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# Bagram News Express



*Fighting Terror, Building Peace*

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## Pilots provide emergency CAS

By Staff Sgt. Rachel Martinez  
455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

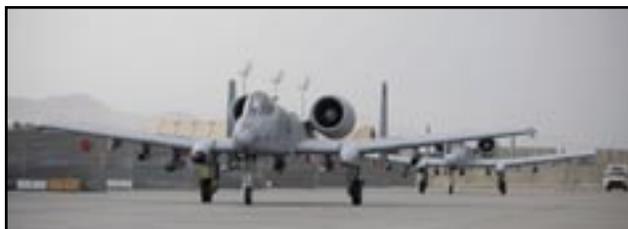
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**BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan** — For F-15E Strike Eagle and A-10 Thunderbolt pilots deployed to Bagram Air Field, joint terminal attack controllers play a vital role in the close air support mission.

“The Air Force JTAC is absolutely our go-to guy on the ground to start any mission,” said Capt. Jeff Sliwoski, an A-10 pilot with the 190th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron. “The JTAC provides a [report] with all the essential information we need to employ ordnance. His other big piece of the puzzle is making sure we understand the situation on the ground - any threats, where the targets are, deconfliction of artillery.”

However, there’s not always a JTAC on the ground when CAS is needed. In these rare situations, pilots step outside their normal boundaries and execute an emergency CAS mission.

“Emergency CAS is very rare, but we are



**BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan** — Two A-10 Thunderbolt II jets taxi out to the runway here on July 26, 2008. The jets are experts at close air support missions and have proven to be invaluable despite being well past their expected useful lifespan. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Samuel Morse)

prepared for the situation,” said Captain Sliwoski, a Boise, Idaho native. “We train for it in our pre-deployment spin-up. We are very familiar with the steps we need to take to employ weapons around friendlies who are not qualified JTACs.”

Being familiar with the necessary steps doesn’t make it easy. The first challenge is aircraft deconfliction. Pilots determine what other aircraft are

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**Every airman 1st class gets a hug**

**BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan** — Chaplain (Maj. Gen.) Cecil R. Richardson, Air Force Chief of Chaplains, gives and Airman 1st Class a hug here on August 4, 2008. Chaplain Richardson spoke at an Airman’s call about how he was influenced to become more than he was as an Airman 1st Class. He then proceeded to give each Airman 1st Class in the audience a coin and a hug to show his appreciation for that rank. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Samuel Morse)

# Airmen prove they are committed to excellence

**By Senior Master Sgt. James M. Majors**

455th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron, First Sergeant

**BAGRAM AIR FIELD, Afghanistan** As the new mentor for the Airmen Committed to Excellence (ACE) council, I've had the opportunity to sit in on one of their meetings and meet with some of the executive committee members. During these few encounters I've learned about some of ACE's accomplishments and goals.

One of ACE's initial goals, which has already been achieved, is to ensure the upcoming AEF rotation has the seed money necessary to sponsor events during their tenure. Council members agreed on the importance of this monetary endowment being in place and ready for the holiday season AEF 5/6 Airmen will experience here in Afghanistan. At present, ACE coffers hold nearly \$1,000. It sounds like someone is making it a little better, for those who will follow.

Another goal is to hammer out and finalize the ACE charter. The document conveys the meaning of ACE's mission. The ACE committee will soon review and vote on changes made by several of the executive committee members. Adoption of the charter is just around the corner.

Another key goal of ACE, is to establish a continuity folder. And again, they have already

started on that. The folder is now going through the rewrites necessary to convey orderly and easy to follow guidance. The folder will include 'how to' and 'lessons learned' instructions vital to fledgling organizations.

As far as ACE's accomplishments, the council has co-sponsored an Independence Day Burger Burn, along with Services, Route 5-6 and Top III councils. It was the persuasion of ACE that nudged the civil engineer squadron to build a dunk tank, which raised \$140 for ACE. Additionally, ACE hosted a 'Guitar Hero' contest, which drew more than 20 'axe grinders' and helped build morale. ACE also provides gift certificates to the Airmen of the Month at the monthly promotion and awards ceremony.

On the horizon, ACE is sponsoring an end-of-tour party, to be held in September. They will also be involved with the 5k run on the Air Force Marathon Day, also in September.

Something else I learned while observing and speaking to a few of the council members ACE is serious about it's commitment to enhancing the morale and esprit de corps on Bagram Air Field. From what I have seen, they are living by their commitment. ACE may be experiencing some early stage of their development, however their accomplishments prove that ACE has what it takes to be the true ACEs of the council's namesake.

