

# Bagram News Express



START RIGHT, FINISH STRONG

VOL. 4 ISSUE 12, MARCH 19, 2010

## Bagram Airman prevents aircraft mishap



**U.S. Staff Sgt. Justin Wilson, 455th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, performs a brake inspection on an F-15E Strike Eagle during an aircraft inspection at Bagram Airfield, March 16, 2010. Sergeant Wilson is a 494th Aircraft Maintenance Unit crew chief deployed from the 48th Fighter Wing, Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England and is a Malone, N.Y. native. (U.S. Air Force photo by/Staff Sgt. Richard Williams)**

**By: Staff Sgt Richard Williams  
455th Air Expeditionary Wing  
Public Affairs**

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan— Vigilance prevailed when crew chiefs from the 455th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron ground aborted an F-15E Strike Eagle mission minutes before take-off, March 12, 2010.

At approximately 11:30 p.m. Staff

Sgt. Justin Wilson, 494th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Unit, crew chief, was watching two taxiing aircraft and noticed an oddity with the flight controls as the second aircraft proceeded to the end of runway area to complete preflight preparations.

“We were watching them taxi and I noticed when the second jet made its turn the left rudder was fully deflected to the right and the right

rudder was perfectly straight after it made the turn,” said Sergeant Wilson, deployed from Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England. “I knew that the pilots were not actually making this happen and something must be wrong.”

Sergeant Wilson, a native of Malone, N.Y., explained the rud-

**See Save, Next**

## Save, Cont.

ders on the tail fins of the F-15E work in a simultaneous motion when the pilot depresses the pedal to adjust for in-flight stabilization. For them to not move in this manner could cause issues during take-off and in flight.

After seeing the potential broken jet at the end of runway area receiving final preparations for take-off, Sergeant Wilson ran to the area to inform the crew of the problem and advise them to send the jet back to its parking area.

“As crew chiefs we are constantly looking for these malfunctions when we are going through our pre-flight inspections,” said Sergeant Wilson. “When we launch aircraft we perform a built-in test with the aircrafts internal computer check to make sure everything is working as it should, and the crew completed that test.”

Sergeant Wilson explained after the jet was launched from its parking spot, the internal controls broke and the malfunction in this case did not occur until the aircraft made a turn on the ground.

“It was a team effort and I was just doing my job,” Sergeant Wilson added. “You see something out



**U.S. Staff Sgt. Justin Wilson, 455th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, performs a preflight inspection on an F-15E Strike Eagle aircraft at Bagram Airfield, March 16, 2010. Sergeant Wilson is a 494th Aircraft Maintenance Unit dedicated crew chief deployed from the 48th Fighter Wing, Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England and is a Malone, N.Y. native. (U.S. Air Force photos/ Staff Sgt. Richard Williams)**

of the ordinary or wrong and you go out there and fix it.”

“This incident could have definitely caused some problems for the aircraft and crew,” said Master Sgt. Jason Bruder, 494th AMU, section chief. “This just shows that our guys are out there to get the mission accomplished. Sergeant

Wilson wasn't a part of that launch, was paying attention, and saw the break and took action and all of our crew chiefs are all like that.”

Sergeant Bruder also deployed from RAF Lakenheath, pointed out the overall team effort that goes into getting the jets ready and the vigilance that goes into sortie production. In this case, the crew chiefs' vigilance potentially saved the lives of the pilots and millions of dollars in equipment.

“We are always looking out for each other and making sure the job gets done right,” added Sergeant Bruder, a Long Prairie, Minn., native.

“I think what every crew chief out here does day in and day out is extremely important to mission success,” added Sergeant Wilson. “If we don't do our job well then the aircrew may not have a safe jet to fly and when they are in the air something bad could happen.”

He added, that the number one goal of the 494th AMU crew chief is to launch the aircraft and do everything in their power to ensure the jets come back safe.



**Sergeant Wilson performs a preflight inspection on the bomb rack of an F-15E Strike Eagle aircraft, March 16, 2010.**

# ‘Crows’ keep watch over Afghan skies

Story by: Tech. Sgt. Oshawn Jefferson, USAFCENT Combat Camera Team  
Photos by: Staff Sgt. Manuel J. Martinez

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – The Airmen at the 4th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron are “Looking for Trouble,” using the MC-12W Liberty to bring tactical intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance to ground commanders in Afghanistan.

“We bring a unique capability to the fight,” said Lt. Col. Rob Weaver, 4th ERS director of operations deployed from Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz., where he is an A-10 Thunderbolt pilot. “Our mission is to deliver combat airpower and over-watch to the joint fight in theater.”

