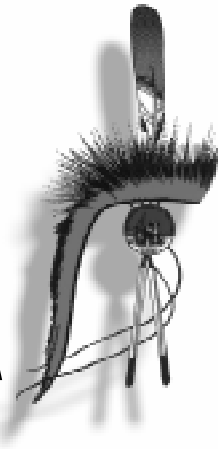


KANZA

SPIRIT 931ST AIR REFUELING GROUP



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McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas

March 2002

Benefits, quality workplace vital to national defense

By Maj. Paul Koscak

Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — Air Force and Department of Defense officials told members of the Senate Armed Services Committee on Feb. 13 that recruiting, training and quality-of-life incentives are key to ensuring the security of the United States.

Investing in people through training, higher pay and bonuses must be as important as buying the latest weapon systems, said Michael Dominguez, assistant secretary of the Air Force for manpower and Reserve affairs.

Specialties such as intelligence, security and communications will be particularly hard hit and must be offset by cuts in less critical career fields, he said.

The president's 4.5 percent pay raise — the highest in 20 years — and "a robust and targeted bonus program" will help the Air Force compete with the private sector in both attracting and retaining quality airmen, Dominguez said. Nurses, dentists, aviators and some enlisted specialties now receive cash bonuses for continued service.

"But the decision to either stay or separate is ultimately made around the family dinner table," he said.

That calls for a "new social contract" to ensure families feel good about the benefits and support they receive, said David Chu, the undersecretary of defense.

"Sixty percent of troops have family responsibilities," he told the committee. Family support programs such as child-care, youth activities and spouse employment must be "part of the equation."

Chu said the number of servicemembers on food stamps has plummeted from 19,400 in 1991 to 4,200 in 2001. An anticipated 2,100 users are expected in 2002, thanks to DOD's family subsistence supplemental allowance program that cuts down on out-of-pocket expenses. The president's budget increases funding for family support centers by 8.5 percent or \$17 million.



Spirit Photo by/Maj. David Fruck

Changes on the way as construction begins

The construction of the active-duty 384th Air Refueling Squadron operations building is underway just south of the 931st headquarters building. By the March UTA, the gazebo should be moved to its new location near the main parking lot. Parking will be also affected throughout the construction. The south entrance to the main parking lot is already blocked and parking north of building 850 will be prohibited. The contractor will build a temporary gravel parking lot just east of the main lot to help ease parking problems in the future.

Those issues are far more challenging for the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve. Support must extend not only to activated citizen airmen and their families but to their employers as well, Lt. Gen. James Sherrard, chief of the Air Force Reserve, told the committee.

More than 11,000 reservists are mobilized in support of Opera-

See Benefits Page 7

AEF rotation policy remains unchanged

By Gen. John P. Jumper

Air Force chief of staff

WASHINGTON (AFNS) — Air Force policy for aerospace expeditionary force rotations remains unchanged. Most airmen will be vulnerable for a three-month rotation followed by a 12-month period before the next rotation.

However, the combination of multiple crisis operations and our ongoing steady state commitments has placed extraordinary stress on the expeditionary air force and our resources.

Taking into account everything we know about current and future requirements to support our nation's fight against terrorism, I have determined the best option is to rotate the majority of AEF 9 and 10 units as scheduled.

It appears that our current operations will continue for a long period of time; therefore, we need to rotate our expeditionary forces when and where feasible. We will rotate forces deployed for operations Enduring Freedom, Northern Watch and Southern Watch so those deployed the longest will be allowed to rotate home first to the maximum extent possible.

In some stressed functional areas, requirements exceed the available AEF 1 and 2 forces. We are committed to finding solutions, which will relieve the stress on these career fields. We have the full support of the office of the secretary of defense in this effort.

However, at this time, we cannot rotate all of our people in these stressed career fields and fill all current requirements. We are forced to extend the rotation to 135 days, or in some cases, to 179 days, for this small number of individuals.

The number of people affected appears to be



Gen. John P. Jumper

less than 10 percent of our deployed forces.

This is an extraordinary time for the Air Force and our country. The nation is grateful for the sacrifices our airmen continue to make in meeting our commitments to fight the war on terrorism and defend the American homeland.

The secretary and I are proud of the job you are doing and we are personally committed to maintaining the AEF rotation schedule to the greatest extent possible.

