

AIR | OBSERVER

the biannual journal of the 137th special operations wing

TOTAL FORCE

205 EIS SUPPORTS
TINKER AFB

EMERALD WARRIOR

WILL ROGERS AIR COMMANDOS
PARTICIPATE IN USSOCOM EXERCISE

MATOP

AEROMED TRAINING
EVENT RETURNS
TO WRANGB

AIR OBSERVER

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JAN/FEB/MAR/APR/MAY 2016

Vol. 02 / No. 01

www.137arw.af.mil

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ON THE COVER

These portraits honor the sacrifice and bravery that first responders from the 137th Special Operations Wing are prepared to make every day. Air National Guard first responders are always prepared to move toward danger to serve their fellow Airmen, local community, state and country.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Senior Airman Tyler K. Woodward

POST-PRODUCTION: Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux

GO DIGITAL

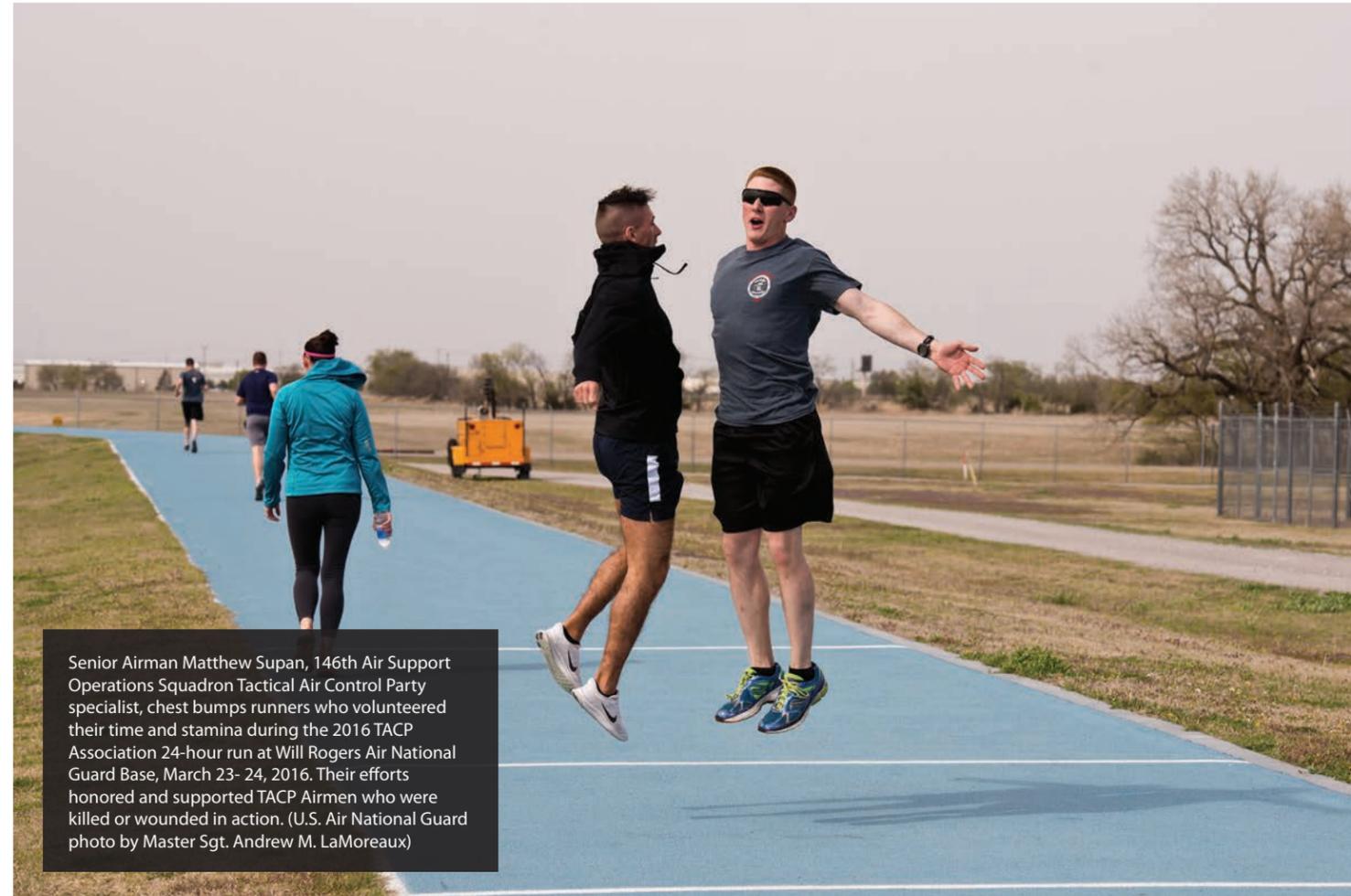
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JANUARY 2016 - MAY 2016

Volume 2 Number 1



Senior Airman Matthew Supan, 146th Air Support Operations Squadron Tactical Air Control Party specialist, chest bumps runners who volunteered their time and stamina during the 2016 TACP Association 24-hour run at Will Rogers Air National Guard Base, March 23- 24, 2016. Their efforts honored and supported TACP Airmen who were killed or wounded in action. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux)

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By now, it shouldn't be a surprise to anyone how extremely proud I am of this unique and diverse wing. While we will be officially designated a special operations wing in the not too distant future, it is in fact our diversity, not our designation, that makes us truly special. This is why it seems very timely to highlight our fifth Special Operations Forces Truth: "Most special operations forces require non-SOF assistance."

Like many, I would occasionally find myself taking a moment to contemplate exactly what that means, "non-SOF"? By serving our country in the U.S. Air Force we are collectively less than 1 percent of the 1 percent of Americans that wear the uniform. Doesn't that make each one of us special? Doesn't each individual unit bring something unique to the table to improve our collective effectiveness?

Of our 18 units on Will Rogers Air National Guard Base, 13 fall under Air Force Special Operations Command, four under Air Combat Command, one under Air Mobility Command, and one under Air Force Space Command. Moreover, each unit plays a significant role in our ability to perform our mission.

- Our Engineering Installation Squadron is critical to establishing the infrastructure necessary to support our MC-12 mission.
- Our Air Support Operations Squadron is vital to aircrew training.
- Our Intelligence Squadron is essential to aspects of our airborne intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance mission.
- Eventually with the establishment of a Joint Terminal Attack Controller Qualification Course and Airborne Cryptological Certification Course, WRANGB will become a center of excellence for manned ISR.
- Our Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron continues to set the gold standard when it comes to treating and transporting our wounded soldiers and Airmen — preserving the golden hour.

Most Airmen are acutely aware of what it means to be a special operator — Airmen using special tactics, techniques and procedures in less permissive environments, developed during intensified training. Perhaps more importantly, I would offer special operations requires a unique mindset from every Airman; a mindset that has clearly taken hold at WRANGB as we continue our conversion toward a special operations wing.

This Air Observer features units that let our Air Force Core Values, Wing Pillars, and SOF truths serve as a beacon to guide their collective efforts. These units understand their role in the wing's mission. They have professional pride in what they bring to the fight, make sure others know what they bring, and know when to bring it! They are non-SOF support that is truly special.

