

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

AF outlines new fitness, testing standards

By Master Sgt. Russell Petcoff

Secretary of the Air Force
Public Affairs

WASHINGTON -- Maintaining peak combat readiness begins and ends with healthy, motivated and well-trained Airmen.

On Nov. 19, the Air Force's deputy chief of staff for manpower and personnel announced the new Air Force fitness standards will officially begin July 1, 2010.

Lt. Gen. Richard Y. Newton III said the service's top leaders sought feedback from commanders and senior NCO leaders throughout the Air Force when deciding to execute the updated program that will test Airmen twice during calendar year 2010 -- once under the current program and once under the new program.

"Based on feedback from the field, we are implementing the July start date so Airmen have the opportunity to excel," General Newton said. "This implementation strategy will allow for a smoother transition of the new Air Force Instruction and afford commanders adequate time to establish installation fitness assessment cells to include adequate manning for the FACs."

According to General Newton, a new AFI detailing the new fitness standards is due out within the next few weeks. This fitness AFI is the first to cover the total force of active duty, Guard and Reserve.



The general added that the July start date will provide commanders and Airmen plenty of time to be prepared and in compliance with the new AFI.

"We want to do this right," General Newton said. "It's about readiness and our continued commitment to ensure we have a fit force, ready to perform its global mission."

Col. Joan H. Garbutt, chief of military force management for Air Staff Manpower and Personnel, said the new start date for the new fitness standards will "set our Airmen up for success." She believes Airmen will excel with the new standards.

"Every time you raise the bar, our Airmen reach higher to meet the standards," Colonel Garbutt said.

Biannual physical fitness testing will begin Jan. 1 using current fitness standards. Units with FACs will use them to conduct the assessments. Units without FACs will continue to use their physical training leaders, or PTLs, to assess Airmen. Enlisted

and officer performance reports will reflect fitness training scores based upon their reports close out dates, General Newton added.

According to the change, during the Jan. 1 to June 30 testing phase, unit PTLs will provide two scores -- one for the current system and one for the new standard so Airmen can gauge their performance. Starting July 1, Airmen will officially test under new requirements with the new scoring. Scores

will be annotated on EPRs and OPRs accordingly.

Under the new standards, the aerobic run will count for 60 percent of the test. Body composition will count for 20 percent. Under the current standard, they count for 50 and 30 percent, respectively. The sit-up and push-ups remain at 10 percent each. The new standards have differently valued waist measurements and 15 seconds, rather than 30, separating run scores.

Passing the test will require a composite score of 75 while also meeting a minimum level for each component. The new physical fitness test will place Airmen in one of five age groups: less than 30, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59 and 60-plus. Results will fall into one of three categories: 90 and above, excellent; 75-90, satisfactory; and under 75, unsatisfactory.

Information on the Air Force fitness program is online at www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/affitnessprogram/index.asp. (AFNS)

Four keys to being a successful Airman

By Lt. Col. Jon-Paul Mickle
51st Security Forces Squadron

OSAN AIR BASE, South Korea
-- Looking back over two garrison command tours and one deployed command tour I believe there are four things that, if consistently applied, will lead to every Airman being successful. These four things are as follows:

- 1) Mission First
- 2) Leave it Better Than You found It
- 3) Take Care of Each Other
- 4) Believe In Something.

The idea of mission first is that we took an oath to defend our nation and we get paid well to compensate us for our sacrifices; that money should be earned every day.

Less than one percent of our nation swears to protect and serve their fellow countrymen. That makes you a precious resource.

Airmen and their supervisors need to strive to make a significant impact on the mission of their wing, not just their individual squadrons, but their wing, every day.

The time and blood of our Airmen is too precious to waste not making the mission happen.

Know your job, train someone to replace you and, to paraphrase General Patton, "It's not your job to die for your country. It is your job to make the other poor, dumb bastard die for his."

Leaving it better than you found it is easy. Pick up the trash. Wash a government owned vehicle. Empty that closet full of junk.

