group entity and used our amazing resources together."

Looking ahead, Bowen said she's excited for her future and the future of the 434th MSG.

"I'm excited for new adventures, and I know our people are going to continue doing amazing things here," she concluded.



**Squadron and deputy commanders of the 434th Mission Support Group present Col. Betty Bowen, 434th MSG commander, with a shadow box for her retirement.**



U.S. Air Force photos by Maj. Kelly Howard

**Tech. Sgt. Stephen Heidrich, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron avionics guidance control specialist, works on rewiring a fuel tank quantity system of a Grissom KC-135R Stratotanker here during the January unit training assembly.**

# CHASING SMOKE

## MAINTAINERS HAVE DIFFICULT, REWARDING JOB

**By Maj. Kelly Howard**  
*Public Affairs staff*

There are some jobs where nearly perfect test scores are celebrated, and then there are those jobs where an occasional failure leaves you “chasing smoke.”

The 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron had a busy unit training assembly in January with two major aircraft issues that stymied them with difficult to duplicate failures and had them tracking one tiny wire from tail to cockpit and rewiring from fuselage to wingtip.

“When you break out the ‘meg-

ger’ you know you have a serious problem,” said Master Sgt. Tommy Patton, 434th AMXS electrical and environmental system technician. “It just isn’t used that often because the problem is usually confined to a smaller area within arm’s reach.”

The “megger,” or megohmmeter, uses high voltage to test the insulation value of wires to ensure there aren’t any breaks along the length of the wire. In the case of aircraft 0363, that wire spanned the entire length of the Grissom KC-135R Stratotanker when the fuel dump actuator in the boom developed

intermittent failure issues.

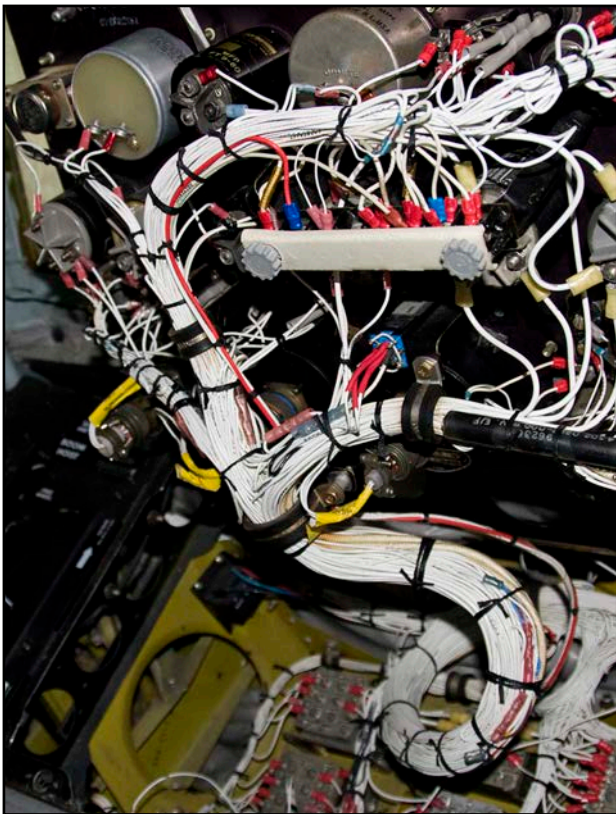
“Half the battle is duplicating a malfunction. That’s what we’re trying to do now but when it’s intermittent it’s like chasing smoke,” said Patton during the process of hunting down the problem. “We don’t want to spend a lot of time rewiring a section only to find out that wasn’t where the problem was located.

“One sharp, young troop, Senior Airman (Matt) Steele, actually caught a flicker on the meter and was able to narrow it down to the actual wire,” he added.