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## News Briefs

### SHOULDER HOLSTERS

Per CJTF-101, shoulder holsters in which the muzzle of the weapon points upward or toward the rear are not authorized. If the holster is modified so that the muzzle points down, it may be used.

### POST OFFICE HOURS

The Bagram Post Office is changing its hours. Starting Aug. 25, the Post Office will be open from 0900-1730L Monday through Saturday and 1200 - 1600L on Sunday to handle all your

postal needs. If you are a unit that is departing the area and need to set up a time to mail out your personal gear or you are a unit mail clerk and need to set up an appointment to process Official Mail please contact the post office at (318) 431-3023 or 431-4679.

### 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 and from 2330L/1900Z to 0030L/2000Z. 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.

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## ECAS from Page 1

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in the area and arrange for clear air space. The next challenge comes with building an area of operations update.

“You have to find out what you have to do to help the guys on the ground,” explained the captain. “There is a lot of talking to the guy on the ground and understanding his situation - the friendly situation in general - and find out exactly what they need.”

Other airframe platforms in the area are helpful when it comes to building the AO update as air-to-air communication is easier than air-to-ground. Whatever the method, the update must be built with speed.

“If the people on the ground are not currently taking contact then you can afford to take more time to develop a plan for the AO,” Captain Sliwoski said. “If they are taking contact then it ratchets it up

another notch to employ weapons quickly, efficiently, and above all, safely.”

Weapons employment is the biggest challenge when it comes to ECAS. When a call for ECAS goes out, nearby assets in the air are sent. Those aircraft may not be equipped with the ideal weapon for the job.

“Normally, a JTAC will assume some responsibility - he identifies what you are bringing and how you can use it,” Captain Sliwoski said. “In ECAS, the pilot is assuming all the responsibility and risk in weapons deployment.”

High importance is placed on deliberate targeting. Decisions on what weapons to employ when and where are based on the distance between the target and any friendlies, according to Captain Sliwoski. This can be challenging considering operations today are not like past wars.

“The enemy doesn’t operate

in droves like in past conflicts,” said Lt. Col. Dave Trimble, 190th EFS commander. “It’s not like we show up and see a mass of people advancing. It’s much more challenging trying to find them in the types of terrain they are dispersed in.”

Close air support now involves more time spent orbiting overhead and helping to search for the enemy, but the end result is the same.

“If our presence alone makes the enemy stop shooting, that in itself is rewarding,” said Colonel Trimble.

That sentiment is echoed throughout the CAS pilot community.

“Our saying in the squadron is that it’s all about the 18 year old with the rifle, it’s not about our ego and having to employ weapons,” added Captain Sliwoski. “The ultimate reward is to be able to help guys that need your help.”

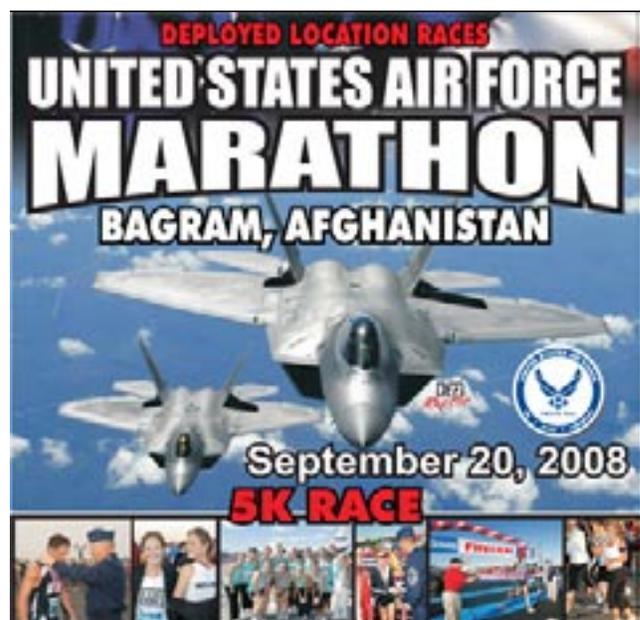
## 2008 Staff Sergeant Promotion Release

Staff sergeant promotion results will be released on Aug. 20 at 0800 CST. The following web sites will be available for AF member’s and the local community to access the promotion list :

AFPC Homepage “Spotlight”:  
<http://ask.afpc.randolph.af.mil/>

Enlisted Promotions Splash Page:  
<http://ask.afpc.randolph.af.mil/EProm/default.asp?prods3=5&prods2=2&prods1=1>

AFPC Public Web Site:  
<http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil>



***Sign up by Aug. 20 in the Services Tent (Building 720)***