Actually conduct an equipment inventory instead of pencil-whipping your change-over.

Change the checklist to save the Airmen time and the unit money.

Document your Airmen's training. Motivate the weak and challenge the strong.

Do a performance feedback. Write a personnel report or a decoration and do them on time. Repair the equipment or the facility that everyone else just ignores.

Regardless of your rank there is something you can do every day to leave your wing "better than you found it" this morning.

Every time we find an Airman in trouble, whether it is financial, on-the-job, off-duty, domestic, criminal or suicidal, there are easily ten others who knew and did nothing.

Being an Airman means more than just being a wingman when your friends drink alcohol.

You also need to be there when their significant other dumps them. You need to coach them on finances. You need to listen to them rage and you need to hold them when they break-down and cry.

Taking care of each other is being the father, mother, brother or sister who can't be there when it matters the most.

You are our family. You are not alone. Take the time to pause, reflect and appreciate the people around you, whether they active duty, civilian, contractor, local national or a dependent.

Take care of each other.

I stopped counting letters of reprimand, Article 15s, courts martial and separations long ago; it's too depressing.

For each one I have done I always ask what was the person's personal code of conduct that allowed him or her to think criminal behavior was okay, and surprisingly I get the same answer time and again, "Sir, I believe in myself."

Now Charles Manson believes in himself and Charles Manson is an effective leader. So much so that he convinced other people to kill a pregnant woman in his name.

The problem is that Charles Manson does not have a code of conduct that fills his life with a positive purpose and a sense of justice. So believing in yourself is not enough.

You have to have a code of conduct, so that when you are challenged with a choice between good and evil, you choose good.

The Air Force core values are a good start, but they are not enough.

You have to make it personal and you can't make it easy.

Your code defines your character, your belief and is exhibited through your actions.

Believe in something. You want to be successful in the greatest Air Force in the world?

Then do the mission, leave it better than you found it, take care of each other, and believe in something. (AFNS)

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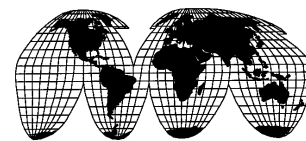
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Grissom adds \$100 million to local areas' economies

By Lt. Col. Gary Lockard
Public Affairs staff

While the men and women of Grissom have been busy supporting various military operations around the world during the past year, the base has once again made its presence felt in the local area by providing an economic impact of more than \$100 million.

Data compiled by Air Force officials for the time period of Oct. 1, 2008 to Sept. 30, 2009, show that Grissom's combined direct and indirect economic impact to North Central Indiana is \$104,405,176.

Grissom has expanded in recent years.

In addition to being the home of the 434th Air Refueling Wing—the largest KC-135 Stratotanker unit in the Air Force Reserve Command—it also houses a Marine Corps Reserve unit and two Army Reserve units.

Grissom's work force, consisting of civilian employees, military personnel and local area contractors, has an annual payroll surpassing the \$53 million mark.

When construction projects, service contracts, and equipment and supplies purchased from local businesses are added in, the direct economic impact jumps to more than \$78 million.

The Air Force estimates that Grissom's presence in the North Central Indiana region indirectly creates almost 500 jobs in the local community worth another \$26 million.

Grissom has a proud history and was originally opened during World War II.

It has undergone numerous changes throughout the years.

Currently, Grissom ARB is one of only five Air Force Reserve Command bases in the nation.

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Photo by Staff Sgt. Ben Mota

Droppin' the hammer

Tech Sgt. Jeff Engel, a heavy equipment operator with the 434th Civil Engineer Squadron, pounds a stake into the ground with a sledge hammer at a new training site for civil engineers just west of State Road 31. The site will allow Airmen to practice using the equipment in a safe environment. The barricade being built will stop debris from falling into the protected wet land areas during construction and use.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

Passin' the plaque

Grissom first sergeants pass a plaque around the room before presenting it to Master Sgt. Kevin Smith, 434th Mission Support Squadron first sergeant. Sergeant Smith retired recently and was recognized by his fellow first sergeants.