Since the squadron stood up in December 2009, the all-volunteer squadron known as the “Crows” has flown 130 sorties, logging more than 600 hours. The four-man MC-12 aircrews fly the aircraft, a modified King Air 350 commercial plane, designed to augment information gathered by other intelligence-collection capabilities operating in theater by providing real-time full-motion video and signals information to allow military leaders to make battle-field decisions.

“We had an operation where one of our



**Lt. Col. Douglas J. Lee, 4th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron commander, performs a walk around inspection of an MC-12W prior to his mission over the skies of Afghanistan, Feb. 27, 2010.**

teams received actionable intelligence regarding a potential suicide vehicle borne improvised explosive device,” said Special Agent Jeffrey Engel, Air Force Office of Special Investigations Expeditionary Det. 2405 deployed from Langley AFB, Va. “The MC-12 aircrew was able to provide visual intelligence which enabled us to see the key points on the ground, enter the area safely and

apprehend five insurgents before they could evade coalition forces custody or use their device against both Afghan and coalition forces.”

“When we first got the intelligence about this operation we needed some validation of the intel we received,” said Lt. Col. Vasago Tilo, AFOSI EDet. 2405 commander also deployed from Langley AFB, Va. “Without the MC-12 squadron, this operation would have never been executed and these targets would have never been neutralized. There is no doubt executing this operation saved the lives of coalition forces and Afghan citizens.”

For these total-force Airmen coming from many different tactical platforms, such as the A-10, E-3 Sentry Air Warning and Control System, E-8 Joint Surveillance and Target Radar System, RC-135 Rivet Joint, T-1 Jayhawk and others,



**An MC-12W Liberty aircrew assigned to the 4th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron, prepares to board their aircraft.**

**See Crows, Next**

## Crows, Cont.

becoming an effective special-mission tactical ISR squadron didn't happen overnight.

First there are two-weeks of training in Atlanta, Ga., including a check ride in a MC-12 simulator. Next, there is a 7-week flying course at Key Field, a Mississippi Air National Guard Base near Meridian, Miss., where the four-man aircrew of one pilot, a copilot, sensor operator and a crypto operator get 12 rides aboard the MC-12. Their 13th ride was in combat operations.

"With every Airman in this squadron being a volunteer from different aircraft, we had to jell together quickly," said Colonel Weaver, a native of Seneca, S.C. "As an A-10 pilot, I don't normally fly with a four-man aircrew, so this has been an adjustment for me. As a team we have met each challenge as professionals. It is a true testament to the professionals we have working on the various airframes in the world's greatest Air Force."

While the mission is meeting with success there have been some unique experiences for some of the Airmen flying the Air Force's newest ISR aircraft.

"Just getting to talk to the (joint termi-

nal attack controller) Airmen on the ground is a new experience for me," said Staff Sgt. Edward Shepherd, 4th ERS sensor operator deployed from Tinker AFB, Okla., where he is an E-3 AWACS radio operator. "I get to build a relationship with that guy on the ground and hopefully positively impact his day. That direct contact makes me feel like I am making a difference for those forces on the ground and it is something that fills me with pride."

"Getting to see the diverse skills from around the Air Force come together to make this mission a success has been great," said Senior Airman Alvar Lam, 4th ERS crypto operator deployed from Offutt AFB, Neb., where he is a linguist. "Our diversity is our strength and we have been able to come together and make our strength a strong asset for the ground commanders we serve."

According to Air Force officials the MC-12 program was dubbed the Project Liberty Program as a nod to a World War II effort that quickly built and transitioned commercial ships into the fight in Europe, much like the Air Force was



**Lt. Col. Rob Weaver, 4th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron director of operations, goes through a routine check of an instrument panel inside the cockpit of an MC-12W Liberty.**

able to do with the MC-12.

The Air Force plans to increase the MC-12 inventory to 37 by the end of 2010.

"The Airmen and this asset are proving their worth on a daily basis," said Colonel Weaver. "I hope the MC-12 can find a permanent home base in the U.S. where Airmen can gain more experience on this critical ISR asset. Our Airmen have proved, with our team flying missions with the MC-12, it means trouble for the enemy."