As always, be safe, fly safe, and fly smart!

WING COMMANDER
COL. DEVIN R. WOODEN



The five Special Operations Forces Truths, on initial view, seem very clear and concise. However, the fifth truth, "Most special operations forces require non-SOF assistance" creates a slight pause in many as we search to define "non-SOF". Most units at Will Rogers Air National Guard Base will carry the "Special Operations" prefix and be gained as Air Commandos under Air Force Special Operations Command. So the question becomes, who is non-SOF?

As a wing falling under the Air Mobility Command, or AMC, we provided support to the warfighter from all Major Commands. Hauling petroleum, passengers, patients, bullets, MREs or other professional gear, we provided the support needed to win the fight — non-SOF support.

Coming from logistics, we had slogans that directly linked us to the mission because we were proud of our role. These slogans included "You can't fly without supply" and "Without POL, you're SOL". What we were really saying was, don't forget the personnel that helped you get where you're going so you can achieve mission success. We have always been fortunate, past and present, in the 137th to have leadership that appreciates the entire team and understands that identifying the "tip of the spear" may not be as simple as it seems. As a combination of Air Commandos and other MAJCOM-assigned Airmen, we may transition back and forth between SOF and non-SOF support.

I see non-SOF as fluid in nature because most of us, if not all, will eventually be considered non-SOF support in getting our warfighters downrange. I have the pleasure of leading an outstanding team of Logistics Readiness, Civil Engineering, Security Forces, Communications, Force Support, Contracting, and Engineering and Installation personnel, all of who will find themselves as both home-station and downrange support, now and well into the future. Even if you aren't pulling the trigger, you are making things happen to get that individual in the right place, at the right time, with the right information and equipment, on time, every time. Take pride and pleasure in your role, wherever you are. The work you do and the non-SOF support you provide is integral to WRANGB and essential for us to complete the mission.

MISSION SUPPORT GROUP
COL. RICK L. MUTCHLER

“Succeed? We always succeed. The 137th and 185th never fail to succeed. We don’t go for satisfactory; we go for outstanding. Will Rogers will do an outstanding job at whatever they decide to do.”

RETIRED MAJ. GEN. STANLEY F.H. NEWMAN

Former Wing Commander



HISTORY LOST AND FOUND | Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux

Retired Maj. Gen. Stanley F.H. Newman poses with the flight helmet he wore during his time in the Oklahoma Air National Guard, April 2, 2016. The helmet features Newman’s name on the back and was found in a closet at Wiley Post Airport in Bethany, Okla., among several other historical objects from Oklahoma’s military past.



Everyone, special operations or not, needs a little help, and teamwork in the workplace can be difficult.

Teams at work often consist of a variety of conflicting personalities and styles. Getting to a point in which a team can collaborate and work in harmony can be a difficult task for a leader, and it takes time.

I love the following story about a widowed man in his 80s who lived up the street from a young boy:

One day, the older man said to the boy, "Come on into my garage. I want to show you something."

He pulled out a dusty, old rock tumbler that consisted of a motor, a coffee can and a little band between them. He then invited the boy to his backyard where they collected some very average and old rocks. They put them in the can with a little bit of liquid and some grit powder.

The old man then closed the can, turned the motor on and said, "Come back tomorrow."

The boy remembered the can making quite the racket as the stones went around in the can.

He came back the next day, and when he and the widowed man opened the can to take out the rocks, the boy was surprised. The once average rocks were beautiful and polished.

"The same common stones that had gone in, through rubbing against each other like this (clapping his hands), creating a little bit of friction, and making a little bit of noise, have now come out as these beautiful, polished rocks," said the older man.

Teams are like this handful of stones. Individually we can be fairly normal, ordinary and even a bit rough. But through the process of teamwork we can end up in a very different state.

Teams consisting of incredibly talented people who are passionate and working hard towards something often bump up against each other, argue, and sometimes fight with a little bit of noise. But by working together, they polish one another and their ideas to create beautiful stones.

Have you built up enough trust in your teams to allow for some collision and disagreement on occasion?

Passive, follow-the-leader types of teams are destined to fail. Each member of a team brings something unique, whether it's their gifts, ideas or arguments, and these team members must feel like they can express themselves without embarrassment or retribution. Because, after all, we all need a little help sometimes.

CHAPLAIN
CAPT. JOSEPH D. BAKER



Special operations forces typically comprise of operators – the forces in the air or on the ground directly affecting the operational environment. Defining the concept of special operations, however, includes everything that supports those operators. We may not all have a direct impact on the mission, but we all did something to successfully get them there.

As an intelligence squadron, we are involved before, during and after each mission, and always in a support function for our aircrew members. Now, as we transition to the intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance mission set, we are able to focus more on the special operations aspect. We are watching our role grow into those ISR capabilities and have a unique opportunity to not only support the aircrew, but have them support us in our collection capability.

In the first case, we, as intelligence operations specialists, provide intelligence and mission briefs, threat training, debriefs and reporting that is tailored to our aircrew and the MC-12W. We also support the Wing with intelligence information and deployment preparation. Another intelligence function we bring is geospatial intelligence. Once in place, we will have the ability to conduct full motion video exploitation in support of both air and ground customers in critical targeting, battle damage assessment, combat identification/movement, multiple intelligence correlation, and threat analysis.

In the second case, the platform and its collection methods can be used to fill intelligence gaps, providing us with information to analyze and feed to the greater intelligence community. In all actuality, the intelligence role is kind of an "I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine" perspective. By supporting the mission, the aircrew and the customer, we are able to analyze and build products enhancing the intelligence community as a whole.

Because of this dual and somewhat cyclical role of our squadron, we appreciate the specific need for both special operations forces as well as the more conventional support from other members of the Wing.

Anytime we have an exercise, deployment and throughout everyday training, all support is critical. They are the planners, preparers, and financiers. Simply stated, they get us there, they sustain us while we are there, and they bring us back home.

We are now a special operations wing, supporting special operations forces. Whether or not we are supporting or are the supported, we are all here to train, build and provide the best capabilities. We can't do that without all the supporting functions that the 137 SOW brings.

INTELLIGENCE
LT. COL. SHELBY L. DREYER



LIGHT EM' UP | Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux

A bolt of lightning strikes the area behind a parked MC-12W and AC-130U Spooky aircraft during a storm delay on the flightline of Hurlbert Field, Fla., May 3, 2016. The aircraft and crews were there as participants of the Air Force Special Operations exercise Emerald Warrior 16, which hosted more than 1,500 personnel and nearly 55 aircraft for the two-week duration, May 2-13, 2016.



With 20 years in education, working with high school students has taught me many things. Those things, combined with 24 years in the guard as a bomb loader, stinger operator and broadcaster, has led me to believe in one absolute – our Airmen are amazing!

What other organization asks an 18 or 19 year old to be responsible for multi-million dollar equipment or stand guard with the willingness to put their life on the line for their brothers and sisters? Who but our amazing Airmen would answer the call and be a part of that 1 percent?

This goes to say that as a fellow Guardsmen and your Human Resources Advisor, I believe in our Airmen.