DOD, Air Force rated positive in Gallup study

By Master Sgt. Stan Parker
SECAF Public Affairs

WASHINGTON -- The Air Force with the Department of Defense has received high ratings for its professionalism, trust, accuracy and quality, according to a recent survey.

The findings were presented during a recent panel discussion following a Gallup Organization study, analyzing how Americans perceive the federal government.

"Overall the survey asked Americans to rate the federal government on a five point scale," said Frank Newport, editor in chief of the Gallup poll. "The military was included and was the highest."

"We asked which branch of the military is most important to the United States and it historically continues to be the Air Force," Mr. Newport said. He added the military has continued to do well in spite of challenges with its nuclear enterprise and the on-going war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Following the President Barack Obama administration's call for "a

high-performance government," Gallup officials conducted the study to examine public attitudes about the "overall customer experience" across all federal agencies. The study asked more than 40,000 American citizens to answer a series of questions about the level and quality of service they received from federal agencies, painting a clearer picture of the overall experience of individual's interactions with the agencies.

Although the study concluded Americans have the most governmental contact through tourism by way of the National Park Service and the Transportation Security Administration, contact with the Air Force and Navy has been fairly positive, Mr. Newport said.

The study's data illustrated how Americans feel about their interactions with the federal government, why they interact with the federal government and with which agencies they most frequently interact.

When asked to provide a wide variety of opinions on the overall performance of different sectors of

government, 78 percent of Americans expressed positive views about the performance of the U.S. military, making it the highest-rated sector. When asked to identify the one agency that is most important to the future of the country, the public cited DOD and considered it the most prestigious agency. Although DOD rated high, the Central Intelligence Agency was viewed as the federal employer of choice, which was consistent with previous studies.

"The key here is that information is absolutely viable, and you can't manage what you don't measure," said Max Stier, president and chief executive officer for Partnership for Public Service and panel member. The reason government is facing critical challenges is largely due to a lack of long term goals and useful real-time health of organizations, Mr. Stier added.

Panel members agreed the federal government has been largely misunderstood of how best to serve its customer base and believed Gallup's initiative will foster growth in meeting the challenge. (AFNS)

Heartland Warrior



Photo by SrA. Carl Berry

Weapons cleaning

Senior Airman Joe Ahlers, a readiness apprentice with the 434th Civil Engineer Squadron, cleans an M16 during the November unit training assembly. Weapons used during a recent exercise were cleaned before being placed into storage.

Policy requires members self-report convictions

Senior Airman Carl Berry
Public Affairs staff

Leading by example is a characteristic that the military requires from its leaders, as reflected in the Department of Defense policy requiring all commissioned officers, warrant officers and senior non-commissioned officers to report all criminal convictions to their first line supervisors.

The policy requires any criminal convictions announced on or after March 1, 2008, to be reported in writing. Service members do not have to report pending actions, only criminal convictions.

Criminal convictions are defined very broadly and include: a guilty plea, a finding of guilty by a judge or jury, a plea of no contest, a deferred prosecution, an entry into a pretrial intervention or diversion program, and any other similar disposition.

“Tickets for motor vehicle violations that do not require a court appearance and judgments as a result of civil
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lawsuits do not have to be reported,” said Master Sergeant Wes Marion, law office superintendent.

The policy requires members of the reserve component to report by the earlier of the next unit training assembly weekend or 30 days of the conviction. It further states that members on active duty must report a conviction within 15 days of the conviction.

“The report must be in writing and the member must maintain the evidence that he or she has complied with the policy,” said Sergeant Marion. “A member must report, whether or not any punishment has been imposed and even if the member intends to appeal the conviction.”

The policy does not speak about discipline actions for failing to report, but the normal ramifications for failure to meet responsibilities, such as a letter of reprimand, letter of counseling, or an Article 15, may be issued to service members that fall under the policy.

