

Medical Logistics: Lives in the balance

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Tech. Sgt. Jose Nevarez, the NCOIC of materiel management, performs an operational check on a ventilator used on aeromedical evacuation flights. His flight has assisted with more than 2,100 patients during his rotation. Sergeant Nevarez is deployed from Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. John Jung)



By Tech. Sgt. John Jung, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Surgical and survival records are being broken by doctors and nurses at the Craig Joint Theater Hospital here daily – but without critical supplies, medications and equipment, the skilled surgeons and caring nurses can't continue to do their job of saving lives.

That's where the masterful work of the 455th Expeditionary Medical Support Squadron, medical logistics flight comes into play.

So far in their rotation, the handful of medical supply technicians who comprise the flight, managed more than \$7.1 million of medical supplies

and equipment, including \$2.5 million in contracts to sustain the hospital as well as the Egyptian and Jordanian hospital here at Bagram.

The flight also supported more than 2,100 aeromedical evacuation patients, 1,100 surgical cases and about 900 level-one trauma patients through their efforts, by keeping vital, life-saving supplies in the hands of caregivers; allowing them to claim an impressive 99 percent patient survival rate.

**See LOGISTICS,
next page**

LOGISTICS

These kind of numbers don't go unnoticed.

"Just this morning, the director of the surgical staff for the hospital told me he was very thankful that we [the logistics flight] stepped up to the plate to make sure the care providers had no shortfalls in drug items or anything that they needed," said Maj. Cadina Powell, medical logistics flight commander, deployed from the Air Force Surgeon General's Office, Bolling Air Force Base, D.C.

But numbers alone don't tell the full story of the flight's accomplishments.

One of the most challenging issues for the flight is the lack of warehouse space at the hospital.

"Usually we have a storeroom that is three or four times the size of the current space we have for the number of patients that are seen here," said Major Powell, a 16-year Air Force veteran and native of Chicago.

The lack of space to store supplies, medicine and equipment, combined with the unpredictable shipping time into Afghanistan keeps the 'Log Dawgs' on their toes.

The Log Dawgs have to meticulously ensure stock levels in the hospital are ready for patients by monitoring the amount of supplies on-hand and proactively re-ordering supplies in case of a mass casualty trauma.

"We have to be creative and flexible with how we order and stock items, due to the length of time required for supplies to arrive" said Tech. Sgt. Jose Nevarez, the NCOIC of materiel management and 12-year Air Force veteran, deployed from Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash.

"To make up for some of that unpredictability we often stock items forward into the clinic or operating room so we don't have take up space in the stock room. It's sort of like a puzzle," said the El Paso, Texas, native. "We have to balance what stock we here now with what we expect to need in the future. But we also have to figure in what the docs and nurses will need in case of an emergency."

Even with their hands full trying to see into the future to order just the right amount of sup-



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Staff Sgt. Crystal Moore, the NCOIC of customer service, brings in supplies. (U.S. Air Force photo/Tech. Sgt. John Jung)

plies, members of the flight still find ways to help out the hospital with its life-saving mission.

Staff Sgt. Crystal Moore, the NCOIC of customer service, materiel management and six-year Air Force veteran, is deployed from Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash., and helps out a part of the manpower team.

"If we're needed, we'll go out to the 'Dustoff' helicopters and bring the wounded or injured into the hospital as well," said the Port Orchard, Wash., native. "It really brings it home for me to see that the supplies I am ordering make a difference here. I see the patients as they come in, and see they are getting well because I've done my job right."

AF officials reinforce tattoo, body alteration policy

WASHINGTON - Air Force senior leaders here have taken steps to ensure Air Force dress and personal appearance standards are applied consistently across the service.

"It's about enforcing and maintaining Air Force standards," said Lt. Gen. Richard Y. Newton III, the deputy chief of staff for manpower and personnel. "Our focus is to ensure our Airmen uphold a professional military image no matter the environment; whether at their home-base, Basic Military Training, or in a joint deployed environment."

Air Force officials recently identified inconsistent application of the tattoo screening process following a review of more than 6,000 trainees at Basic Military Training. The review revealed more than 80 individuals did not comply with the Air Force's tattoo policy standards.

"The Air Force tattoo policy remains unchanged since March 1998," General Newton said. "Air Force instructions spell out our professional standards and responsibilities.

They outline the excellence that defines us as Airmen.



WASHINGTON - Air Force senior leaders have taken steps to ensure dress and personal appearance standards are applied consistently. (U.S. Air Force photo illustration/Senior Airman Susan Tracy)

Air Force Instruction 36-2903, Dress and Personal Appearance, states "Excessive tattoos and brands will not be exposed or visible while in uniform." Excessive is defined as any tattoo/brands exceeding one-quarter of the exposed body part and those above the collarbone when wearing an open collar uniform. The AFI also outlines the current provisions and prohibitions to include standards governing piercings and body alterations.