I find that to do my job, to value Airmen and their development, operationalize diversity, include Airmen in development opportunities, provide practical ways for Airmen to improve their skills and abilities and engage people, one thing makes it all possible — connections.

In order to develop Airmen, we must create meaningful and enduring connections with the people next to us, below us and above us, no matter the differences between us.

No struggling student ever stayed in school because they liked math or history. They stayed because they connected with a teacher who stood by them with a high-five during the successes and a metaphorical smack upside the head during the momentary lapses in judgment.

Similarly, no Guardsmen stays longer than their first enlistment, much less 20 plus years, because we love computer-based trainings, two hours in MOPP 4, or the walk back with your wingman after “random” drug screenings.

No, we stick around because of the people, the conversations and the connections we have created.

We all have that “mentor” with a connection that directly influenced our path at one point in our lives and careers. Let us be that mentor.

This Wing has created an environment where leadership can be found and created at all levels. Each person has a voice regardless of rank, gender, age, race, or your job as a student, truck driver or lawyer. Our naturally diverse mix of experiences and opportunities are what make us strong.

We find and support each other through making and maintaining active connections.

My primary role as your Human Resource Advisor is to promote our wing’s most valuable resource ... you. I am here to help you create these connections inside and outside of the unit, wing and community, and to help maximize your potential for success — as you define it.

**HUMAN RESOURCE ADVISOR
SENIOR MASTER SGT. JUN H. KIM**



When an Air Force recruiting commercial comes on TV, images of soaring jets zip across the screen or ground operators jump out of the back of a C-130. These adrenaline pumping Air Force Specialty Codes are just a small representation of the 244 enlisted and officer careers the Air Force recruits on a daily basis.

As the newest members of the Air Force Special Operations Command family, those of us in less glorified career fields are beginning to discover how we support not only our regular customers, but the special operations forces we support.

The Logistics Readiness Squadron is comprised of nine career-specific specialties, the most of any Mission Support Group squadron. It is a prime example of a hodge-podge of AFSCs that come together to perform critical, but quiet, professional roles in the day-to-day operations of an AFSOC base.

During a recent temporary duty assignment to Hurlburt Field, LRS participated in its first AFSOC exercise, Emerald Warrior, which is the largest of its kind. Special Operations Forces from nearly every branch of the services participated, and a common theme throughout the two weeks was the need expressed for LRS personnel. In fact, LRS members touched nearly every element of Emerald Warrior operations.

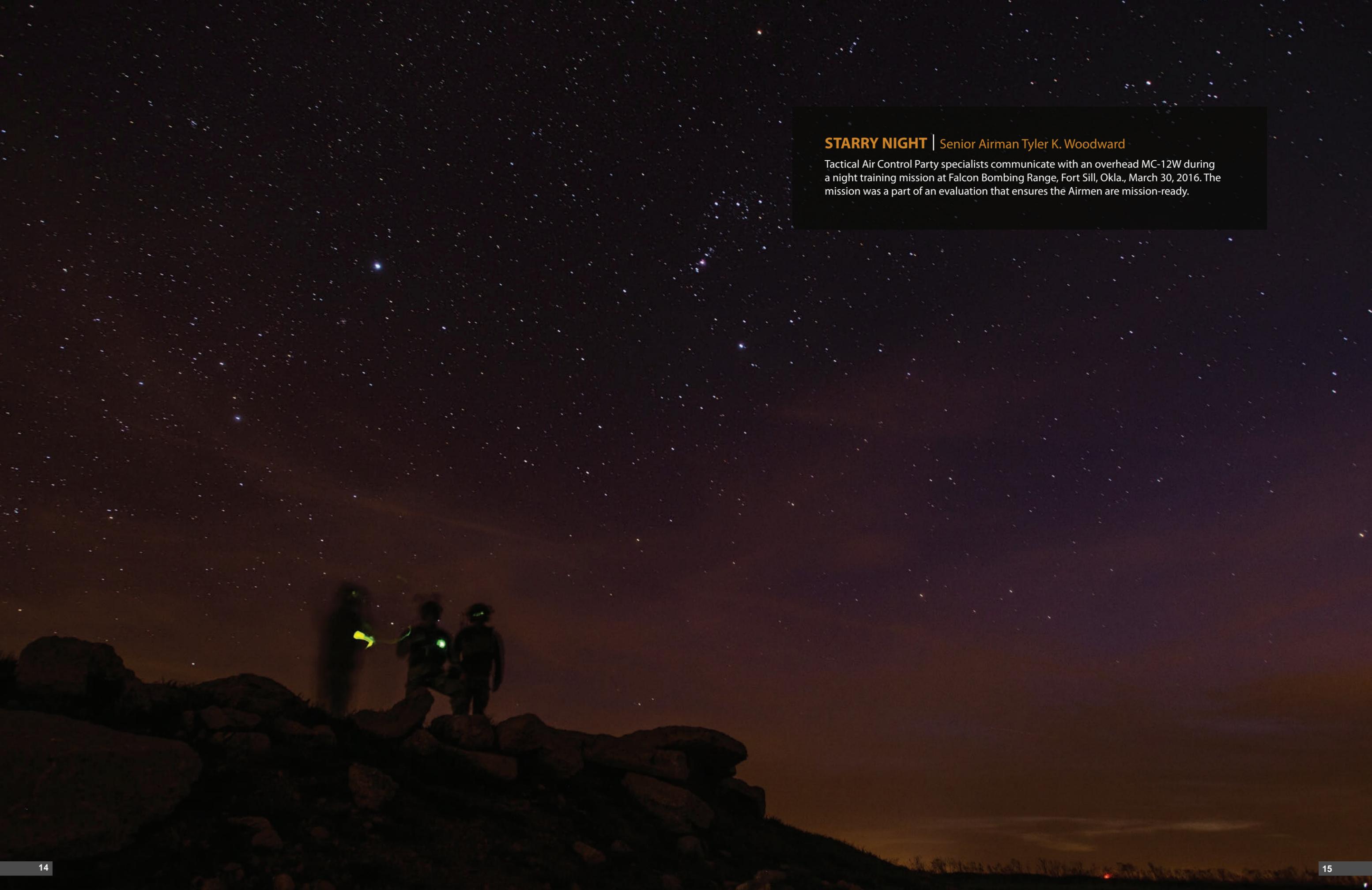
The moment the plane hit the ground, Small Air Terminal personnel assisted with the download of many of the 38 participating units’ personnel and their cargo. Vehicle Operators moved Naval Special Warfare personnel, Army Rangers, and numerous other personnel and valuable cargo to and from the field multiple times a day. Vehicle maintainers sustained all vehicles: fire trucks, Humvees, forklifts, all-terrain vehicles, and more, many of these used directly by SOF. Fuels hit the flightline running ensuring that the aircraft, generators, and ground vehicles were issued the life blood necessary for their operation. Personnel from the Materiel Management Flight supplied life-saving chemical warfare gear, body armor, uniforms and weapons. The Traffic Management Flight received and processed crucial aircraft parts and equipment while Munitions provided operators with thousands of rounds of training ammunition. Tucked neatly into the background, beginning months prior, Logistics Planners coordinated every detail of the complicated deployment, while Logistics Officers orchestrated every moving part of the exercise from cradle to grave.