Commentary: I didn't know that!

By Brig. Gen. Chip Utterback

Former 366th Air Expeditionary Wing commander

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (AFPN) — I saw an e-mail that one of our warriors sent to his family and friends recently. I didn't spy on the guy; I simply read the private e-mail to his family in a nationally syndicated newspaper column. From that e-mail and some Web sites several of our folks have established to keep family members updated — to find them, just search for the base's name — I learned a lot that the bad guys can learn, too. In 20 minutes I learned how many people are here, exactly where our base is located, what time we eat and how many people are in what tent at a given time. I learned what kind of airplanes we have, much about our mission, and a lot about our security. I can go on and on. We have rules on communications for a reason. Your innocent letter, e-mail or Web site can end up on the front page. You might make us an easy target and our families won't appreciate it. Our friends and family don't understand operational security and communications security the way we do, or should. We are at war, we have been attacked, people want to hurt us. Let's not give the bad guys a how-to manual. (Courtesy of Air Combat Command News Service)

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SLOPES SAFETY; SKIING, SNOWBOARDING PREVENTIONS

By TSgt. Lloyd E. Robinson
931st OSF

There are plenty of winter activities that one can take part in during the long winter months, skiing and snowboarding are among the favorites. Whether or not you are a professional or a complete beginner, you need to be aware of the hazards of winter sports such as skiing and snowboarding. Due to the recent death of Sonny Bono, we are now being constantly reminded of the dangers associated with snow skiing and snowboarding. Many dangers are created by being unprepared, not following the rules and not having the proper information to make well-educated judgments and decisions. By following the information provided, you will have the necessary tools to go out and have fun in the snow and live to tell about it.

To begin with, before you even attempt to hit the slopes, you should be in top physical condition. We all have our own level that we consider "top" and you should be there before you go out for a fun day of skiing. And investing in Ski lessons is not a bad idea either. Taking lessons will make your skiing more enjoyable and a lot safer. Today there are two general lessons that people are taking, skiing and snowboarding. Whether you are skiing or snowboarding, always ski under control and on ski runs that fit

your skiing ability. You should always stay focused on the task at hand, which in this case the focus would be on your skiing and at the mountain in front of you. Try and avoid other skiers, a good way to do this is by keeping a "safe" distance of at least 25-50 feet from any other skier. Ski runs can become congested and dangerous, so if you notice a ski run is busy, don't hesitate to stop and let other skiers pass. Skiing and snowboarding are a bit like driving, so follow the rules of skiing as well. Yielding the while merging and observing all signs are pertinent while taking on a slope. And by no means should you or your family members participate in any type of "horseplay". By doing this, you are endangering not only yourself; you are endangering all other skiers that are on the mountain with you. Lastly, all skiers should use devices designed to prevent "runaway" skis. Runaway skis can be very dangerous to other skiers.

So do you think you are ready to hit the slopes yet? Well think again. One last bit of information any skier should know, and that is "dressing appropriately". Sounds simple, but more and more people are dying from exposure to the elements. You should always dress with warm clothes such as warm underwear, a warm hat, thick gloves, thick woolen socks, wa-

See Safety Page 7

Spirit Spotlight

Senior Airman Chris Norris

18th Air Refueling Squadron

This month's Spotlight selectee is a Haysville, Kan., native who has been in the Air Force for 22 months

Job title:
Boom Operator

Civilian job:
None

Favorite way to relax: Work on my car with my brother, play sports, Hang out and watch movies with my Girlfriend.

Easiest way to annoy me: To hear people complain

Most influential people in my life: My Father, He helped me find the greatest job in the world (Boom Operator). He showed me how to be successful, and helped me a little along the way. He is a mentor to me as well as my father.

If I won \$1 million, I would:

I would buy a house and build a 1981 Trans Am





Around the Air Force



Air Force remains committed to AEF rotation cycles

By Tech. Sgt. Tim Dougherty
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON—The combination of America's war on terrorism and steady state commitments worldwide has put increased strain on the Air Force's aerospace expeditionary forces. However, except for a few stressed career fields, officials at the Pentagon say normal rotations should be back soon.

"Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper is committed to the AEF construct—a three-month deployment with a 12-month period at home," said Maj. Gen. Jeffrey B. Kohler, director of operational plans, deputy chief of staff for air and space operations.