Failure of Airmen to observe the standards outlined in the

AFI is a violation of Article 92 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

"Adherence to Air Force instructions is the responsibility of each Airman and an important element of the Air Force core values: integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do," General Newton said. "These core values are essential to the profession of arms and form the basis for Air Force policies and guidance."

To see AFI 36-2903 in its entirety, visit the Air Force Portal at <https://www.my.af.mil>.

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National Military Family Association officials accepting scholarship applications from military spouses

by Maj. Belinda Petersen, Air Force Personnel Center Public Affairs

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas -- National Military Family Association officials are accepting scholarship applications from military spouses, and the deadline is Jan. 31, 2010.

The Joanne Holbrook Patton Military Spouse Scholarship program awards up to \$1,000 to military spouses to obtain professional certification or to attend post secondary or graduate school.

The program consists of a general scholarship, a scholarship for spouses of the wounded, and a scholarship for spouses of the fallen.

"The National Military Family Association recognizes that unique challenges like frequent moves and deployments can interfere with military spouses' ability to complete their education. In order to help spouses reach their career and educational goals, we offer scholarship opportunities, as well as a web portal stocked with military spouse education resources and information,"

said Joyce Raezer, the executive director of the National Military Family Association.

Applications will only be accepted online at <http://www.militaryfamily.org/scholarships>. Spouses of uniformed service members (active duty, National Guard and Reserve, retirees and survivors) of any branch or rank are eligible to apply. The scholarship funds may be used to assist with tuition, fees, and school room and board.

Award notifications will be made in March and scholarship checks will be mailed by June. If selected for a scholarship award, applicants must be able to enroll in a school or vocational program and show proof of eligibility by April 1, 2010.

For more details about this scholarship program, including how to apply, visit <http://www.militaryfamily.org/our-programs/military-spouse-scholarships/scholarship-instructions.html>.



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Airman 1st Class Phillip Souphanthavong, an avionics specialist from the 455th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, gives thumbs up during a preflight inspection on an F-16 Fighting Falcon. Airman Souphanthavong is deployed from Shaw Air Force Base, S.C., and hails from Raleigh, N.C. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Felicia Juenke)

When is a shirt, not a shirt?

By Doug Beckstead
455th Air Expeditionary Wing Historian

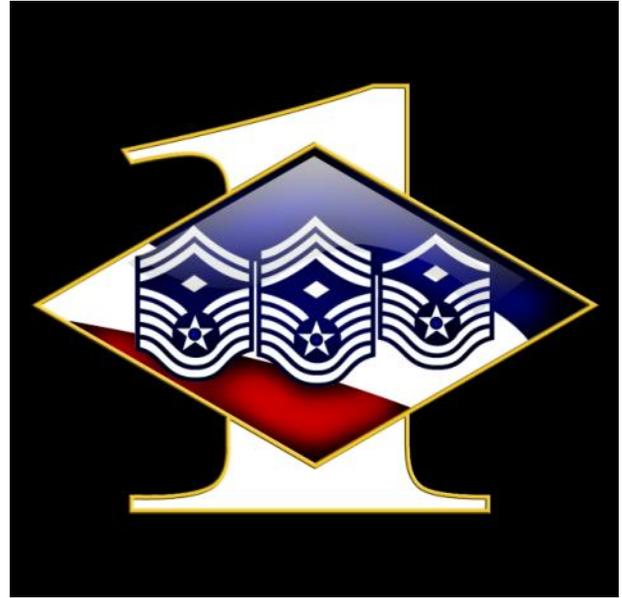
BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - When I joined the Air Force history program I came from an academic, not a military background. Some of the customs, courtesies and traditions of the military were unfamiliar to me. One term in particular has been rather intriguing. That term is “First Shirt.” Just what exactly is a “Shirt” and what do they do?

The history of the first sergeant goes back many, many years to the Middle Ages to a time when a feudal lord maintained armed men to guard his castle. These men were commanded by a captain of the guard who may as often as not been a mercenary who received his training in a foreign army. The soldiers under him were called *serventes* or servants. Over the centuries, as languages evolved, they became known as *sergentes*, or sergeants, as we know them today.

The term “First Sergeant” came to denote the highest ranking individual within the platoon or company. He ensured good order, discipline and morale. He served as the go-between between the enlisted troops and the company commander. Over the span of history, not much has changed about what they do.

So, where does the term “First Shirt” come from?