Diving deeper into our individual roles, it becomes evident the mission would not happen without LRS and justifies the SOF truth, “Most special operations require non-SOF assistance.”

Nothing moves without logistics, just as nothing moves without non-SOF support.

From my experience, what I see in logistics happens everywhere across the wing. Airmen base-wide have a hand in special operations taskings and missions. Whether it’s fuel in the plane, lodging, transportation, cargo, or money in your account when you return, non-SOF assistance is always there.

**GUEST CONTRIBUTOR
1ST LT. MARY K. WEBB**



STARRY NIGHT | Senior Airman Tyler K. Woodward

Tactical Air Control Party specialists communicate with an overhead MC-12W during a night training mission at Falcon Bombing Range, Fort Sill, Okla., March 30, 2016. The mission was a part of an evaluation that ensures the Airmen are mission-ready.



TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE

205 EIS CLIMBS HIGHER

STORY | Senior Airman Kasey M. Phipps

PHOTOGRAPHY | Senior Airman Tyler K. Woodward



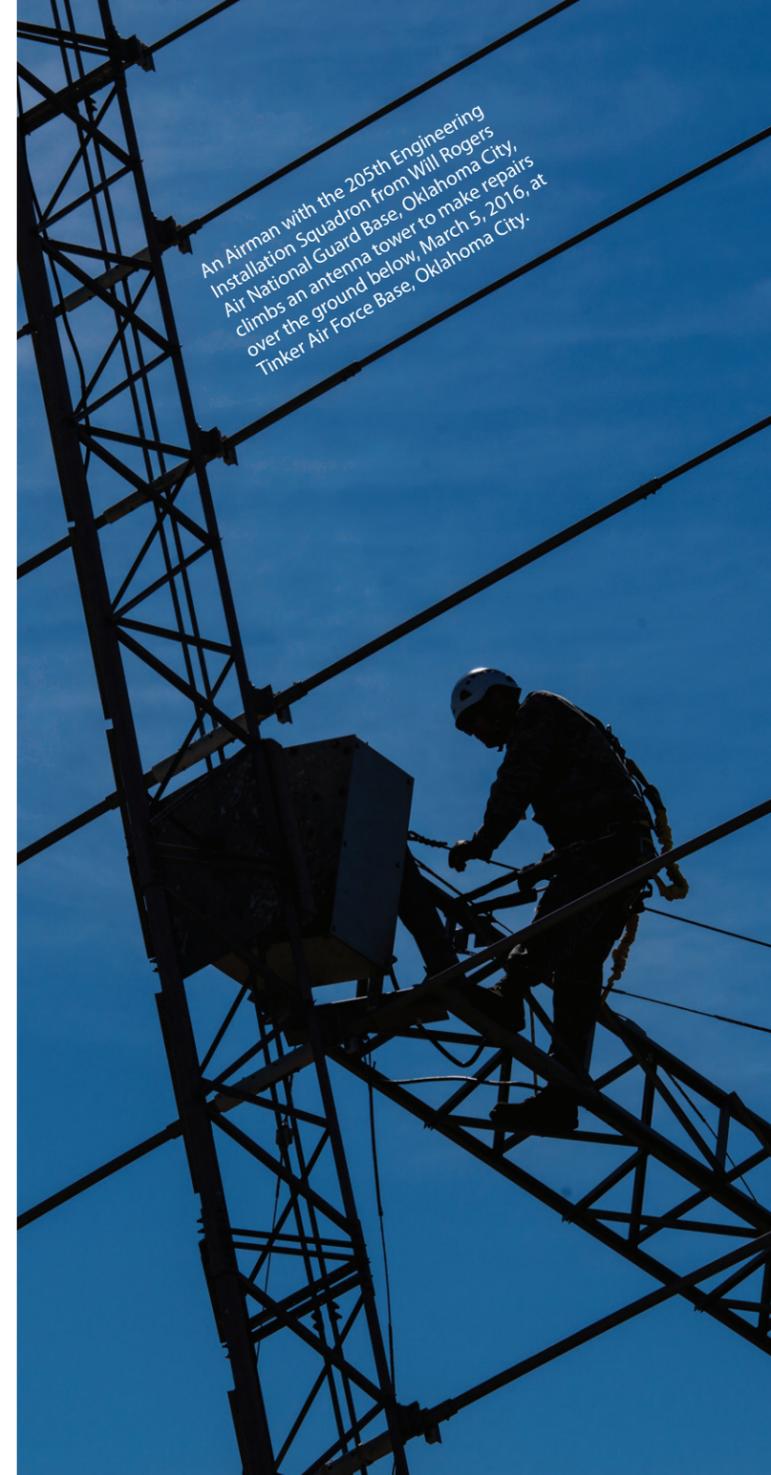
Airmen with the 205th Engineering Installation Squadron from Will Rogers Air National Guard Base, Oklahoma City, inspect and inventory antenna parts, March 5, 2016, at Tinker Air Force Base also in Oklahoma City. The Airmen were a part of one of the two teams from the 205 EIS guard unit that worked to setup and repair antennas for active-duty squadrons at Tinker AFB.



An Airman with the 205th Engineering Installation Squadron from Will Rogers Air National Guard Base in Oklahoma City, secures a half-inch heliex cable to a roof ledge, March 5, 2016, at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma City.



Senior Airman David Hopper, a cable and antenna technician with the 205th Engineering Installation Squadron from Will Rogers Air National Guard Base, Oklahoma City, moves a UVU-200 dual-band base station antenna to its position near a roof's ledge, March 6, 2016, at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma City.



An Airman with the 205th Engineering Installation Squadron from Will Rogers Air National Guard Base, Oklahoma City, climbs an antenna tower to make repairs over the ground below, March 5, 2016, at Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma City.

Climbering up thin ladders and swaying over the ground below, Airmen from the 205th Engineering Installation Squadron at Will Rogers Air National Guard Base performed preventative maintenance on an existing communication antenna and installed a new antenna for active-duty squadrons, March 5-6, 2016, at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma City.

The new and repaired antennas allow the squadrons to communicate across the installation as well as to the control tower at Tinker AFB.

For 205th Airmen, working on equipment in support of active duty is more than just a technical connection.

"It shows that we want to help them in their mission just like they do ours," said Tech. Sgt. Tyler Compton, a team lead for one of the two projects.

The 205 EIS Airmen were split into two teams — one focused on setting up and installing UVU-200 dual-band base station antennas on the roofs of three buildings and the other applying their skill to a preventative maintenance inspection on a lightweight rotatable antenna at the top of a nearly 100-foot tower.

The installation of the UVU-200 required the team to pull cable through the buildings, laying out the cable in the ceilings and pushing it through multiple stories until there was enough cabling on the roofs.

"We pull the cable, and then we get it from point A to point B," said Compton, the team lead on the UVU-200 installation. "Then we put

connectors on it and attach the connector to the antennae themselves and the radio."