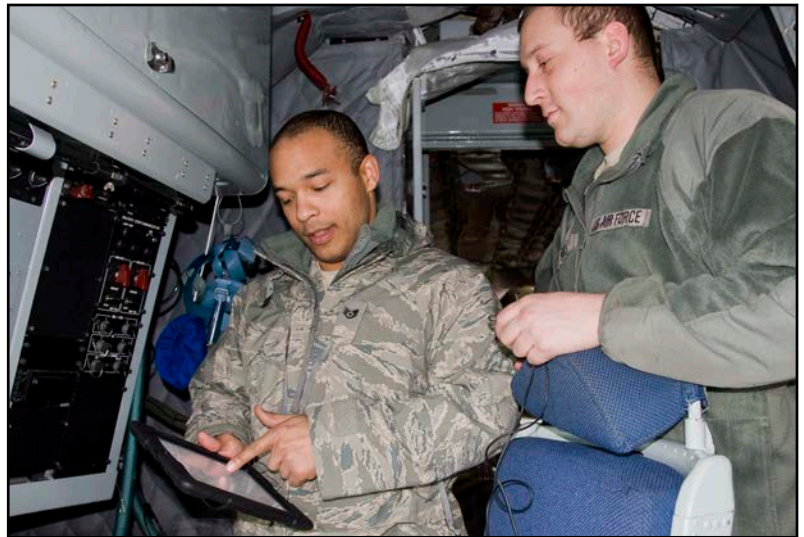
After determining which wire was the culprit, the maintainers had to then trace that exact wire, which was wrapped in a bundle of 20-plus wires, the length of the aircraft to the cockpit looking for rubs, pinched areas, burns or cuts along the way so it could be repaired.

After the repair, aircraft 0363 was re-entered into service and with its actuator functioning perfectly.

And while that crew was work-



**ABOVE:** A slew of wires in a KC-135 are revealed as maintainers of the 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron search for a wire causing intermittent failure in the fuel dump actuator of a refueling boom.



**RIGHT:** Staff Sgt Gregory Lee and Senior Airman Matthew Steele, both 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron electrical and environmental systems technicians, use a tablet device while tracking down a wire causing intermittent failure issues with a KC-135's the fuel dump actuator.

**RIGHT:** Senior Airman Matthew Steele, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron electrical and environmental systems technician, uses a megohmmeter to track down the source of intermittent failure issues with a KC-135's fuel dump actuator in the aircraft's refueling boom here recently. The megohmmeter uses high voltage to test the insulation value of wires to ensure there aren't any breaks along the length of the wire.



ing tail to nose, a crew in Dock 1 was working nose to tip rewiring a fuel tank quantity system of the right wing on aircraft 3530 as it had started having issues with fuel quantity readings in the wing showing higher than what was actually onboard.

Diagnosing such a problem and then correcting it is quite the undertaking, explained Master Sgt. Timothy Henneberry, 434th AMXS instruments and flight controls noncommissioned officer in charge.

"Unlike a lot of other airplanes, this is not a redundant system; it's a singular fuel quantity system," elaborated Henneberry. "That makes it much more difficult to troubleshoot because you don't

have two probes sitting next to each other for comparison."

But when the problem persists, sometimes the best thing to do is to start from scratch and rewire the system.

"Rewiring is the last resort; after all other troubleshooting methods have failed," said Henneberry.

It took two shifts a day of approximately three-person crews about a week to complete the rewiring job, and nearly 500 feet of wire was required for the intricate and time-consuming task.

Despite all of the hard and sometimes tedious work, the maintainers said they enjoy their jobs because of the challenges.

"It's a very interesting job

even after doing it for close to 30 some years because there's always something different," explained Patton. "As the planes get older, they require attention in different areas, and that keeps you on your toes as your constantly researching and constantly in the books."

The Grissom maintainers also said they are proud to be part of something bigger than themselves.

"Every one of these guys is proud of that," elaborated Patton. "It's a very unique opportunity to work on something that not just a normal job; you're serving your country, but at the same time you have a very interesting job."

