

Bagram News Express

Fighting Terror, Building Peace

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What's does your sign say?

By Master Sgt. James Herkel
455 Air Expeditionary Wing
Antiterrorism Force Protection

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — Comedian Bill Engvall is famous for his shtick on certain people wearing the “I’m stupid” sign. Doing so will make better sense to others when they ask, say, or do stupid things.

What does your sign say? Maybe it says, “I’m a sheep.” Or perhaps you’re just wearing a big target. Hopefully, you bear a large placard that reads, “I’m ready, bring it on!”

Our enemies are checking our signs. They don’t especially care about what your AFSC might be or what qualification badge you wear on your chest. In fact, the only part of your uniform that really matters to him is the small segment above your left breast that reads, “U.S.”

By now you are surely wondering, “How will I know if I’m wearing the wrong sign?”

If you can’t remember the last time you cleaned your weapon, you are surely wearing a sign that reads, “Don’t count on me.” And if your

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Teamwork making a difference

PANJSHIR PROVINCE, Afghanistan - Members of the Panjshir Provincial Reconstruction Team, civil affairs, unload flour, sugar, and rice to be given to 320 local Afghan families that live in the remote Dara village. The PRT's primary mission is to rebuild Afghanistan and promote U.S./Afghan relationships. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Demetrius Lester)

Security Forces protect resources

By Master Sgt. Demetrius Lester
455 Air Expeditionary Wing
Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan – They’re on the flightline, at entry control points, and along the perimeter. Sometimes, they’re not seen at all.

They are Security Forces.

While the exact numbers are classified, members of the 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron are located throughout Afghanistan helping fight the Glo-

bal War on Terror.

They provide flightline security and mission support, perform tactical security missions, and secure aircraft, cargo, and passengers with the Fly Away Security Teams — the largest in the CENTCOM area of responsibility.

“We limit the enemies’ resources and capabilities by securing areas so our members and coalition forces can do their missions,” said Capt. Pedro Jimenez, 455th ESFS operations officer deployed from the

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BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan - Senior Airman Michael Cooper (left) and Airman 1st Class Jeremy Gooden, 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron tactical automated sensor system controllers, monitor the flightline and perform visual assessments for alarm activations here June 5. Both members are deployed from the 355th Security Forces Squadron, Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Demetrius Lester)

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824th Security Forces Squadron, Moody Air Force Base, Ga. “The enemies see a deterrent when they see us all over the place, so they don’t damage aircraft, people or sabotage missions.”

When a new team is brought together for any amount of time, it takes time to gel. But the members of 455th ESFS, who are deployed from various locations for six-month rotations, make it happen without hesitation because everyone understands their respective role in supporting the Global War on Terror.

“We are essentially protecting over \$3 billion worth of combat assets,” said Master Sgt. Donnie Bolton, 455th ESFS operations superintendent deployed from the 824th SFS. These assets are essential to the 455th Air Expedition-

“...we protect the number one asset, the people...”

ary Wing’s mission of providing expeditionary combat operations and expeditionary combat support to U.S. and Coalition forces operating in Afghanistan.

While vulnerable to mortar and rocket attacks, as well as IEDs and indirect fire, not one team member hesitates to do their job knowing it’s essential to effectively accomplishing the mission.

“By crippling the bad guys, which is our job, we protect the number one asset, the people who accomplish the mission of fighting terror and building peace for the people of Afghanistan,” Sergeant Bolton added.

News Briefs

MUSIC NIGHTS

Stop by the Camp Cunningham Recreation Tent to listen to your favorite genre of music...there’s something for everyone. R&B Music Night is Friday at 2100L/1630Z. Country Music Night is Sunday at 1800L/1330Z. Salsa Night is Monday at 2030L/1600Z.

COMBAT O

Combat Orientation is Thursday at 0900Z/1330L at the Enduring Freedom Chapel. This is a mandatory briefing for all Air Force personnel assigned to Bagram Air Field. Newcomers must attend the briefing within a week of their arrival. Accountability is tracked and will be forwarded to the 1st Sergeants at the end of the week.