**Colonel Weaver briefs an MC-12W aircrew prior to departing for a mission over Afghanistan. The four-man aircrews fly the modified King Air 350 commercial plane, designed to augment information gathered by other intelligence-collection capabilities operating in theater, by providing real-time full-motion video and signals information to allow military leaders to make battlefield decisions.**

# 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Warriors of the Week

Senior Airman Kristine Spence, 455th Expeditionary Medical Group



completed 30 percent of the total repair workload, completing 41 scheduled and 9 priority repairs in her first 30 days on station.

When asked her feelings on being named Warrior of the Week, Airman Spence replied, "I am excited about it. It is an honor to think I was even considered."

"We keep the hospital running," she said. She added without the equipment she and her crew maintain, the hospital staff would not be able to provide the quality care their patients need.

For her nomination, Airman Spence's supervision stated she recently won Air Force Level Biomedical Equipment Airman of the Year in 2009. Since she has arrived, Airman Spence has impressed her supervisors with her professionalism and positive attitude which also earned her Squadron Airman of the month January 2010.

Airman Spence is also a victim advocate for the 455th AEW Sexual Assault Response Coordination Office and a member of the 455th EMDG quick reaction force.

Senior Airman Kristine Spence is the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Warrior of the Week. She is a biomedical equipment technician assigned to the 455th Expeditionary Medical Group/Task Force Medical and is deployed from the 60th Medical Support Squadron, Travis Air Force Base, Calif.

Airman Spence's primary duties include installation, repair and

calibration of medical equipment for the Craig Joint Theater Hospital and supporting coalition medical facilities on Bagram Airfield.

Since arriving, Airman Spence has been a vital component to mission success. She installed equipment and created power sources which increased the Craig Joint Theater Hospitals patient care capability by 38 percent. She also

STORY IDEAS  
STARTING A NEW MISSION  
MEDIA QUESTIONS

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# History Spotlight: The Islamic Conquest

By: Tech. Sgt. Scott Gaitley, 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Historian

In 637 A.D., only five years after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, the Arab Muslims, marching under the banner of Islam, shattered the might of the Sassanid Empire, and began advancing into the lands east of Iran. The Muslim conquest was a long-drawn-out struggle into the modern day region of Afghanistan. Herat and the southern areas were swiftly subdued, but it took nearly two centuries for Balkh to fall entirely under Muslim control. The rest of Afghanistan became a collage of quarreling Muslim city-states, far from Bukhara's influence and provoked by desire for independence.

During the eighth and ninth centuries, partly to obtain better grazing land, ancestors of many of the Turkic-speaking groups now identifiable in Afghanistan settled in the Hindu Kush area. Some of these tribes settled in what are now Ghor, Ghazni, and Kabul provinces and began to assimilate much of the culture and language of the already present Pashtun tribes.

By the middle of the ninth century, Abbasid rule had faltered, and semi-independent states began to emerge throughout the empire. In the Hindu Kush area three short-lived, local dynasties emerged. The best known of the three, the Sammanid, ruling out of Bukhara (in what is now the Soviet Union), extended its rule briefly as far east as India and west into Iran. Bukhara and neighboring Samarkand were centers of sci-

ence, the arts, and Islamic studies. Although Arab Muslim intellectual life still centered on Baghdad, Iranian Muslim scholarship, i.e., Shia Islam, at this time predominated in the Sammanid areas. By the mid-tenth century the Sammanid Dynasty crumbled in the face of attack from the Turkish tribes to the north and from a rising dynasty to the south, the Ghaznavids.

Out of this chaos caused by invading Arabs came Alptigin, a Turkish slave-soldier who overthrew his masters and captured the fortress of Ghazni in 961 A.D. He quickly died thereafter, but his successors consolidated their power and went on to capture Kabul, Bost, Balkh and Herat, dealing a deathblow to the Arabs. In their place stood the new power of the Ghaznavid dynasty.

Sultan Mahmud the Great was both an empire builder and patron of the arts. Ghazni was richly endowed with mosques and palaces, becoming one of the greatest cities in Islamic world. He filled his court with poets and artists, his stables with an army of elephants, and whenever the treasury was bare, raided Delhi – introducing Islam to India in the process. Winter was spent in the warmth of Bost and Lashkar Gah, made green with an intricate series of canals. On Mahmud's death in 1030 his rule stretched almost to Calcutta in the east, and west to the Caspian Sea.

The empire was too large and remained unstable. India and the

Afghan northern regions fell almost immediately, and while the Ghaznavid princes fought over the remains they failed to notice new tribes coming down from the mountains with envious eyes. In 1148 the Ghorids, Muslims from central Afghanistan led by Alauddin 'the World Burner,' swept into Ghazni and laid the great city to waste. It took seven days to burn to the ground. From here the Ghorids poured into India and Iran where they plundered and pillaged. When they returned, they endowed their capitals at Firuzkoh and Herat with fine buildings, leaving the Minaret of Jam and Herat's Friday Mosque as their greatest testaments.