There are no records to prove the origin of the term one way or another, but according to Chief Master Sgt. Roger M. Ball, one plausible explanation dates to the last half of the nineteenth-century in the American West. At the time, troops did not have ready access to supplies and uniforms. Sometimes they had to do with the one shirt and pair of pants until they just plain wore out and were unserviceable. Today one simply goes over to supply with the damaged uniform and turns it in for a new one. Back then, you had to wait until the next supply train (generally wagons pulled by mules – not literally a railroad) come through. The First Sergeant would then inspect the goods to get a good accounting of what



was being delivered. As supplies were unloaded, he received the first new shirt for his uniform and thus the name “First Shirt.”

Is this the real derivation of the term? No one knows for sure. But, like many traditions, it just makes good sense so who knows. It may very well be true.

How did the role of the Shirt evolve here in the US? Well, tradition has it that it dates back to before the American Revolution to the seventeenth-century Prussian Army. At the time, the position of *feldwebel*, or company sergeant served in a position that combined the roles of today's first sergeant with those of the sergeant major (and later the chief master sergeant in the Air Force). They became the highest ranking non-commissioned officers.

During the American Revolution, General George Washington relied heavily on General Baron Friedrich Wilhelm von Steuben and his strong traditions from the Prussian Army. Among the things he brought to the fight was a small book that came to be known as the “Blue Book.” This small volume contained much of the organizational, administrative and disciplinary details that were incorporated into the Continental Army and remain today.

See SHIRT, next page

SHIRT

Within Washington's Army, the first sergeant was chosen by the company officers for their expertise and ability to maintain good order, discipline and morale of the troops within the unit. The first sergeant had to be intimately acquainted with the character of every soldier in his company.

The job of the first sergeant is not strictly administrative in nature. They are at the forefront of their troops in battle as well. There are at least ninety instances where first sergeants have received the nation's highest honor, the Medal of Honor. The first man to do so was Frederick R. Jackson, "First Sergeant, Company F, 7th Connecticut Infantry." The citation for the award reads: "Having his left arm shot away in a charge on the enemy, he continued on duty. Taking part in a second and a third charge until he fell ex-

hausted from the loss of blood."

In 1833, Congress recognized the first sergeant when they enacted a new pay scale whereby the sergeant major, quartermaster sergeant and chief musician each received \$16 a month. The company first sergeant received \$15 a month and all other sergeants received \$12 a month.

In 1847 the uniform regulations for the U.S. Army were changed to authorize the lozenge (French for diamond) to designate the first sergeant.

The role of the first sergeant carries with it a long history and tradition that dates back literally hundreds of years. The rank has always had a central theme to it: maintain good order, discipline and morale. In other words, the first sergeant's job is to help people.

So, next time the Shirt corrects a problem with your uniform, remember, they are only trying to make you a better Airman. It's their job.



BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Airmen perform landing-gear maintenance on a C-17 Globemaster III recently. The Airmen are from the 8th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, 379th Air Expeditionary Wing, Southwest Asia. The C-17 is deployed from Charleston Air Force Base, S.C. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Felicia Juenke)

NEWS BRIEFS

IMMUNIZATIONS: Are your immunizations up to date? Active duty members are required to stay current on all immunizations during their deployment. Report to your nearest medical treatment facility to check your status and get vaccinated. For questions, contact Task Force Medical Public Health, 431-4426.

NEWCOMERS INPROCESSING: All Air Force members are required to inprocess with PERSCO. The inprocessing will start your combat pay entitlements. If you have been in the AOR for at least 30 days and you are not receiving combat pay, visit Finance in the crow's nest tower on Camp Cunningham. If you know for a fact that you did not inprocess with PERSCO, please visit PERSCO located in Bldg. 700 near the passenger terminal. Call 431-2070/4409 for more information.

COMBAT O: Combat Orientation is every Friday at 0130Z/0600L at the MWR Clamshell. Uniform is Air Force PT uniform for fitness assessment. This is a mandatory briefing for all Air Force personnel assigned to Bagram Airfield. Accountability is tracked and will be forwarded to the first sergeants.

Did You Know:

1 in 33 men and 1 in 6 women

will be sexually assaulted

in their *lifetime*?

Every 150 seconds someone is assaulted somewhere in America?

80% of victims *know* their assailant?

Always take a Wingman

If you are interested in becoming a Victim Advocate, contact
Captain Tabitha Stump
DSN: 318-431-4060
tabitha.stump@bgab.centaf.af.mil



All personnel not in an authorized military uniform (duty or PT) are required to display IDs or BAF badges at all times. All military or civilian personnel are obligated to challenge others not properly displaying badges. People not in possession of proper identification shall be turned over to the PMO. Get involved, strengthen our security, and keep our war fighters safe!

455 AEW AT/FP Office: 431-4207
Capt. Sprute - Antiterrorism Officer
MSgt. Holtzmann - Antiterrorism Superintendent

Force Protection is *your* business - *everyone* is a sensor



Must wash their hands
before returning to work...