

Heartland

Warrior

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Serving the men and women of the 434th Air Refueling Wing, Grissom ARB, Ind.

Drill travel pay

Some TRs may be eligible

By Maj. Miki Kristina Gilloon

AFRC Public Affairs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. -- Certain Air Force reservists who travel 150 miles or more from their homes to perform monthly drills may be eligible for round-trip travel reimbursements.

Qualifying reservists include those displaced by Base Realignment and Closure actions and programmatic changes or those serving in critical Air Force specialties. They could receive up to \$300 for each round trip taken after Aug. 14, 2008.

"Taking care of our Citizen Airmen is a top priority," said Earnest Sowell, Air Force Reserve Command Personnel Division deputy director. "With today's volatile economy, authorizing travel reimbursement for our drilling reservists is an attempt to ease the burden of traveling extensive distances to serve their country,"

A memorandum signed Aug. 14, 2008, by Assistant Secretary of the Air Force Craig W. Duehring established the Air Force policy for Inactive Duty Training Travel Entitlements Outside of Normal Commuting Distance for eligible members.

Only reservists who receive inactive duty for training drill pay are eligible for the pay under the following conditions:

- They are qualified in a skill designated as a critically manned career fields. Officer career fields include, but are not limited to, rated operations staff officers (16G), civil engineers



Photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

Quenching a big thirst

A massive C-5 Galaxy approaches a Grissom KC-135R Stratotanker during an aerial refueling mission recently. The C-5 and its crew belong to the 167th Airlift Wing, West Virginia Air National Guard.

Please see pay, page 3

Don't be afraid to be 'the bad guy'

By Capt. Bradley Altman
18th Aircraft Maintenance Unit

EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska -- I once worked with a senior master sergeant who I often praised for his willingness to be "the most-hated man in the room."

This comment always did two things: shock everyone within earshot and bring a smile to his face.

Most of the people who heard me say this simply thought I was insulting him, but he knew it was my way of saying thank you.

Obviously, he didn't earn this distinguished title by being overly sympathetic or understanding when it came to dealing with both his subordinates and his superiors. But he also didn't earn it from being disrespectful to them either.

No, this prestigious honor was placed upon him because he was painfully honest, painfully blunt, and he always refused to walk by a problem no matter how big or small.

These traits not only made him my go-to guy, but also the backbone of our squadron.

Every unit needs someone who is not afraid to call it how he sees it; a "bad guy" -- if you will -- who always corrects an issue or problem on the spot.

Too often, organizations don't have individuals willing to take a hard stance and be the "bad guy" every day.

Instead, they have individuals who worry about office conflicts and choose to only enforce the rules and regulations they deem critical.

Whether individuals do this intentionally because they don't think it's a big deal, or unintentionally because they don't know the long-term results are the same -- the unit suffers.

When this happens, your unit slowly loses its discipline and you start having issues throughout the organization.

Before long, your supervisor starts asking you questions that have no definitive answer like "What happened" or "What's going on?"

I'm sure you've been in units where they blame it all on the next generation of Airmen as being undisciplined and unfocused, when it was you and I who let it get this way by not consistently enforcing basic Air Force standards.

Don't believe me?

The last time you saw an Airman with their haircut out of regulations, did you correct them?

What about the last time you saw someone wearing a winter cap without a jacket?

Or someone who was not wearing a reflective belt when it was dark outside?

We're all to blame to some extent.

In the past year, the Air Force had some major incidents that have negatively affected the way the outside world views us.

A slew of incidents, highlighted by several high-visibility mistakes, have identified underlying issues such as a lack of leadership involvement, a failure to hold people accountable, and a failure to follow written procedures.

All of these things can be easily fixed by focusing on instilling discipline in our unit, and refusing to walk by our problems.

Essentially, we all need to do our best "bad guy" impression and get a little more comfortable being "the most hated person in the room." (AFNS)

Tankers: a long way from a question mark

By Gen. Arthur J. Lichte
Air Mobility Command commander

SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, Ill. (AFNS) -- Air refueling operations continue to be amazing aerial feats, especially for people who witness the process for the first time.