# Security Forces civilian recognized by command



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

Katherine Blackburn, 434th Security Forces Squadron security assistant works with Staff Sgt. Michelle Curtiss, 434th SFS security response team member, at the Grissom Visitors Center Feb. 1. Blackburn, a 33-year civil servant, was recently recognized by the Air Force Reserve Command with an Outstanding Security Forces Flight Level Civilian award.

## By Staff Sgt. Ben Mota *Public Affairs staff*

The first impression an organization gives is vitally important to its overall image. Equally as important is securing and protecting an organization's people and assets. For Grissom, these two vital roles fall on the shoulders of one person.

Katherine Blackburn, 434 Security Forces security assistant, was recently recognized by the Air Force Reserve Command with an Outstanding Security Forces Flight Level Civilian award for fulfilling both those roles.

"I was completely shocked when I found out I had received the award," said Blackburn, who has served as a civil servant for over 36 years. "I didn't even know that I had been nominated."

As a security assistant, Blackburn is in charge of keeping the base safe through nonconventional methods by ensuring that people without traditional access to the base have the proper credentials as well as placing any type of driving restrictions on them if necessary.

"She has been instrumental in not only ensuring procedures to prevent unauthorized entry to the installation are in place, she also puts those procedures into her day-to-day duties as the 'gatekeeper' for the installation," said Maj. James Benvenuto, 434th Security Forces operations officer.

While serving over three and a half decades, Blackburn has seen numerous security changes including the recent addition of a new defense biometric identification system

here. They system requires anyone who does not possess a common access card to have a new type of visitors pass that has scanning capabilities in order to ensure they have proper authority to be on base.

The system is an identity authentication tool and physical access control system that uses barcodes and biometrics to identify CAC card holders at entry control points. It is a Department of Defense mandated program recently implemented here at Grissom.

"Ms. Blackburn was key to developing procedures for visitor and contractor access to the installation to ensure the procedures meet (Air Force instruction) requirements and high security standards," said Benvenuto.

Prior to DBIDS,

visitors and contractors at Grissom filled out hand-written forms to gain access to the base, added Blackburn. With the new system all contractors and visitors were required to get new identification cards creating a backlog of work that needed to be completed in a short amount of time.

"I have to be flexible because my job changes from day to day," she said. "I can go two hours without assisting anyone to a full room of people needing to get on base in a matter of minutes."