COMBAT PUSH

Combat Push times are Monday, Wednesday and Friday in the Camp Cunningham Rec Tent from 0900L/0430Z to 1000L/0530Z. Services, Comm and PERSCO will be available to sign outprocessing checklists. Personnel must complete your Post Deployment Health Questionnaire on-line and pick up your medical records at Flight Medicine/Public Health before coming to Combat Push. For more information call 431-4409.

ATTENTION ALL JUNIOR NCOS

The Bagram AF Route 5/6 meets Thursdays at 1800L/1330Z at Camp Cunningham’s Town Hall. The meetings are open to all staff sergeant selects, staff sergeants and tech sergeants. Contact Tech Sgt. Stephen DeWeese, 431-3212 or Tech Sgt. Charles Heywood, 431-2820 for more information.

NEWS BRIEF SUBMISSIONS SHOULD BE SENT TO

455aewpa@swa.army.mil WITH THE SUBJECT LINE “NEWS BRIEFS” AND INCLUDE POC INFORMATION.

Understanding your role during the political season

By Master Sgt. Donte Anderson

455 Air Expeditionary Wing Law Office
Superintendent

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan -- After a long and arduous campaign season, it appears the candidates are preparing to officially begin their run towards the upcoming general election.

In an effort to be proactive, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, recently published an article reminding all military members of their duty to remain neutral during the political season while representing the US Armed Forces. DoD Directive 1344.10 states that it is DoD policy to encourage members of the Armed Forces to carry out the obligations of citizenship.

All members have a 1st Amendment right to voice their opinion regarding a particular candidate or on the political process. However, those opinions must be expressed in their capacity as a private citizen and not as a member of the Armed Forces. This is in keeping with the traditional concept that members on active duty should not engage in partisan political activity while in uniform, and that members not on active duty should avoid inferences that their political activities imply or appear to imply official sponsorship, approval, or endorsement. In short, as a military member there are certain political activities that are accept-

able and some that are deemed to be unacceptable.

For instance, you can display a political bumper sticker on your privately owned vehicle. However, you can not use your official authority or influence to interfere with an election, affect the course or outcome of an election, solicit votes for a particular candidate or issue, or require or solicit political contributions from others. Here are some more things a military member may do in reference to a political campaign:

1. Register, vote, and express a personal opinion on political candidates and issues, but not as a representative of the Armed Forces.
2. Promote and encourage others to exercise their voting franchise, if such promotion does not constitute use of their official authority or influence to interfere with the outcome of any election.
3. Join a partisan or nonpartisan political club and attend its meetings when not in uniform, subject to certain restrictions.

This list of dos and don'ts isn't all inclusive, but provides guidance on what you can and cannot do as it pertains to political campaigns. Remember, these rules don't only apply during a federal election; they apply during state and local elections as well. Voting is a benefit that we all share as citizens of the United States; just ensure that you know the differences between your 1st Amendment rights as a private citizen and your role as a representative of the US Armed Forces.

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running shoes have a thin (or thick) layer of desert dust on them from the lack of use, your sign probably says, "Somebody please be prepared to take care of me in an emergency."

Maybe you find yourself constantly being reminded to tuck in your PT shirt, or to remove your hands from your pockets, or to get a haircut, or _____ (you fill in the blank). You get the idea. If you're that person, your sign very likely says, "At the critical moment, I'll do what's convenient and

probably not what's right." Our enemies will probably read these signs as large targets. The less than subtle message here: don't be a human vulnerability; don't be *that guy*.

Since our enemies always have the advantage of choosing the time of attack, it makes good sense to always be prepared. This means knowing the plan, maintaining good situational awareness, staying fit and healthy, taking care of your warfighting equipment, and most importantly, taking care of one another. To use a great old adage, none of us are as strong as all of us.

This is especially true during adverse conditions and a great philosophy to guide you while deployed.

To guarantee you wear the right sign, take a good look in the mirror and evaluate yourself. Are you fit to fight? Do you know your responsibilities if attacked? Have you rehearsed these actions individually, with your team? Do you wear your uniform in a way that will represent yourself, your unit, and the Air Force favorably? Are you looking out for your wingman? So what does your sign say? It's your choice.