The second project focused on a lightweight rotatable antenna outside the buildings. The work done on it was part of routine preventative maintenance inspections and incorporated repairs on issues found during the previous inspection.

"During the last inspection, we found some parts on the antenna that were bad, mainly the spacers for the elements, which are basically the antenna," said Tech. Sgt. Matthew Burnett, the team lead on the tower project. "That's actually why one had already fallen off — because the elements were so bad. One had loosened and fallen down. That's why there was one already on the ground when we pulled up."

The repairs required the Airmen to lower the tower to the ground so that all the structural and electrical parts could be inspected and repaired more easily.

Despite the teams focusing on different projects, they both recognized the importance of gaining hands-on experience that goes further than checking off training boxes.

"We don't see this tower much, so it's good training," said Burnett. "We've also got a couple of new guys and it's good for them to see."

One of those new Airmen, Airman 1st Class Kasey King, a cable and antenna technician with the 205 EIS who finished his training in November, got to experience the benefits of practical experience in the field.

"It soaks in a lot more being on the job using my hands than reading a book," said King. "You can read about it and kind of have a summary of what to do, but you forget what order the steps go in and stuff like that. It's a lot easier when you're here; you can actually remember it and see it."

Both jobs helped to prepare Airmen for deployment by allowing them an opportunity to gain experience before working on the varying structures of a deployed base.

"The jobs themselves usually bring all of our training together," said Compton. "When we go to Wichita Falls for technical school, they teach us about the principles of everything. Then, we go to the Lightning Force Academy and expand some of those principles. When we actually get to on-the-job training, we get to see more of the things we actually do on real jobs. You don't do any of this in tech school."

Compton said that problem solving, no matter the project, also plays a big part in their preparation for deployments.

"A lot of the stuff we do stateside helps with what we do overseas," said Compton. "When you're deployed, you'll know what to do when you face those same problems."

Now, the unit as a whole is taking a leap into new territory that will

potentially help Airmen even more in deployed environments.

"Our unit is trying to get to where everybody knows how to do a bit of everything, and that way we can augment each other," said Compton. "We have a lot of cross-training going on here because we want more of a single unit, instead of a divided one."

This change is reflected in the recent renovations to the 205 EIS building, which include a single bay area for training.

"We're one unit," finished Compton. "We need to work like that. We need to train like that."

The 205 EIS is one of 16 engineering installation squadrons in the nation. Of those, 15 are guard units and one is an active-duty unit at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Mississippi. **AO**

ON YOUR MARK, GET SET ... | Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux

The sun sets on the Will Rogers Air National Guard Base flightline as a C-17 Globemaster III from the 183rd Airlift Squadron in Jackson, Miss., waits for the next day's activities, April 15, 2016. The C-17 was at WRANGB as part of MATOP, Multiple Aircraft Training Opportunity Program, an aeromedical evacuation training event that allowed participants to train on C-17s, C-130 Hercules and KC-135 Stratotankers.



Multiple aircraft.....
Multiple units.....
One mission.....



STORY | Senior Airman Kasey M. Phipps

Multiple Aircraft Training Opportunity Program

MATOP

PHOTOGRAPH | Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux



1st Lt. Savon Terukina, a flight nurse from the 142nd Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron in Delaware, checks for a proper pulse after she and her team applied a splint to a simulated patient, April 15, 2016, at Will Rogers Air National Guard Base. The 137th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron hosted Multiple Aircraft Training Opportunity Program, MATOP, which included aeromedical team building activities like the timed self-aid buddy care races as well as in-flight simulated patient treatment, April 15-16, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux)



Airman 1st Class Dominique Dimatteo, an aeromedical evacuation technician from the 166th Airlift Wing, Delaware, puts on her in-flight oxygen mask during a simulated fire scenario, April 16, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Kasey M. Phipps)

The flightline whirred with activity as teams of Airmen hustled between aircraft and vehicles, loading and unloading equipment that can both save and sustain lives. Remnants of shouts between crew members could be heard on the Oklahoma wind that tore at the different unit patches on their arms.

Airmen from six of the Air National Guard's nine aeromedical evacuation squadrons packed and unpacked, setup and tore down, took off, landed, and performed lifesaving medical procedures as part of a Guard-wide training event hosted by the 137th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron at Will Rogers Air National Guard Base in Oklahoma City, April 14-17, 2016.

"The purpose of MATOP is to bring units together so that we can interact and train together to kind of share techniques and different kinds of skill sets, and also to share different airframes," said Col. Keith Reed, 137 AES commander.

Aeromedical evacuation squadrons are typically Air National Guard or Reserve units that are responsible for the transport and care of patients, usually on a C-130 Hercules, KC-135 Stratotanker or C-17 Globemaster III and are required to do annual training on all three.

With each of the airframes come unique quirks and frustrations, requiring Airmen to adapt to new layouts and setups while still performing the mission at a high level.

"That part of the training is not always accessible," said Master Sgt. Yvonne Payne, 137 AES aeromedical evacuation technician and MATOP organizer. "Here, we have multiple airframes in one central location where all of the guard units can come to have that training."

TOP LEFT: Airman 1st Class Dominique Dimatteo, aeromedical evacuation technician from the 166th Airlift Wing, Delaware, sorts through aeromedical equipment bags to find a specific item during a timed scavenger hunt, April, 15, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Caroline E. Essex)



TOP RIGHT: Members from the 137th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron race to the finish line during a timed Self-Aid Buddy Care relay race, April 15, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux)



MIDDLE LEFT: Master Sgt. Tifani Kent, a 137th aeromedical technician and flight instructor, smiles during interaction with her team, April 16, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux)



MIDDLE RIGHT: Members from the 137th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron load a litter with a simulated patient onto a C-17 Globemaster III before a training flight, April 16, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Airman Kasey M. Phipps)



BOTTOM LEFT: Light floods the inside of a C-130 Hercules training simulator as Airmen began to familiarize themselves with its features and layout, April 15, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux)



BOTTOM RIGHT: Simulated smoke fills the inside of the C-130 Hercules training simulator during a training flight, April 16, 2016. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux)



On the first day of the event, Airmen from the six units had a chance to get familiar with each aircraft and its unique points, including exiting strategies, equipment locations, and design.

Then in a fog of shouting, clanking and foot-pounding, the Airmen were tested on their abilities to setup those airframes along with their medical knowledge and abilities in timed scavenger hunts, relays and obstacle courses that combined skill assessment with friendly competition between the units.

Those same cohesive units were then broken up and separated into several aeromedical evacuation crews on the second day, much like they would in a deployed environment.

“Having the benefit of working together in this type of event already helps build those relationships with other squadrons, and it also allows us to see that even though we’re all similar, some squadrons have better or different techniques that we may want to use in our home squadrons,” said Payne.

Each crew consists of a medical crew director, flight nurses, and medical and aeromedical evacuation technicians, who were then assigned to an aircraft, some static and some flight ready.

In the aircraft, the crews were tested on properly setting up and securing equipment and patients, monitoring and stabilizing patients, and responding to in-flight aircraft emergencies while being exposed to fluctuating scenarios in a variety of conditions like smoke or fire.