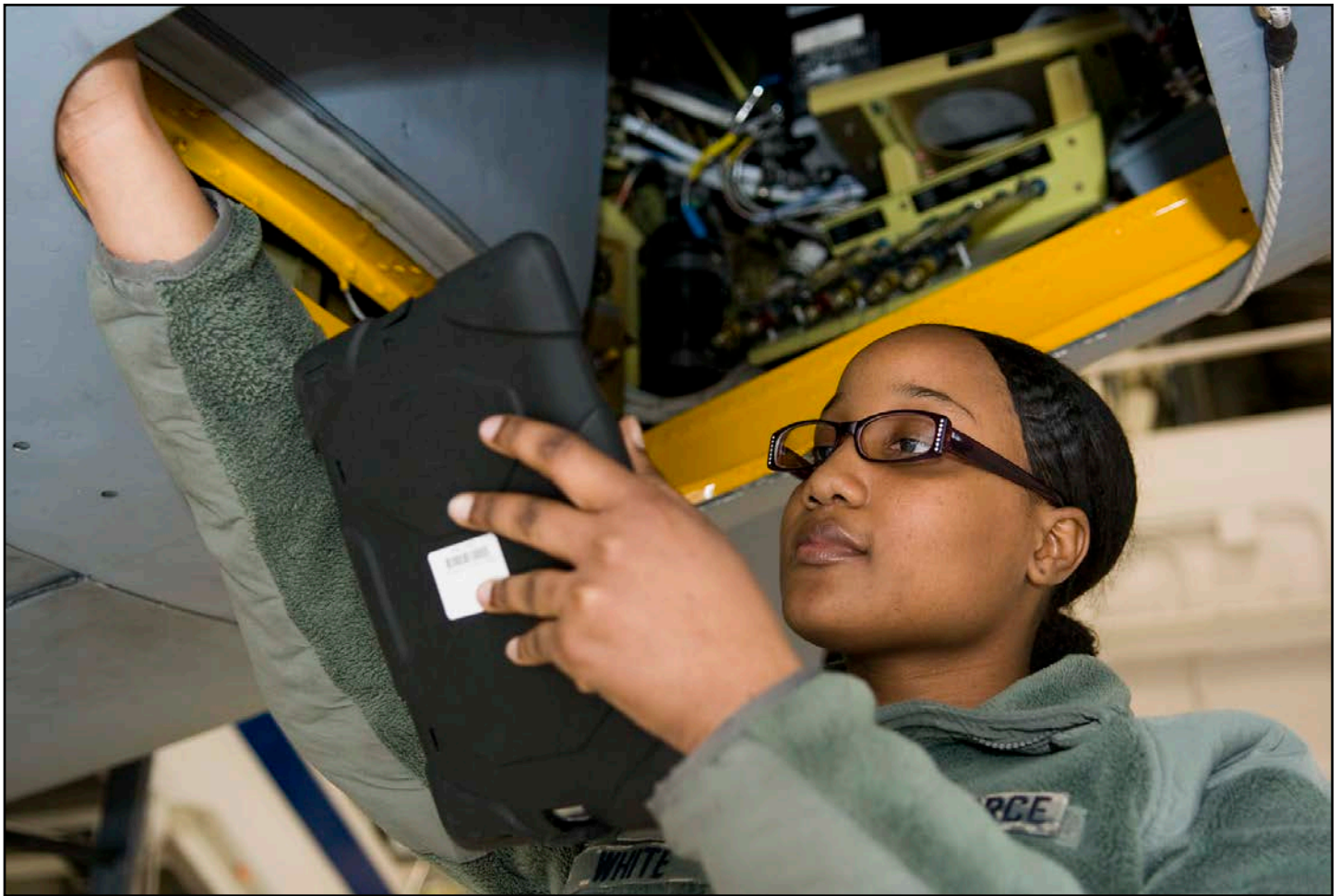
Blackburn is also in charge of all of the restricted area badges, often referred to as line badges, issued at Grissom and was recognized for her contribution to a mass reissue due to technology updates.

"A base-wide line badge reissue was conducted due to AFI requirements since over ten percent of the previous series of line badges were unaccounted for," said Benvenuto. "Ms. Blackburn coordinated with unit security managers to account for the previous series of line badges and reissued over 900 new credentials."

Blackburn's contributions to the squadron, excellent work ethic and her ability to deal with a challenging and dynamic work environment is why she was nominated for the award, said Benvenuto.

Prior to her civil service Blackburn served in the regular Air Force.





U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

Airman 1st Class Danielle White, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron integrated avionics systems apprentice, uses a new E-Tool Lite here Feb. 5. Grissom is one of six test bases authorized to use the tablets with electronic reading capability that allow for easy navigation through more than 65,000 technical orders used in aircraft maintenance.

## Grissom maintainers use new tablets to lighten load

By Staff Sgt. Carl Berry  
Public Affairs staff

Over the course of two years Air Force maintainers have gone from carrying four to five bulky books to carrying an eight-pound ruggedized laptop to now carrying only a lightweight tablet equipped with all their technical orders.

Grissom is one of six test bases authorized to use the E-Tool Lite, a tablet with electronic reading capability, which allows for easy navigation through more than 65,000 technical orders.

During fiscal year 2011 the Air Force converted TO's into a digital format so maintainers could access them electronically.

"The original electronic tool came in the form of a ruggedized laptop that had a two-hour battery

life," said Chief Master Sgt. Richard Scully, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron assistant superintendent. "The e-tool lite has a battery life of eight hours and weighs just 1.5 pounds, which is beneficial because a lot of our maintainers are working on aircraft all day."