"Given the war on terrorism, we had to go through a momentary blip in our rotation schedule," he said. "However, it looks like we're going to be on time in bringing home about 90 percent of the people who are currently deployed. We will rotate the forces deployed for operations Enduring Freedom, Northern Watch and Southern Watch so that those who deployed first will be allowed to rotate home first to the maximum extent possible."

There are some exceptions, Kohler said. While Air Force leaders are working hard to come up with a solution, a very small number of career fields

may not be able to rotate as scheduled, he said.

"We know that there are some stressed career fields, such as security forces, combat communications and firefighters, that might have to stay a little longer," Kohler said. "But that's not to say that absolutely everyone in those career fields

“The reason we are stressed is simple—we do such a great job.”

—Maj. Gen. Jeffrey B. Kohler
director of operational plans, deputy chief of
staff for air and space operations

will be staying longer."

The deployment picture will start to come into focus by the middle of February when the Air Force begins scheduling for the rotation in March, he said.

"It might work out that only one or two unit type codes out of an entire civil engineering squadron might be the stressed career field," Kohler said. "We just don't know yet because we haven't gotten down to that level of fidelity."

The tremendous performance of the AEF in Operation Enduring Freedom is what caused the stress on certain career fields in the first place, Kohler said.

"The Air Force is sort of a victim of its own success," Kohler said. "The reason we are

stressed is simple—we do such a great job. We went out and set up these bases and started generating sorties as soon as we were asked. I think the results speak for themselves in the war on terrorism in Afghanistan. The (U.S.) Central Command commander in chief could not have done what he did without

ploy and place them in an AEF library.

"This crisis has caused us to look a little bit deeper," Kohler said. "We'd like to be able to find people who we haven't originally had in an AEF library who can deploy but normally don't deploy. For example, Air Education and Training Command has instructors who have special skill sets, and the AETC leadership has said that there may be periods in the year when they can rotate. This is just one example and we're looking at all options."

Other fixes for stressed career fields are going to take some time and may only be resolved with increased manpower. Although the Air Force has asked for an end-strength increase of about 22,000 with 7,000 requested for this year, because of training requirements, this is more of a long-term solution, Kohler said.

"This is an extraordinary time for the Air Force and our country," Jumper recently told commanders. "The nation is grateful for the sacrifices our airmen continue to make in meeting our commitments to fight the war on terrorism and defend the American homeland. The secretary and I are proud of the job you are doing and we are personally committed to maintaining the AEF rotation schedule to the greatest possible extent."

the superb work of all the airmen who went out and set it up."

To ease the problems the Air Force has in stressed career fields under current requirements, about 10 percent of the people will stay deployed a little longer—some up to 135 days; others, up to 179 days, Kohler said. To cover the overlap, the second part of the solution will be to reach into the next AEF and bring replacement unit type codes forward about 45 days. Any reduction in current requirements may get the AEF cycle on track a little bit quicker, he said.

Another way to relieve some of the burden on our deployed people is to find additional airmen who normally do not de-



Active-duty retirees return to ranks as reservists

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. — Three former, active-duty NCOs stepped out of retirement and back into uniform when they enlisted in Air Force Reserve Command in late November.

Tech. Sgts. David W. King joined the 302nd Aeromedical Staging Squadron and John Gaydusek signed up with the 302nd Maintenance Squadron at Peterson AFB, Colo., Nov. 26. The next day Master Sgt. Al Eakle, a civilian employee in the 934th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office, strengthened his ties to the unit, located at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport Air Reserve Station, Minn., by becoming a reservist in the office.

The National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2001 added Section 12741 to Chapter 1223, Title 10 USC, which permits retired active-duty members who later serve in the Air Force Reserve to elect retirement as members of the Retired Reserve.

King learned about the program on the Internet. "At first I thought it was a typo because I just knew it was against the law at the time," he said.

The three men cited different reasons for wanting to return to Air Force blue.

"I loved what I did when I was on active duty," said King, who was chief of medical inspections for Air Force Space Command at Peterson when he retired in August 1998. "I missed it. My military job (aerospace medicine) doesn't exist in the civilian sector."