“In the real world, we all know nothing goes according to plan,” said Payne. “With events like this, you have your ups and your downs ... flights are going to come in early, come in late. There are so many things that could go wrong in a real world mission, that events like this allow the personnel to see that it’s not going to go perfectly. This is our moment to have our little panic and learn from the issues or our mistakes.”

The event required all Airmen, including communications, logistic and administration Airmen, to effectively apply the processes that they have learned throughout their careers, providing knowledge refreshment for the experienced and a thorough introduction to those new to the career field.

For Staff Sgt. Chantel McKinley, a relatively new 146 AES aeromedical technician from Channel Islands, California, MATOP was her first AES training event. As a simulated patient, she was able to observe the finer details of how patients are cared for throughout the entire flight.

“It helps a lot because I actually get to see what they’re doing, like the technology they use and how they set everything up,” said McKinley. “I also see how they communicate during the whole process through their headsets.”

The first MATOP training event was hosted in 2012, and this year’s event, four years later, was the second. Its recurrence was inspired by the completion of the 137 AES’ new static C-130 training platform, and it hopefully won’t be the last.

“We’re looking at doing this annually moving ahead from here,” said Reed. “The great thing about holding it more often is that you learn so much from one event. We can go right back into planning mode and build an even better event for next year.”

So as the last visiting aircraft said goodbye to the once full flightline, the 137 AES steeled themselves against the howling wind and began preparation for the next challenge, one that will hopefully have considerably less planning time than the last. **A0**



EYE ON THE TARGET | Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux

Members of the 146th Air Support Operations Squadron, Will Rogers Air National Guard Base, Oklahoma City, join members from the 19th Special Forces Group for weapons refresher training, Feb. 5, 2016, at Fort Bliss, San Antonio. This training helps Tactical Air Control Party Airmen (TACPs) from Will Rogers Air National Guard Base gain familiarity with weapons they will use when they attend the Special Forces Advanced Urban Combat course held by 19 SFG.

EMERALD WARRIOR

Air Commandos from the 137th Special Operations Wing train with their joint special operations partners from United States Special Operations Command for training to respond to real and emerging worldwide threats.

STORY | Senior Airman Kasey M. Phipps



Two weeks. 1,500 personnel. More than 50 aircraft. Five states.

The Air Force Special Operations Command held Emerald Warrior 16, an annual special operations exercise that brings members from the Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, Army, partner nation allies and interagency elements to the Southeastern United States for one mission — irregular warfare and special operations tactics.

The advanced tactical scenarios took place May 2-13, 2016, on the ground and in air, sea and cyberspace and included Naval Special Warfare personnel, Air Commandos and Army Special Forces.

For the Airmen of Will Rogers Air National Guard Base who worked out of Hurlbert Field, Florida, it was an opportunity to see the new mission and their roles within it in a high-speed, if not muggy, environment.

“We had the opportunity to interact and build relationships with different users and operators from not only AFSOC, but the different U.S. Armed Service branches of the special operations community,” said Senior Master Sgt. Timothy Lankford, the Contracting Officers Representative for the Contractor Logistics Support at WRANGB.

Though WRANGB had two MC-12W aircraft and aircrews who operated day and night throughout the exercise, most Airmen worked in less obvious, but in no way less impactful ways.

Behind the scenes, the Airmen of the 137th Logistics Readiness Squadron and 285th Special Operations Intelligence Squadron kept the gears moving and engines running.

These quiet professionals flew under the radar with their feet firmly planted on the ground — working in the darkened corners of the Joint Operations Center, shielding themselves from the downpours on the flightline and laboring under the harsh Florida sun as they covered tent stakes with sandbags to protect others from injury.

“The 137 LRS provided multiple functions and augmentees in several of the LRS flights, while our intel and flying units provided MC-12 crews and support,” said 1st Lt. Mary Webb, Installation Deployment Officer. “Personnel were embedded in Petroleum, Oils and Lubricants, the Traffic Management Office, Air Terminal Operations Center, and

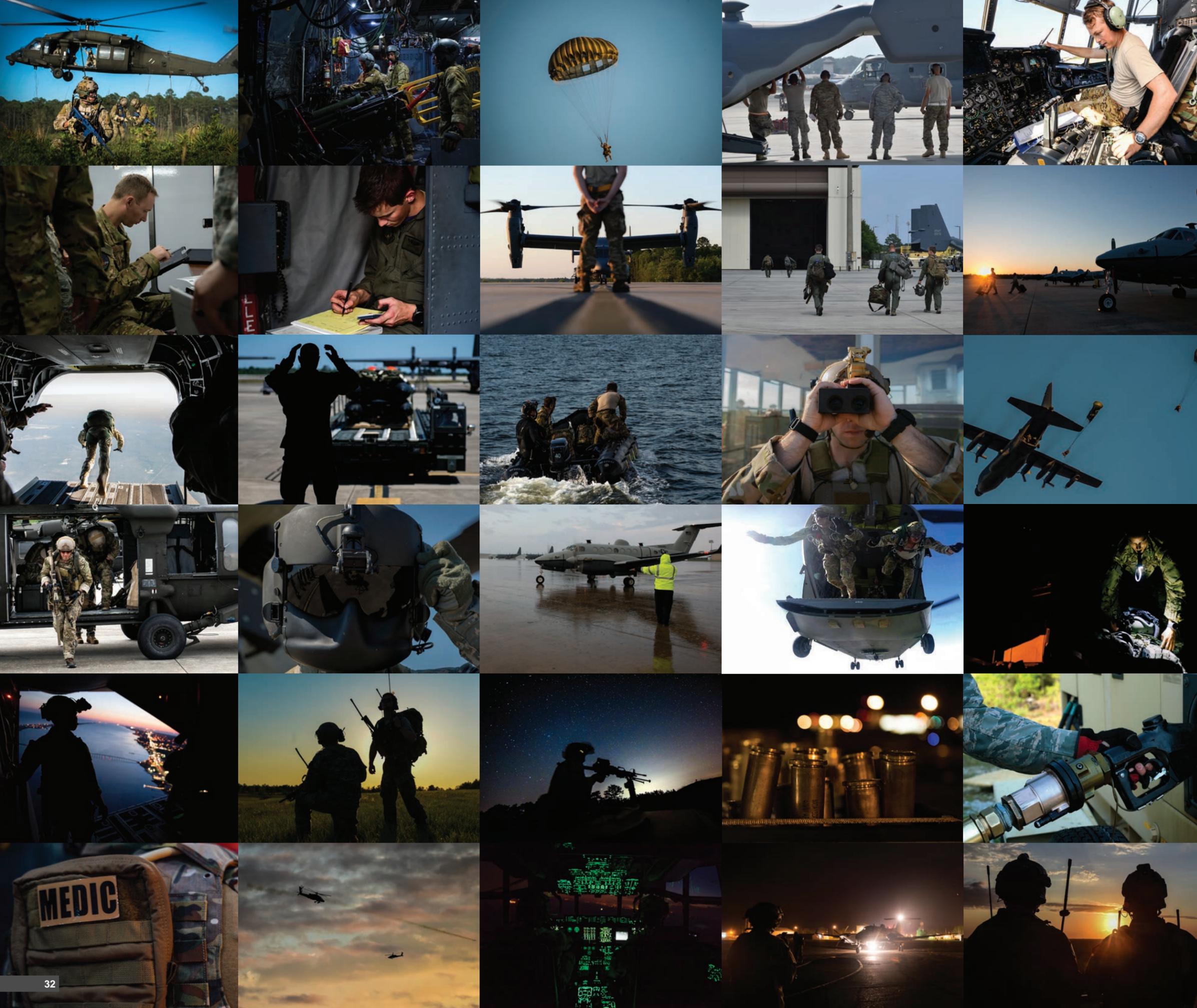
TOP: Military personnel gather in the Joint Operations Center just before an intelligence briefing during Emerald Warrior 16, May 4, 2016, at Hurlbert Field, Fla. Multiple units from throughout the country participated in Emerald Warrior 16 throughout multiple military training ranges and locations in the region.