For Air Mobility Command Airmen, we consider it simply part of what we do but, in reality, it is quite remarkable to have two aircraft meeting less than 50 feet apart at more than 20,000 feet above the ground traveling at speeds close to 400 miles per hour while a tanker replenishes another aircraft

with the fuel necessary to continue the mission.

The amazement is even greater when one considers the first major air refueling operation happened 80 years ago when the Question Mark, a tri-engined Fokker C-2 aircraft with a crew of five, climbed into the southern

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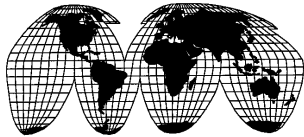
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Tanker, from page 2



U.S. Air Force photo

A Fokker C-2A is refueled in flight by a modified Douglas C-1 transport aircraft during an operation dubbed "Question Mark" in 1929. A large question mark was painted on each side of the receiver aircraft's fuselage, intended to "provoke wonder at how long the aircraft could remain airborne," according to Air Force historians. The Douglas C-1 aircraft were transformed into aerial refueling tankers by installing two 150-gallon tanks for offloading and a refueling hose that passed through a hatch cut in the floor of the aircraft. During the operation, which began on New Year's Day in 1929 and ended 150 hours and 40 minutes later on Jan. 7, the two Douglas refueling aircraft passed 5,660 gallons of fuel, completing 43 sorties, 12 of which occurred at night.

California sky Jan. 1, 1929.

Over the next seven days, the crew kept the aircraft airborne through air refueling from two three-man crews operating Douglas C-1 single-engine transports that had been transformed into tankers with the addition of two 150-gallon tanks to off-load fuel.

Combined, those historic tankers made 43 takeoffs and landings to deliver 5,660 gallons of fuel, 245 gallons of engine oil, storage batteries, spare

parts, tools, food, clothing and mail during the Question Mark's 150-hour and 40-minute operation.

Today's tanker fleet continues to play the vital role of sustaining operations. Tankers underwrite our nation's ability to project power. Aircraft extend our reach to deliver the clenched fist of U.S. power to our adversaries, or the open hand of assistance to people in need.

Without tankers, our combat aircraft

cannot reach their targets. Without tankers, our resupply aircraft and humanitarian relief materials cannot always reach their destinations. Without tankers, we cannot move our wounded warriors non-stop from the battlefield to the U.S. for the medical care they need.

As a nation, we're overdue on building new tankers. We must make delivery of this capability a high priority for our nation. We simply must get on with it. We're working hard to ensure Air Mobility Command is ready when the next effort begins to choose the industry partner to build our next-generation tanker.

I can understand how the group of Airmen felt at the beginning of the New Year 80 years ago. Their thoughts were likely focused on how to not only successfully demonstrate the air-refueling capability, but also make people aware of its potential significant military contributions.

Today, the question isn't how critical is the tanker to our warfighters and our national security. We know the need for a tanker is critical; it's a capability our nation simply cannot do without.

Mobility Airmen provide global air mobility -- the right effects at the right place at the right time. I look forward to a successful 2009.

Pay, from page 1

(32E) and clinical social workers (42S). Enlisted career fields include aviation resource management (1C0), operations intelligence (1N0) and safety (1S0).

- They are assigned to an Air Force Reserve unit with a critical manpower shortage or in a pay grade with a critical manpower shortage. Officer career fields include operations commanders (10C), bomber pilots (11B), test pilots (11E) and fighter pilots (11F). Enlisted career fields include flight engineer (1A1), aircraft loadmaster (1A2), and airborne battle management (1A4).

- They are assigned to a unit or posi-

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tion that is disestablished or relocated as a result of BRAC or another force structure reallocation.

Under this policy, eligible reservists can be reimbursed for all travel expenses for each round-trip travel up to \$300, not to exceed 12 IDT travel trips per calendar year.

Actual costs of lodging, transportation and meals may be reimbursed. Receipts are required for lodging expenses claimed and any expenses of \$75 or more.

Reservists serving on Military Personnel Appropriate and Reserve Personnel Appropriation Man Day

tours are not eligible to be reimbursed for their expenses.