In his full-time, civilian job, he is the chief of GPS satellite systems configuration management for the 2nd Space Operations Squadron in the 50th Space Wing at Schriever AFB.

Camaraderie was another reason King joined the Reserve for two years. "Like many reserv-

ists, it wasn't for the money," said the 22-year veteran. "Pay is much better doing overtime for my civilian job. I just wanted to be part of this team again."

Employment potential motivated Gaydusek, a data management processor for a communications company in Colorado Springs. "I'm interested in pursuing a full-time air reserve technician position, and this is a good way to get my foot in the door," he said.

"I also enjoy the lifestyle, the people. After 20 years, it's hard to give the Air Force up," said Gaydusek, who retired the same month he enlisted.

Gaydusek signed up for one year. "If it works out, I'll stay for another 22 years — if they let me," he said.

Both men were drawn to benefits offered by the Reserve.

"The Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance is a lot cheaper than civilian life insurance, and I like having access to the Community College of the Air Force," King said.

"My wife can take all of her CLEP tests for free, which is nice," Gaydusek said.

Becoming a reservist complements Eakle's full-time, civil service job.

As the assistant public affairs officer and editor of the unit magazine, he wanted to connect with the traditional reservists in the office. "At first the only way I had contact with them was to come in on unit training assembly weekends," he said. "I earned comp time for doing that."

When he heard about the program, he knew it was right for him. By joining the Reserve, he earns points toward a bigger retirement check when he reaches age 60 and maybe more with a possible promotion during his four-year enlistment.

But it would not be automatic. He was told it would take

up to six months to enlist and a waiver since he had been retired for more than five years.

His commander is glad he did not give up. "The wing will benefit from this program by the amount of experience retirees bring with them," said Col. Dean J. Despinoy, 934th AW commander. "However, each request has to be evaluated individually to see how it fits into the organization and impacts our reservists. In this case, it was a great fit."

Eakle worked a number of jobs for the first two years after retiring in 1993, and entered civil service as a tour guide, and later, supervisor at the Hoover Dam Visitor Center in 1995.

The one thing he missed most and noticed lacking in all the jobs he had after leaving the Air Force was the camaraderie. That

sense of belonging returned when he arrived at the 934th AW more than a year ago but "was really brought home" when he participated in his first UTA as a reservist.

"There were a lot of surprised looks, handshakes and welcomes from people in the wing this past weekend," he said. "We have some great people here, and it felt really good to be one of them as a reservist."

Retired active-duty people who are interested in joining the Reserve may contact the Recruiting Opportunity Center at 1-800-295-4648 and leave information for a recruiter to call them back. More information about the program is available on the Web: www.afreserve.com/retiree. **AFRC News Service**



Spirit Photo by/Maj. David Fruck

Despinoy takes over at Tinker

Col. Dean Despinoy, center, took over command of the 507th Air Refueling Wing, Tinker Air Force Base, Okla., on Feb. 3. Despinoy, the former commander of the 931st Air Refueling Group, was most recently the commander of the 934th Airlift Wing, Minneapolis-St. Paul Air Reserve Station, Minn. Brig. Gen. (select) Harold L. Mitchell, left, 4th Air Force vice-commander, performed the change-of-command ceremony. At right is Col. Tim Wrighton, who moved from Tinker to March Air Reserve Base, Calif., to take over command of the 452nd Air Mobility Wing.

Military Personnel Flight hours

The core hours of operation for the MPF are: Mondays through Fridays—7:30 a.m.-4 p.m.; UTA Saturdays —8 a.m.-4 p.m.; and UTA Sundays—10 a.m.-4 p.m.

OUTPROCESSING

If you, or any unit member you know, needs to out process for TDY, reassignment, or retirement, please keep in mind that on UTA weekends the Military Pay section (Traci or Dee) is only open for business on Saturdays from 0730 to 1300 hours. For further information contact TSgt Anick Wallace in Relocations at X-3665.

Admin Training

The MPF is closed each Sunday of the UTA from 0730 – 1000 for In-House training. Classes are held in building 850, room 201. Administrative personnel (3A0X1 & 3S0X1) are welcome to attend.

MPF Training

Training for all 3As and 3Cs will be provided on **Sunday** of the UTA. Classes are held from 0900 - 1100 in building 850, room 217.