TOP MIDDLE: Tech. Sgt. Michelle Evans, 137th Logistics Readiness Squadron installation equipment manager, places sandbags on tent stakes for the safety of military personnel during Emerald Warrior 16, May 3, 2016, at Hurlbert Field, Fla.

BOTTOM MIDDLE: Airman 1st Class Cannon Towell, intelligence analyst, and 2nd Lt. Benjamin Tyson, intelligence officer, both from the 285th Special Operations Intelligence Squadron at Will Rogers Air National Guard Base, Oklahoma City, deliver intelligence briefs to MC-12W crewmembers Maj. Scott McIver and Maj. David Metzger before a flying mission during Emerald Warrior 16, May 3, 2016, at Hurlbert Field, Fla.

BOTTOM: MC-12Ws from Will Rogers Air National Guard Base sit alongside C-130 Hercules airframes on a damp Hurlbert Field flightline during Emerald Warrior 16, May 3, 2016, at Hurlbert Field, Fla.

PHOTOGRAPHS | Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux



Supply to assist with the extra requirements that Emerald Warrior creates.”

With the increased exercise activity, there were more aircraft to fuel, more shipments to receive, more aircraft to download and upload, and many other tasks, added Webb.

“Lack of augmentees in logistics functions could have meant mission delays and/or cancellations,” explained Webb. “You don’t fly without supply, and without fuel, pilots are pedestrians. Logistics personnel performed the unglorified grunt work that enables the mission to happen.”

Contracting officers ensured that maintenance contracts were being executed properly, which guaranteed that MC-12 operations continued smoothly without delays and that maintenance personnel had everything they need.

“My mission at Emerald Warrior was to ensure that CLS teams were performing safe and reliable aircraft maintenance, as well as providing clarification and guidance with respect to the contract specifications and statement of work,” Lankford said. “I ensured the CLS team had the proper space and work areas to allow them to have the aircraft fully mission capable for our aircrews for each flight tasking we received.”

Though the work for the Airmen in supporting roles was similar to that of normal operations at WRANGB, the Emerald Warrior environment provided a welcome and useful change, one with big takeaways.

“That training was different because it engaged many different services in conjunction with many different special operations functions,” said Webb. “The training mirrored real-world contingencies in the respect that we now operate in a joint environment during almost any contingency. Emerald Warrior emulated that in a very real way and allowed us to train personnel the way we truly function during real-world operations.”

For Lankford, the connections made at Emerald Warrior along with the experience that Airmen can take to a deployed environment is immensely important.

“We were able to tailor our missions around what our users require for any given operation scenario,” he said. “The interactions and missions we performed provided the 137th a much better understanding of what will be required of us when we do deploy down range.”

Though they may have been camouflaged among the movement and vigor of operations, the Airmen behind the curtain were always there and always ready for the fight — no matter the duration, personnel numbers, aircraft requirements or distance. **A0**

Multiple units from around the country participated in Emerald Warrior 16 throughout multiple military training ranges and locations in the region, May 2-13, 2016.

(Images available on www.dvidshub.net)



EYE IN THE SKY | Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux

Tactical Air Control Party Specialist, or TACPs, and MC-12W aircrews from Will Rogers Air National Guard Base, Oklahoma City, work together to create simulated battlespace scenarios while training to support ground forces overseas. The smaller image shows a landing strip at Fort Chaffee Maneuver Training Center, Ark., during a training flight by a MC-12, May 24, 2016, and is an example of the imagery the TACPs use to make informed tactical decisions.



THE MANY MANY MANY HANDS OF CONTRACTING

From supply orders to construction projects, the requests to the 137th Special Operations Wing contracting office never cease. Fortunately for Will Rogers Air National Guard Base Airmen, the many hands of base contracting are more than capable of handling these requests.

Contracting is inherently complicated due to the fact that it deals with widely varying issues with the common bond being appropriate allocation of funds.

"We spend the government's money to purchase mission essential needs that are not available through the supply chain," said Master Sgt. Christine Walker, 137 SOW base contracting officer.

Acquisition of these mission essential needs are a high priority for those whom the purchase impacts. Despite only having an office of three Airmen, one of which is traditional, base contracting manages to function at a high level to ensure requirements are met.

Like many career fields, the perception of work being accomplished seems straightforward, but behind the scenes, contracting involves complicated legal restrictions and responsibilities. For example, in accordance with federal acquisition regulations, purchases must include a minimum of three quotes from vendors or face a 30 to 60-day delay while more quotes are sourced.

"We have to demonstrate that the cost of the item or items requested is reasonable," said Walker. "Depending on the potential value of the contract, the bidding period can fluctuate. Then, we choose the contract based on the lowest quote that provides the supplies we need."

Even within purchase operations, contracting has to demonstrate different hands, or skills, related to different categories. Purchases are categorized as simple and complex — each with their own restrictions and rules.

A simple purchase is an acquisition greater than \$25,000, but less than \$150,000 and can come from any vendor. Complex purchases exceed \$150,000. An example of recent simple purchase completed by the base contracting office was the rental of a venue for the Strong Bonds event put on by the Chaplain's office. Likewise, an example of a complex purchase was the acquisition and installation of new communications antennas for MC-12W operations on base.

Another hand demonstrated by base contracting involves civil engineering projects. The contracting office routinely works with the 137th Civil Engineering Squadron to provide necessary manpower for construction around the base.

"CE is the technical expert," said Walker. "So, they say to me, 'this is what we need, this is what we are looking for, here's the square footage and here's what the layout is.'"

These requirements are then translated into contracts, which are then bid out to vendors.

A prime example of this was the recent construction of the 146th Air Support Operations Squadron building, which was contracted to a qualified vendor and overseen by CE personnel.

The reach of a contracting office extends as far as deployed locations abroad. Though similar to processes locally, finding qualified vendors is more complicated when overseas.

Contracting officers are encouraged to work with local companies in their area of responsibility. This can create a unique set of challenges including access to the installation and potential language barriers.

"Depending on the threat level, the forward operating base may decide the vendor can't come on base," said Walker. "So, things can change from the time you put the contract out to the time it's awarded."

Threat levels can also impact project timelines due to restrictions on military personnel that prevent contractor oversight, said Walker. In a worst case scenario, lack of oversight could lead to injury or potentially death.