The legislation governing IDT travel reimbursement expires Dec. 31, 2010.

For more information, unit reservists can contact their local Reserve military personnel flight. IMAs can contact their respective program manager or base individual mobilization augmentee administrator. Local Reserve finance offices also have information about the travel reimbursement. (Air Force Reserve Command News Service)

Intel troop named year's top SNCO

By Staff Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner
Public Affairs staff

Topping off the rank chart of enlisted members are the so called top three; and it was one from amongst those ranks that was recognized for being the top of the top.

Master Sgt. Greg Minnich, 434th Operations Support Squadron intelligence specialist was recently named 434th Air Refueling Wing Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, placing him first among piers.

Sergeant Minnich joined the Air Force Reserve in 1992 as a combat crew communications troop, where he spent the first 16 years of his Air Force career.

In 2006, a then Tech. Sgt. Minnich was given the chance to change career fields and, subsequently, increase in rank to the level of senior NCO. But, it wasn't the rank that enticed him to make the switch.

"I wanted to take a different look at the Air Force," he said. "It was an opportunity to learn and get a different experience."

In fact, it is the ability and desire to learn which Sergeant Minnich credits his success in the Air Force and as a senior NCO.

"Continuing education has always been a priority," said the intelligence troop, who holds two degrees from the Community College of the Air Force. "Right now I'm working on my bachelor's from American Military University in military intelligence."

It isn't just college classes alone that Sergeant Minnich credits with his education though.

"Everything can increase your knowledge, especially deployments," he said. "I have learned the most in the Air Force from deployments, because I'm doing the work in a real-world environment."

Sergeant Minnich stated he has been deployed more than fifteen times, many of those to Incirlik Air Base, Turkey.

He said he learned something new on each deployment, including how to



Photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

Master Sgt. Greg Minnich

mentor junior NCOs.

According to his nomination package, Sergeant Minnich "volunteered for two tours to Incirlik (Air Base), Turkey," and "set a good example for younger Airmen in the Intelligence shop."

It is his ability to mentor and desire to grow that the sergeant said allowed him to step into a much higher role during a recent deployment, officials said.

Due to a shortage in manpower for intelligence officers, Sergeant Minnich was made the acting officer in charge of the 90th Expeditionary Air Refueling Squadron's intel shop, briefly filling a role normally done by superiors.

It wasn't just his deployed accomplishments that won him this award. According to his nomination package, the sergeant "championed the transition of all 434th ARW isolated personnel reports to (a) new joint rescue's classified system."

"I managed the transition from the old ISOPREP system, which was just for the Air Force to a new joint system used by all services," said Sergeant Minnich.

But, it was not only knowledge the sergeant brought back from deployments.

According to Sergeant Minnich, shortly after September 11, 2001, he was deployed to Turkey where he met and befriended a local by the name of Kader.

Kader and the sergeant continued their relationship thanks to several deployments that followed, and the two married in 2005.

Kader and her son, Ahmet, now live with Sergeant Minnich on Indianapolis' south side.

Sergeant Minnich will now compete for the title of 4th Air Force Senior NCO of the Year. Should he win that, he will then compete at the Air Force Reserve Command level.

Heartland Warrior

Security member named NCO of the Year

By Staff Sgt. Benjamin Mota
Public Affairs staff

Recognized for his outstanding performance as a noncommissioned officer, Tech. Sgt. Robert DeLee, 434th Security Forces Squadron fire team leader, was named the 434th Air Refueling Wing's NCO of the Year.

Sergeant DeLee's duties include supervision of a fire team in tactical situations, including combat and security missions, and can fill in as squad leader during times of need.

According to his nomination package, the sergeant "ensures continuous improvement of his team's skills in achieving force protection objectives."

The package, which is prepared by Sergeant DeLee's leadership, also stated that he is "recognized by senior unit leadership for management skills and abilities to direct operations."

Sergeant DeLee also stated he has the task of training up new security

forces Airmen on his team.

"I enjoy the responsibilities of teaching skills to the new Airmen and mentoring them as they advance in their military careers," he said.

The fire team leader has served in the Reserve for approximately 11 years. Before that time, he served four years on active duty.