NCO Leadership

We have received class dates from both Tinker & Ft. Worth Joint Reserve Base (Carswell). Interested SSgt & TSgt may contact Group Training for further information.

ART Orientation

New enlisted ARTS should attend this course within their 1st year of being hired. It is now an in residence course, held at Robins AFB, GA. The next class is 4 & 5 Jun 02. Contact your unit training manager or Group Training to request a slot.

Senior NCO Leadership

Application packages for the May and September

classes are due to DPMT by 10 March 02. Stop by Group training if you have questions.

Movin' On Up

Congratulations to the following members for completing Professional Military Education or formal technical training.

The following recently completed in-residence PME:

Senior Airman Randy Salmons, 931st MSF, (ALS)

The following recently completed or will soon complete formal training: **Tech Sgt. Michelle Carlross** 931st MSF Personnel 7 level school; **Staff Sgt. Matt Chounlamany** 931st AGS Crew Chief 7 level school; **Airman Basic David Dixon**, 931st AGS, Comm-Nav 3 level school

Training Opportunities

Confronting difficult issues course: The Professional Development Center from AFRC will be providing this

class to 931st members on 19 - 21 May 02. Class size is limited to 10. Those interested may contact Group Training for further details.

HRDC Lending Library: The lending library has recently expanded. In addition to new books and cassette tapes, it now includes a self-paced course on CD-Rom to learn Office 2000 software applications. Stop by Group Training and take a look!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!

Do you enjoy taking pictures? Are you versed in desk top publishing? Would you just like to pitch in and help where you can?? The HRDC is starting a yearbook for the 931st and we need lots of help. Anyone interested may contact MSgt Pam Summers (x-5423) for more information.

931st Airmen of the Year



Spirit Photos by/Tech. Sgt. David Brumley

During the February Group Commander's Call, Col. Jim Bouska, 931st Air Refueling Group commander, presented the yearly award winners for 2001. Winners include Master Sgt. Mack Housman, 931st Mission Support Flight, senior NCO of the year; Tech. Sgt. Darren Demel, 18th Air Refueling Squadron, NCO of the year; and Senior Airman Joel Tilley, 931st Aircraft Generation Squadron, airman of the year.

Safety

Continued from Page 3

ter-resistant ski pants, a weatherproof-well insulated parka and goggles. Woolen jumpers are preferable over synthetic clothes because they are warmer and provide excellent insulation, even when wet. NEVER were jeans or cotton gloves, they provide very poor protection from the wind, rain and snow. If you choose to wear sunglasses instead of goggles, invest in a quality pair, good filtering is essential even in midwinter. And if you plan on spending ALL day on the slopes, take plenty of sunscreen with you. Sunburn is a serious problem in ski resorts. People often forget about protecting their face and lips from the elements. Chapped lips and sunburn can be prevented if you just take the time to use a little sunscreen and chap stick, you'll thank yourself later. Remember, exposure is no joke and can be fatal.

By following all precautions listed here and at the ski lodge you go to, you can greatly reduce or eliminate the risks that are out there waiting for you and your loved ones. Practicing safety is not a hard part of life to deal with, not if you make it a significant part of your everyday life. By doing this, it'll be second nature and you will live a longer and happier life while still enjoying all of the "adventurous" things that life has to offer, such as skiing and snowboarding. So go out there and enjoy the slopes people, just do so in a safe and practical manner.