The Air Force originally planned to purchase up to 40,000 laptops at a cost of \$3-4,000 each, but now they're looking to purchase tablets at cost of \$400-500 each, said Scully.

"The reason for the switch isn't solely for cost reasons, the standard e-tool is much better than bringing a library, but the e-tool lite is much more functional because it can be used in any situation," he added.

So far, the feedback from maintainers has been positive.

"They like that the e-tool lite is easy to use, has longer battery life, and is much more efficient than the standard e-tool," said Chief Master Sgt. Chad Weisend, 434th AMXS maintenance superintendent. "They also cut down on time of work performance, because they're able to navigate through multiple technical orders, and enlarge photos for clarity."

Currently the e-tool lite is the final phase of its testing.

"Once the e-tool lite is officially approved by Air Force Reserve Command, we will be able to use all of its functions," said Scully. "Currently the wi-fi connection is turned off and they are updated once every seven days. Once the e-tool lite is approved they will be updated every day with cyber security protections."

# Grissom Airmen get new, improved gas masks

By Senior Airman  
**Andrew McLaughlin**  
434th ARW Public Affairs

Wearing a gas mask is not known to be a very pleasant, but a new piece of gear might help to improve that experience.

The 434th Mission Support Group bioenvironmental engineering team fitted Airmen for new M50 Joint Service General Purpose Masks during the January unit training assembly here.

"It's a vast improvement over the old masks," said Jackie Mantravadi, 434th MSG chief of bioenvironmental engineering services.

The new mask replaces the older MCU 2A/P gas mask and has improved features.

The M50 uses two smaller air

filter canisters compared to the previous mask, which used one large canister. This is beneficial because if one canister needs to be removed, the other can still be used for breathing.

Damon Spradlin, 434th MSG environmental health technician, said the two canisters balance the weight better, and their smaller size allows for easier aiming of a weapon.

The M50 fits a wider range of sizes, allows for better vision and provides improved comfort, added Mantravadi.

The new mask also provides some new conveniences.

It has a built-in second skin that creates the seal, so Airmen no longer have to attach a separate piece before wearing it. Vision inserts

now fit into the mask instead of having to be worn on the head, and the position of the drinking tube can be moved inside the mask.

The comfort factor and increased visibility is what Spradlin said he likes most about the M50.

Airmen trying out the new mask had good things to say about it as well.

"They're a lot better than the ones we used in basic," said Airman 1st Class Michael McNally, 434th Maintenance Squadron KC-135R crew chief.

Spradlin said he will send out e-mails to supervisors over the coming months to tell them when their Airmen are ready to be fitted. Their goal is to have all Grissom Airmen fitted for the new masks by this spring.



*U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman McLaughlin*

Tom Wallace, 434th Mission Support Group environmental health technician, fits and tests an M50 gas mask for Airman 1st Class Torrie Bailey, 434th Maintenance Squadron KC-135R crew chief, here Jan. 5. The 434th MSG bioenvironmental engineering team began fitting Airmen for the new masks and will continue to do so over the coming months.

# New boompod simulator construction underway

By Senior Airman Jami Lancette  
Public Affairs staff

By May of 2013 Grissom will have yet another simulator and this time its training for the other side of the plane.

In-conjunction with the already in place KC-135R Stratotanker cockpit simulator that the pilots utilize for additional training and feedback sessions, a boom operator weapons system trainer is currently under construction and is scheduled to open in May 2013.

“It basically enhances our training,” said Master Sgt. Scott Ward, 434th Operations Support Squadron in-flight refueling evaluator. “It’s not going to replace the flight training; it’s in addition to the flight training requirements.”

A BOWST is a controlled atmosphere and can replicate multiple malfunctions at a time, providing the boom operator with a variety of training conditions and enhancing situational awareness during emergencies.