“Airmen that are unsure if they have been convicted of a crime, or who

have any other questions regarding this policy, should contact the Area Defense Counsel and not the base legal office,” said Sergeant Marion.

The Area Defense Counsel for Grissom Air Reserve Base is located at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, and can be contacted at (937) 257-7841 or DSN 787-7841.

The ADC reports directly to the chief, trial defense division, and cannot be influenced by a service member’s chain of command.

“They are not just there for court-martial, but also may advise on other Uniform Code of Military Justice actions such as Article 15s, LORs, LOCs, demotions and discharges,” said Sergeant Marion.

Members must report, there is no leeway and there is no gray area for officers and senior non-commissioned officers.

Any supervisors that are unsure of what to do once a member reports should contact their base judge advocate office for guidance.

First-strike ration aims for better nutrition

By Christen McCluney
Defense Media Activity

WASHINGTON -- Several military organizations are working together to provide servicemembers with healthy, good-tasting, sustainable and nutritionally sound combat rations.

"We're charged with a fairly awesome task, and that is to fuel the Defense Department's most flexible and adaptable weapons platform, and that, of course, is the individual warfighter," said Gerry Darsch, director of the Defense Department's Combat Feeding Program at the Massachusetts-based Natick Soldier Systems Center.

Because many military personnel have jobs similar to those in the civilian sector, their nutritional requirements aren't going to be very much different from those of their civilian counterparts, said Andy Young, chief of the Military Nutrition Division at the U.S. Army Institute of Environmental Medicine. But some servicemembers in operational specialties do require more fuel and energy than most civilians. Achieving their nutritional requirements while working in the field can be especially difficult, he added.

The MRE -- shorthand for its designation in the supply system as Meal, Ready-to-Eat -- is the standard military ration.

Each meal provides one-third of the military-recommended dietary allowance and must meet a variety of requirements, including long shelf life, tolerance of changes in temperature and stability in varying conditions.

One of the latest developments that has come out of this program is known as the first-strike ration, or FSR.

Before its introduction, servicemembers who were outside of a forward operating base for two to seven days



were given MREs to travel with. Because of space limitations, they would field-strip the meal and throw away more than half of the food, including a large portion of nutrients.

"The first-strike ration, in essence, is issued at one per warfighter per day, instead of two or three MREs," Mr. Young said. It reduces the weight and volume of the MRE by 50 percent, and also is more cost-efficient.

"The first-strike ration provides all the components that can be easily eaten on the move," Mr. Young said. "And we now can regain control, if you will, of nutrition and make sure that those warfighters are getting the nutrients that they so desperately need to maintain (or) enhance both cognitive and physical performance."

Working with specialists at the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine, the group convened a panel of nutrition experts from all over the world, many of whom had served in the military, and challenged them to get the best nutrition possible into a limited amount of space.

"After that, it was simply a matter of testing the actual performance improvements and capabilities of the ra-

tion in human subjects in the field conditions that would be used," Mr. Young said.

Focus groups and surveys revealed what products were being left behind, and from there, a list was put together of items that servicemembers wanted.

Packaging was one of the main issues, Mr. Darsch said.

When the design of an electrolyte drink was changed into an hourglass-shaped package with a feature that allowed water to be added directly from a canteen or CamelBak, the consumption rate

went from 33 percent to more than 70 percent.

The addition of a shelf-stable, pocket-style sandwich was another request from servicemembers.

Because microwave ovens and frozen food items aren't available in the field, the combat feeding team's technologists used "hurdle technology," a packaging process that balances water, atmosphere and acidity in the package, creating hurdles to bacterial growth and keeping the products shelf-stable.

The next goal, Mr. Darsch said, is to expand the first-strike rations menu from three to nine meals and to go into the field and allow warfighters an opportunity to rate the new menus.