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# 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 IN PROCESSING:** All Air Force members are required to in process with PERSCO. The in processing will start your combat pay entitlements. If you have been in the area of responsibility 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 in process with PERSCO, 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 0100Z/0530L 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.

## **BAF MAIL INSTRUCTIONS:**

BAF residents, ensure individuals sending mail have your most current contact information. This alleviates any delays in receiving your mail. Below is the contact information required for individuals to receive mail.

**NAME - (Eg. Jane Doe; no rank)**

**UNIT - (Eg. 455 ECS/SCXK)**

**Bagram Airfield or BAF**

**APO AE 09354**

## **AFGHANISTAN HISTORY CLASS:**

The weekly Afghanistan History course has changed class time and date from Monday's 1900-2000 to Tuesday's 1900-2000 in the Town Hall on Camp Cunningham. For more information contact the 455th AEW Wing Historian's office at 481-6053.

## **455th AEW Community Standards**

### **WATER USAGE**

Conserving water is mandatory for all personnel. "Combat Showers" are mandatory in all shower facilities, including those in the dormitory structures. Total water run time in showers will not exceed three minutes.

Do not leave water running while shaving, brushing teeth, washing dishware etc.

## **455th AEW Safety Tip of the Week**

### **HEADPHONES**

Headphones and their associated devices, (CD players, MP3 players, radios, etc.) are only authorized in indoor exercise and recreation areas. They are prohibited for outdoor use, including outdoor physical fitness activity. Military personnel who violate this prohibition are subject to prosecution under Article 92 of the UCMJ, as well as any other applicable article of the UCMJ. Civilian personnel are subject to administrative disciplinary action and/or termination of employment and redeployment. If you have questions, please contact the Safety Office at 431-4743.

## **455th AEW Financial Tip of the Week**

### **ENTITLEMENTS**

**Savings Deposit Program** - Established to provide members of the uniformed services serving in combat zones the opportunity to build up their financial savings. Member needs to be in a combat zone for at least 30 consecutive days in order to participate in the program. Deposits can be made by allotment, check or Eagle Cash Card. Copy of orders, current Leave and Earnings Statement and military identification card are required to make a deposit. Deposits may not be less than \$5.00 and must be in multiples of \$5.00. You can only deposit the amount of paychecks you have accrued in the combat zone. Amounts up to \$10,000 may be deposited, earning 10 percent interest per annum (2.5 percent quarterly). Interest will continue to accrue on the account up to 90 days after departure from the combat zone. After that 90 days, interest will stop accruing. You can track or withdraw your Savings Deposit Program earnings via myPay.

## **455th AEW Policies and Procedures**

### **FLIGHTLINE PHOTOGRAPHY**

Personnel on Bagram Airfield are not authorized to take still photography or video imagery on the airfield flightline unless authorized by the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs office and 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron. Images must be used for official use only. Violators of this policy will be detained and possibly taken into custody. Call 455th AEW/PA at 431-2371 for more information.

**FORCE**

# THE AMAZING RACE AFGHANISTAN



Where? Bagram Airfield (West Side).  
 Who? Teams of up to 4 individuals (open to all military and civilians).  
 How? Sign up at the Vultures Nest on Camp Cunningham  
 Deadline for sign ups: Midnight, 26 March 2010  
 When? Sunday, 28 March @ 1330

For official rules and more information, email;  
 Travis.luehe.CTR@bgab.afcent.af.mil or  
 Jaclyn.johnson.CTR@bgab.afcent.af.mil  
 Or call 481-6216 or 447-2221



## SARC FAQs

### QUESTION:

Where can I find guidance on sexual assault issues?

### ANSWER:

Air Force Instruction 36-6001, dated Sept. 29, 2008, implements the policy for the Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program.

## Bagram Airfield Air Force PT Uniform Standards...



- Shirt must fit properly.
- Shirt must be tucked in.
- Wear shorts at the waist.
- Do not roll up your shorts.
- Wear white socks not black socks.

## Always take a Wingman

If you are interested in becoming a Victim Advocate, contact  
 Capt. Jose Milan  
 DSN: 318-431-4060  
 455aew.sarc@bgab.afcent.af.

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~~Employees:~~



Must wash their hands before returning to work...