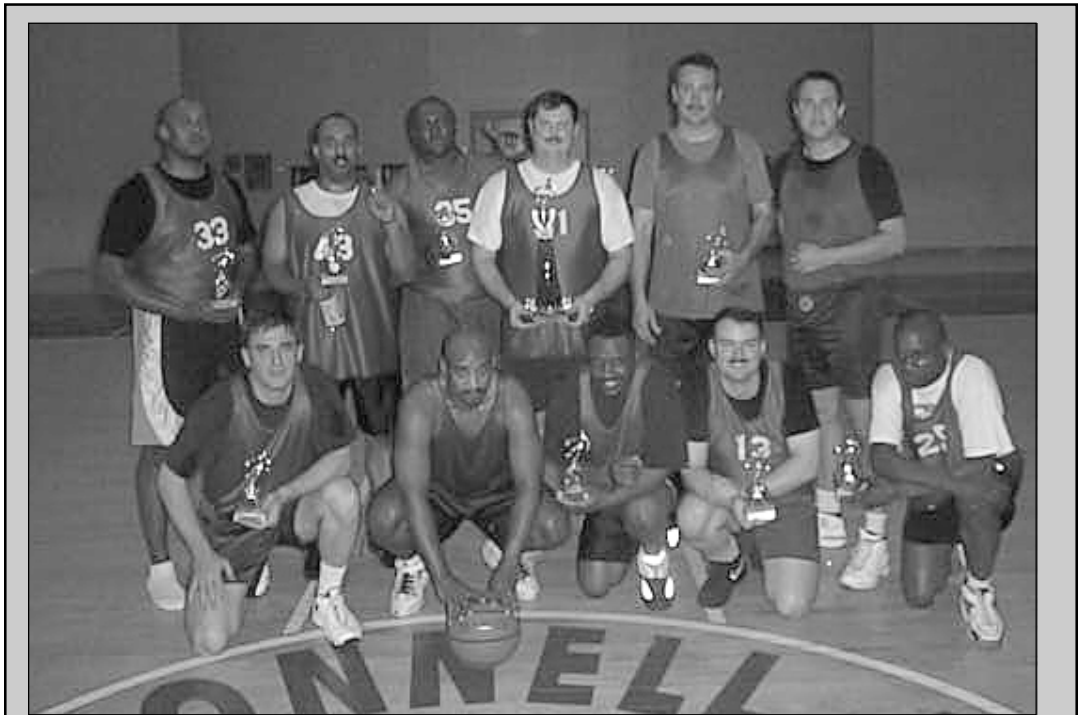


Photo courtesy of McConnell Fitness Center

B-ball champs

The 931st Over-30 Basketball Team won the Over-30 League in January with a 15-1 record. In the playoffs the 931st team went undefeated including a thrilling 49-38 win against the 22nd OSS to win the base championship finishing with an overall 19-1 record. Pictured: Back row from left to right Jay James, Milt Wilhight, Nate Brown, Greg Gilmour, Cliff Rosen, Joe Olive. Front Randy Brink, Pat Johnson, Ray Patterson, Larry Brown, Orlando Ross (Not pictured Travis Clark, Mark Young).

Benefits

Continued from Page 1

tion Enduring Freedom, he said, supporting everything from intelligence to aerial port to medical services.

"The Air Force has enjoyed more than 30 years of unparalleled total force integration success," Sherrard said of the Reserve. "You can't tell us apart and that's the way it should be."

Although the Reserve exceeded its recruiting goal for the first time in five years, with manning at 100.6 percent of its authorized strength, the command is not resting on its laurels, he said.

Recruiting candidates without prior service still lags behind, and

Stop-Loss has not helped, dwindling the traditional pipeline of potential reserve candidates. To enhance the pool of experienced reservists, retired military people are being encouraged to continue service in the Reserve, Sherrard said.

"We save valuable training dollars and benefit from specialty skills, experience and knowledge these individuals possess," he said. "Once returned, members earn additional pay, retirement points, years of service and promotion opportunity."

Like the Reserve, the Air National Guard exceeded its recruiting goal but continues striving to attract quality servicemembers through increased income and benefits, Brig. Gen. David

Brubaker, deputy director of the Air National Guard, told the committee. Thanks to Congress, Servicemen's Group Life Insurance offers a \$250,000 benefit and the Uniformed Service Thrift Savings Plan provides added retirement income, for instance.

Emphasis is being placed on increased tuition assistance, computer access and child-care for guard members during drill weekends, he said. The Air National Guard is now funding a full-time family readiness center at each of its major bases.

"The program significantly enhances mission capabilities by reducing pressures on Air National Guard personnel and their families, as well as improves their quality of life," Brubaker said.



DEEP FREEZE



U.S. Air Force Photo by Master Sgt. Kim M. Allain

Engine and brake heaters keep aircraft parts from freezing up while a C-141C Starlifter is unloaded on the ice near McMurdo Station, Antarctica. C-141C crews shuttle people, equipment and supplies from Christchurch, New Zealand, during Operation Deep Freeze, a joint military operation of the U.S. Armed Forces and the New Zealand Defence Forces, providing logistic support for the U.S. National Science Foundation's Antarctic Program.

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