"The most important thing about the (FSR) in particular, and nutrition in general, for the warrior in the field is, it's not nutrition unless it's eaten," he said. "So it doesn't do you any good to take the package; you've got to actually eat it. And that's why the (FSR) is such an important step forward for the particular audience it was targeted at. That it actually improves consumption, and that, in turn, improves the nutrition." (Courtesy of AFPS)

Heartland Warrior



Photo by Senior Airman Carl Berry

Feeding the troops

Reservists from the 434th Air Refueling Wing take a brief time out from a busy Unit Training Assembly for lunch at the Grissom Dining Facility. The 434th Services Flight manages the dining facility and works to ensure tasty and healthy meals for wing personnel.

In the limelight

Promotions

To technical sergeant -- William Wright, 434th Security Forces Squadron

To staff sergeant -- Bartholemew Erwin, 49th Aerial Port Squadron; and Tonya Handley, 434th Aerospace Medicine Squadron.

To senior airman -- Bradley Brooking, 434th SFS; Rachelle Chance, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron; Kenneth Coyne, 434th Maintenance Squadron; Bryan Gates, 434 MXS; Edward Lawton, 434th Operations Support Squadron; Kirk Myers, 434th MXS; David Osborne, 434th LRS; Richard Saez, 434th SFS; Erica Vanmatre, 434th MXS; and Matthew Willis, 434th SFS.

To airman first class -- Jacob Harrington, 434th MXS; and Matthew Steele, 434th MXS.



Medals

Meritorious Service Medal -- Lt. Col. Kevin Hayes, 434th Operations Support Squadron; Maj. Timothy Bartlett, 434th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron; Maj. Michael Polomchak, 434th Maintenance Operations Flight; Chief Master Sgt. Gary Flook, 434th MOF; Senior Master Sgt. Michael O'Brien, 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron; Master Sgt. John Bond, 434 AMXS; and Master Sgt. Maurice Greene, Jr., 434th MXS.

Air Force Commendation Medal -- Tech. Sgt. Tommy Hunter, Mission Support Flight; and Tech. Sgt. Misty McKinney, 434th Air Refueling Wing

Air Force Achievement Medal -- Staff Sgt. Gerald Smith, 434th AMXS.

Air Medal -- Maj. Joseph Austin, 434th OSS.

Aerial Achievement Medal -- Lt. Col Douglas Gullion, 72nd Air Refueling Squadron.

G.I. Bill

Virtual application eases benefits transfer

By 1st Lt. Gina Vaccaro McKeen
AFPC Public Affairs

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas (AFNS) -- A new module in the virtual Military Personnel Flight that will simplify the process of transferring Post-9/11 G.I. Bill benefits to dependents is set to launch this month.

The new vMPF module will check an Airman's eligibility and allow him or her to fill out, sign and send the required statement of understanding to the Automated Records Management System virtually.

Airmen will continue to use the Department of Defense Transfer Education Benefits Web site to complete their application.

The vMPF module will simplify the process by allowing Airmen to see if they are eligible to apply and to complete their statement of understanding form online.

Airmen who already have submitted their applications using the former process do not need to take any additional action. The new module applies to Airmen who have not yet submitted their statements of understanding.

Eligible Airmen who access the vMPF module will see an introductory page which provides general guidance and direction for transferring education benefits using the DOD TEB site. The introduction page links to additional Post-9/11 G.I. Bill information as well as to the statement-of-understanding page.

An ineligible Airman who accesses the module will see one of several notifications explaining why he or she is ineligible to transfer his or her education benefits.

Possible notifications are that an Airman has not completed the required six years of service or has not enlisted for a long enough time to apply.

For more information go to the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill page on AFPC's secure "Ask" Web site, or call the Total Force Service Center at (800) 525-0102.