“It helps us enhance our emergency procedures and enhance our boom operating skills pertaining to check list procedures as they are an adherence to air force



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

Construction of a boom operator weapons system trainer is underway at Bldg. 668. The new BOWST is scheduled to open in May.

standards,” said Ward.

During the simulation the instructor will be able to see exactly what the boom operator is doing from multiple computer screens just a few feet away and will be able to put to the test the booms knowledge and skills at a moment’s notice.

“One of the unique things about the BOWST is at the end of the simulation there’s a debrief portion where the instructor debriefs with the operator and they can review the session because it is recorded,” explained Ward. “It increases the learning with current simulation as well as future.”

## Old tankers get boost from new fuel-saving engines

By Maj. Mark Blumke  
Air Mobility Command

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, Ill. -- Some decades-old KC-135 Stratotanker are drinking from the fountain of youth -- or at least the engines are.

Airmen installed the first of 1,440 upgraded Stratotanker engines at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., Jan. 15. The 1970s engine parts will be replaced with modern engines that burn less fuel and run longer without repairs, officials said.

“We expect the engine to stay on wing for 20-plus years and take the KC-135 into retirement,” said Senior Master Sgt. Dong Kim, Air Mobility Command’s propulsion branch chief.

Mounting the CFM Propulsion Upgrade Program on KC-135 and Navy E-6B Mercury culminates almost three years of work between Air Mobility Command, Air Force Material Command, the Navy and the original equipment manufacturer, CFM Interna-

tional.

The C-PUP engine delivered to MacDill AFB is the first of 15 that will be delivered by General Electric Aviation under an F108 engine augmentation contract.

The refurbished engines upgrade the high pressure compressor and turbine sections of the KC-135’s F108 engine, a military variant of the CFM56-2 engine.

More than half of the engines on the KC-135 have not seen depot rework since they were

initially installed; some dating back to 1984.

The engine depot at Oklahoma City Air Logistics Complex expects to deliver the first organically produced C-PUP engine later this year and is planning to produce 120 annually. The upgrade effort is projected to take 12 years to complete and will affect 1,440 engines, according to officials.

Grissom’s KC-135R Stratotanker’s are not currently scheduled for the upgrades. (AFNS)

# Retiree ID cards now have expiration dates

By Debbie Gildea  
AFPC Public Affairs

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-RANDOLPH, Texas -- Blue retiree identification cards issued prior to December 2012 had the word "indef" instead of an expiration date.

Since December, retiree cards issued have an expiration date effective the day before the retiree's 65th birthday.

Although benefits will not automatically expire, some changes will take effect based on Medicare eligibility, Air Force Personnel Center officials said.

"Retirees and their eligible

spouses will still have access to benefits and they'll still be enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System, but the expiration date - which is one day before their 65th birthday - is a reminder to retirees that they must enroll in Medicare Part A and B to retain their TRICARE for Life eligibility," said Ed Yoder, Air Force DEERS project office.

Airmen who retired before the December card change took effect do not need to get a new ID card just because of the expiration date change, Yoder said.

"If your ID card is worn out, unserviceable or your appearance

has changed significantly enough that the picture is no longer a good likeness, you should get your card replaced. But there is no mandate to replace your card with the new expiration date card."

Retirees who have the new card showing the expiration date will get a replacement card showing the indefinite status once they turn 65, and spouses' cards will read "indef" once they turn 75, Yoder said.

For information about the new expiration date retiree card, DEERS eligibility programs and other personnel issues, visit the myPers website at <https://mypers.af.mil>. (AFNS)

## In the limelight

### Medals

**Air Medal:** Lt. Col. Douglas Gullion, 72nd Air Refueling Squadron; Capt. Scott Street, 72nd ARS; Capt. Jacob Creel, 72n ARS; Capt. Brandon German, 74th Air Refueling Squadron; Capt. Christopher Robinson, 72nd ARS; 1st Lt. Ashley Lehman-Bush, 74th ARS; 1st Lt. Benjamin Strader, 72nd ARS; and Master Sgt. Paul Sherrod, 72nd ARS.