"There was an incident when I was deployed to Afghanistan where roadside bombs were being put in culverts," said Walker. "We

put out a contract for a vendor to put covers over the culverts. But, because no one was available to oversee the project, the vendor said they were doing the work and they weren't."

Deployed or at home, base contracting has a hand in just about every office and mission, ensuring that projects aren't unnecessarily delayed and squadrons get the supplies and labor they need. Despite many challenges, Walker, and her small contracting team, never loses sight of their mission

"If we didn't have contracting, a lot of people wouldn't get what they need," concluded Walker. A0



STORY | Senior Airman Justin M. Creech

PHOTO-ILLUSTRATION | Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux

iSTAN



Stanley blinks at the uniforms squeezing into the small space around him, one tightening a blood pressure cuff on his arm and another checking his other vitals. As they check his pulse, pupil response and breathing, the aeromedical technicians speak above the C-130 Hercules' roaring engines to ask him how he's feeling.

Just as Stanley begins to respond, flames erupt from the sides of the aircraft, and heavy smoke fills the air.

While the technicians and flight nurses from the 137th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron respond to the fire, Stanley remains still, blinking steadily at the sagging litter above him.

Stanley, or iStan, a patient simulator, can breathe, bleed, cry, talk, respond to simulated medication and treatment, and exhibit a pulse and pupil response, but he still needs human intervention to change positions.

"To sum it up, he's responsive," said Maj. Casey Patton, a 137 AES aeromedical evacuation flight instructor, flight nurse and mission clinical coordinator program manager. "He's very responsive to the medical interventions we apply."

Along with the pre-loaded simulated medical scenarios, a wireless microphone voiced by the scenario coordinator from a laptop, interchangeable male and female anatomy and even the new C-130 training simulator, Stanley, or his female equivalent, makes for a more realistic training environment. He is even approved for flight.

"The word 'simulation' is used so loosely now," said Patton. "So we're taking away that



Maj. Hollis Guenther, an aeromedical flight nurse from the 156th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, Charlotte, N.C., holds an oxygen mask on iStan, or "Stanley" the patient simulator, as he strives to level off its vitals, April 16, 2016, in a static C-130 Hercules training simulator at Will Rogers Air National Guard Base during Multiple Aircraft Training Opportunity Program, or MATOP. Along with vitals, iStan has the ability to speak, bleed and even blink. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Andrew M. LaMoreaux)

anomaly. When we use the word simulation, we're really and truly simulating reality."

The programs and Stanley's behavior are adjustable through a laptop that the scenario's coordinator uses, changing settings and reading feed-back from Stanley's computer brain in order to respond to players via the wireless microphone.

"Right now we have three programmed scenarios that we're using but we eventually hope to develop scenarios further for our training and get more specific," said Senior Airman Aaron Rickey, an aeromedical evacuation technician and soon-to-be flight instructor.

Stanley's voice, though it changes according to the coordinator, is an especially important part of the simulated treatment process, one that gives players a better idea of interacting with real world patients.

"I think the patient communication factor is huge," said Master Sgt. Tifani Kent, an aeromedical technician and flight instructor. "We train so often with mannequins that we forget the caregiver mentality of actually talking to the patient. He (Stanley) has really brought that back into the picture."

The 137 AES is one of few Air National Guard units that use an iStan for regular

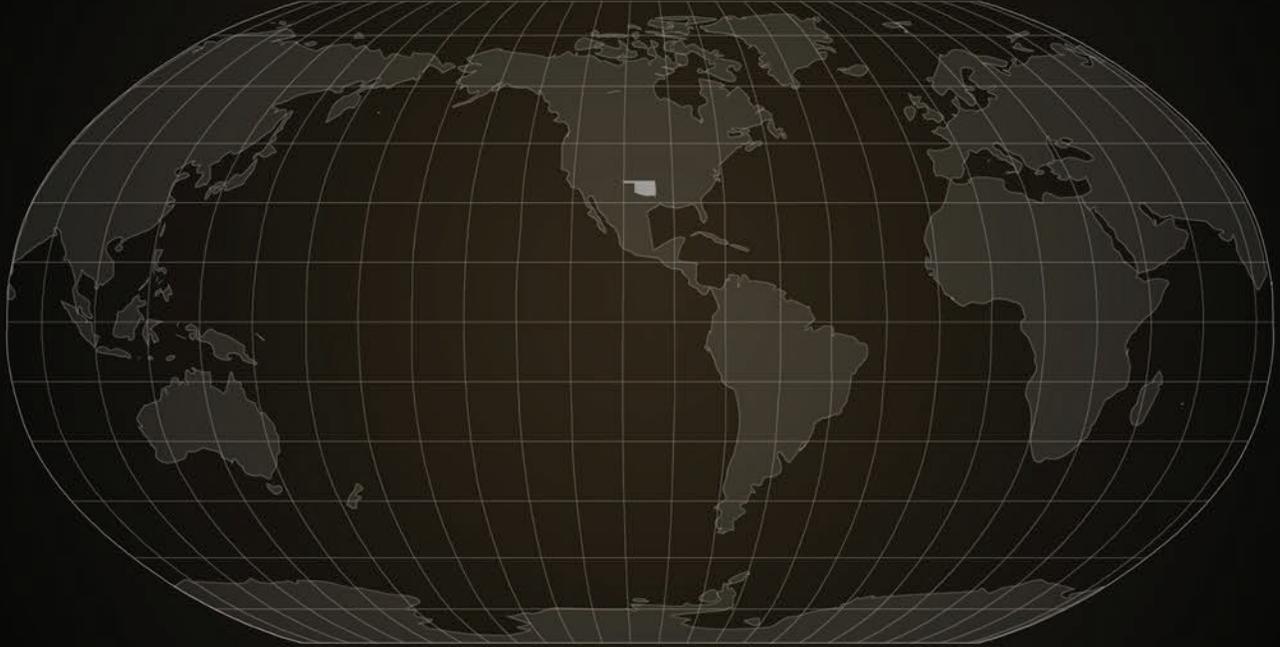
training, which allows Stanley to live up to its nearly 100,000-dollar price tag.

Each training starts with a briefing on Stanley's features including how and where to find his pulse, where to inject medication and where his sensors for things such as light and touch are located. Because Stanley can also be used in a clinical setting, 137 AES could potentially create a training scenario that goes from ground pick-up, to air transport, to the ground again. Paired with the C-130 trainer, Stanley provides a comprehensive training environment that not only helps 137 AES Airmen train, but can also put Will Rogers Air National Guard Base on the map.

"We really want to create a program that is centered on a simulation and bring this sort of advancement and technology to the rest of the Air Guard, not just with Stanley but with an entire environment that offers that realism," said Patton. "Because it's totally different from the traditional training environments."

After the scenario, Airmen squint and blink against the light bouncing off the flight line as they step out of the lowered back door of the once "burning" C-130, which never left the ground or started an engine, and away from Stanley, now unblinking and quiet, and into the windswept reality at WRANGB. **A0**

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EXERCISE ULCHI FREEDOM GUARDIAN

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NEXT ISSUE DECEMBER 2016