Sergeant DeLee recently completed a tour of duty at Kirkuk Regional Air Base, Iraq, in direct support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was commended by the Defense Force Commander for "superior performance and leadership skills," and volunteered numerous hours off duty to manage the creation of aggressive defense measures used to deter hostile insurgent activity all while deployed.

In his civilian occupation, the Iraqi Freedom veteran is a police officer for Plymouth, Ind. He has been with that department for 10 years.

In addition to his job duties at



Sergeant DeLee

work and as a civilian, the sergeant coaches a junior-league soccer program, is involved in neighborhood watch programs, performs duties as a Drug Abuse Resistance and Education officer in local school systems, and annually supports the 434th ARW blood drive.

Civil engineer is Airman of the Year

Senior Airman Carl Berry
Public Affairs staff

GRISSOM AIR RESERVE BASE, Ind. -- The title of 434th Airman of the Year 2008 was awarded to Senior Airman Joseph Ahlers, 434th Civil Engineer Squadron.

"It was really exciting to find out I was named Airman of the Year," said Airman Ahlers. "I'm honored to receive the award because there are a lot of great Airmen serving at Grissom."

Putting him at the top of the list was his superior service performance as an emergency management apprentice, which includes serving as a flight safety monitor, chief of emergency management plans and operations and a base wide Chemical Biological Radiological/Nuclear Explosive

instructor.

Additionally, he assisted in the launch of Grissom's carpooling program, which connects 434th service-members for their commute to unit training assemblies, for the purpose of boosting morale, and economic and environmental reasons.

As a civilian, Airman Ahlers is attending the University of Wisconsin Law School in hopes of becoming a Air Force judge advocate general.

He also hopes to represent Grissom well at the 4th Air Force level.

"I hope that while representing my own accomplishments at 4th Air Force I will also be representing what all of the talented Airmen at Grissom are doing," he shared.

Airman Ahlers will be competing for the title of 4th Air Force Airman of



Airman Ahlers

the Year. Should he win that, he will then compete at the Air Force Reserve Command level.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Ben Mota

Dodge ball!

Three members of the 434th Air Refueling Wing take aim during the recent dodge ball tournament held at the base fitness center. The 434th Services Flight holds a number of special events after duty hours to promote physical fitness.

Commander addresses Reserve issues on 'Front and Center'

By Senior Airman Zach Anderson
4th Air Force Public Affairs

CHICAGO -- Major Gen. Robert Duignan, commander, 4th Air Force, took part in a world-wide webcast panel discussion Dec. 4 here to provide an update on the Guard and Reserve.

General Duignan was part of a three-person expert panel brought together for an appearance on "Front and Center," a monthly public affairs forum on military issues produced by the Pritzker Military Library.

Joining General Duignan on the panel to address the issues were Major General (IL) William Enyart, 37th Adjutant General of the State of Illinois and Dr. John Winkler, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs.

The discussion was hosted by long-time Chicago television journalist John Callaway.

"The purpose of the Pritzker Military Library is to acquire and maintain an accessible collection of materials and develop appropriate programs focusing on the Citizen Soldier in the

preservation of democracy," said Ryan Yantis, Executive Director of the Pritzker Military Library. "That individual service is key to our focus and helping citizens to understand that role and linkage," he continued.

Over a 90-minute discussion, the panel discussed a wide range of topics, including the increasing role the Reserve and Guard components of the military continue to play in the ongoing war on terror.

"The United States Air Force has been engaged in combat for over 16 years, and the Air Force Reserve has been and will continue to be an integral part of that effort," General Duignan said. "We maintain a combat-ready force that has a 72-hour response to global crisis with a single level of readiness with a full spectrum of combat operations."

General Duignan also addressed the capabilities of reservists to operate within the active duty Air Force.

"The Air Force Reserve will continue to integrate with the other components at all levels. We will always train to the same standards of the regular

component. We exist as an operational component of the Air Force, serving side-by-side with regular and Guard Airmen and the Air Force Reserve will be even more relevant in the future. The Air Force cannot do the mission without the support of its dedicated wingman, the Air Force Reserve," the general said.