**Meritorious Service Medal:** Lt. Col. Brian Hollis, 72nd Air Refueling Squadron; Lt. Col. Scott Phillips, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron; Lt. Col. Thomas Riedel, 434th Operation Support Squadron; Maj. Gregory Messel, 434th Maintenance Group; Capt. William Swanson, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron; Senior Master Sgt. Carl Hubbell, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron; Senior Master Sgt. Ruth Love, 434th LRS; Senior Master Sgt. Wesley Marion, 434th Air Refueling Wing; Senior Master Sgt. John Sommel, 434th Mission Support Squadron; Senior Master Sgt. Robert Summers, 434th AMDS; Master Sgt. Jackson Barnett, 434th Security Forces Squadron; Master Sgt. Thomas Lennon, 434th Force Support Squadron; Tech. Sgt. Christopher Kopinski, 434th CES; and Tech Sgt. Daniel Knouff, 434th CES.

**Air Medal:** Lt. Col. Douglas Gullion, 72nd ARS; Capt. Jacob Creel, 72n ARS; Capt. Brandon German, 74th Air Refueling Squadron; Capt. Christopher Robinson, 72nd ARS; Capt. Scott Street, 72nd ARS; 1st Lt. Ashley Lehman-Bush, 74th ARS; 1st Lt. Benjamin Strader, 72nd ARS; and Master Sgt. Paul Sherrod, 72nd ARS.

**Aerial Achievement Medal:** Capt. Joel Nickelson, 434th OSS; and 1st Lt. Benjamin Strader, 72nd ARS.

**Air Force Commendation Medal:** Capt. Chad Summers, 434th LRS; Senior Master Sgt. Jason Peterson, 434th Maintenance Squadron; Senior Master Sgt. Aaron Wilson, 434th MXS; Master Sgt. Jose Gomez, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron; Master Sgt. Timothy Henneberry, 434th MXS; Master Sgt. Terry Hoist, 434th AMXS; Master Sgt. Robert Laviolette, 434th AMDS; Master Sgt. Gaines Stevens, 434th AMXS; Master Sgt. Elnora Strong, 434th ARW; Master Sgt. Cinthia Webb, 434th FSS; Tech. Sgt. Randy Brooks, 434th AMXS; Tech. Sgt. Michael Darnell, 434th LRS; Tech. Sgt. Rusty Hunter, 434th LRS; Tech. Sgt. Michael Maddux, 434th MXS; Tech. Sgt. Travis Stephens, 434th SFS; Tech. Sgt. Marjorie Trittipio, 434th AMDS; Staff Sgt. Eric McGraw, 434th AMXS; and Staff Sgt. Deborah Wichers, 434th ARW.

**Air Force Achievement Medal:** Maj. Matthew Walz, 74th ARS; Capt. Shawn Bailey, 74th ARS; Capt. Robin Cosand, 74th ARS; Capt. Kathryn Dahlen, 434th AMDS; Capt. Madalyn Davidson-Weeks, 434th AMDS; Capt. Matthew Heineman, 434th AMDS; Capt. Jessica Hodson, 74th ARS; Capt. Joel Nickelson, 434th OSS; Master Sgt. Nancy Johnson, 434th AMDS; Master Sgt. Karen Scholz, 434th AMDS; Tech. Sgt. Brian Luethy, 434th AMXS; Tech. Sgt. John Dietz, 434th AMDS; Tech. Sgt. Shannon Pyle, 434th AMDS; Tech. Sgt. Annette Quattrocchi, 434th AMDS; Tech. Sgt. Rachel Rodeghero, 434th AMDS; Staff Sgt. Joseph Logan, 434th AMDS; Senior Airman Joseph Hyatt, 434th AMDS; Senior Airman Jeremy Wilburn, 434th AMDS; and Senior Airman Aaron Wilson, 434th AMDS.