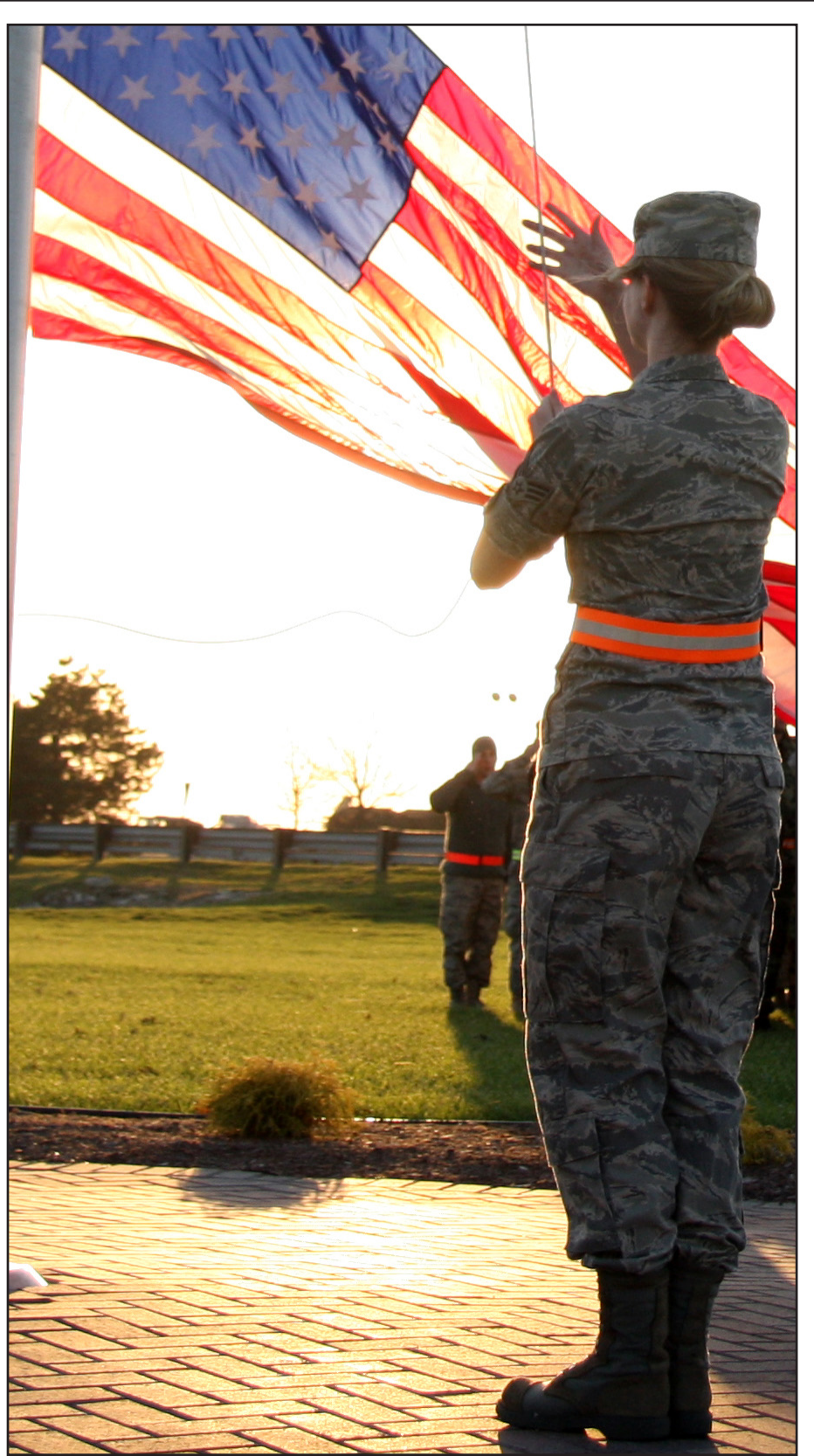


Photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Orders-Woempner

By dawn's early light

Senior Airman Michaela McClintock, an inventory specialist with the 434th Logistics Readiness Squadron, raises the flag during reveille Nov. 7. Members of the 434th LRS stood in formation for the ceremony.