The discussion also centered on some of the key differences between the Guard and Reserve components and the different challenges faced by each.

"It is important that citizens understand and appreciate the difference between the Guard and Reserve and the different mission and role each is playing," Duignan said.

Following the moderated discussion, the panel also addressed questions from a live audience.

According to Yantis, the panel discussion was one of the best the library had produced. "It was excellent. We had more questions and the audience was engaged, asking dynamic questions. It was a topic that led to good discussion." (AFRCNS)

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MPF hours change

The 434th Military Personnel Flight will change their customer service hours on main unit training assemblies beginning in January to allow for in-house training opportunities.

The MPF customer service are will be open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturdays, and from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Sundays.

Anyone with questions, or needing more information, should call the customer service section by calling Ext. 3909.



U.S. AIR FORCE
EagleEyes

Eagle eyes

The Eagle Eyes program is an anti-terrorism initiative that enlists the eyes and ears of Air Force members and citizens in the war on terror.

It starts with teaching people about the typical activities terrorists engage in to plan their attacks.

Armed with this information, anyone can recognize elements of potential terror planning when they see it.

Next, the program provides a network of local, 24-hour phone numbers to call whenever a suspicious activity is observed.

Everyone is encouraged to learn the categories of suspicious behavior and stay attuned to your surroundings.

If you observe something suspicious, please contact the Grissom Air Reserve Base Security Forces at Ext. 3385 or the Air Force Office of Special Investigations at Ext. 3964.

If off base and what you observe requires an immediate police response contact your local law enforcement authorities.

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Photo by Tech. Sgt. Pat Kuminecz

Yellow ribbon program

Master Sgt. Nathan Moore, a staff member of the Airmen and Family Readiness Office, reviews information pamphlets with Tech. Sgt. Debra Turner, 49th Aerial Port Squadron. Both were participating in the 'Yellow Ribbon' Reintegration Program which was held in the Services building during on the December unit training assembly.

Reservists can nominate bosses for ESGR Awards

ARLINGTON, Va. -- Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, a Department of Defense agency, has opened the nomination season for the 2009 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award.

National Guard and Reserve members and their families are eligible and encouraged to nominate employers who have gone above and beyond in their support of their military employees.

Nominations will be accepted at www.FreedomAward.mil from November 3, 2008 to January 19, 2009.

The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. Government to employers for their outstanding support of their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

The 2009 recipients will be announced in the spring and honored in Washington, D.C. at the 14th annual Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award ceremony September 17, 2009.


Recipients of the 2008 Freedom Award met with President George W. Bush and Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England.

Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Dr. David Chu presented the awards at a ceremony attended by members of Congress and senior government and military officials.

Almost one-half of the U.S. military is comprised of the National Guard and Reserve.

The Department of Defense shares these citizen warriors with their civilian employers, many of whom provide significant support to their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

Honorees in 2008 ranged from a small family owned transportation business in Utah to large businesses including Chrysler and Dominion Resources to the City of Austin, Texas, a public sector employer.



★

2009

**SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
EMPLOYER SUPPORT
FREEDOM AWARD**


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**To all National Guard and Reserve
members and their families—**

**Nominate your employer for the Secretary
of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award,
the highest award given by the U.S. Government
to employers for their exceptional support of
employees serving in the Guard and Reserve.**

**ACCEPTING NOMINATIONS
NOVEMBER 3, 2008 - JANUARY 19, 2009
AT WWW.FREEDOMAWARD.MIL**

ESGR is a Department of Defense agency established in 1972. Its mission is to gain and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law, and resolving conflicts through mediation.



Past recipients of the Freedom Award have provided full salary, continuation of benefits, care packages and even family support to employees fulfilling their military obligations around the world.

The Freedom Award was instituted in 1996 under the auspices of the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) to recognize exceptional support from the employer community.

ESGR is a Department of Defense agency established in 1972. Its mission is to gain and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law and resolving conflicts through mediation.

For questions regarding the Freedom Award nomination process, please visit www.FreedomAward.mil or contact Beth Sherman, ESGR Public Affairs, at 703-380-9717.