

BAGRAM NEWS EXPRESS

START RIGHT, FINISH STRONG



Vol. 5 Issue 20, May 28, 2010

Making the airfield safe for the “big birds”



“Basha” a falcon used to catch birds and other wildlife expands his wings, May 24, 2010. Afghan contractors work with the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing safety office to keep wildlife from interfering with flying operations at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. (U.S. Air Force photo by/ Master Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross)

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

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—Foreign objects can be an aircraft’s worst enemy. As pilots taxi them down runways around the world, the air intake of an F-16 fighter jet or the rotary propeller of an MC-12W can sustain serious damage when they come into contact with items that do not belong on the airfield.

One of the main concerns at any airfield is the potential for wildlife to damage the mission essential aircraft or place air crews in harm’s way, said Todd Grimm, a wildlife biologist from Boise, Idaho, with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

“The main thing I am doing here is identifying any potential wildlife hazards that may impact the aircraft,” said Mr. Grimm, deployed to the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Safety Office.

Mr. Grimm, along with four local Afghan trappers, set snare traps, and use other lethal and nonlethal means to ensure birds remain out of the path of inbound or outbound aircraft.

They also ensure animals considered prey for local predators such as jackals and wild dogs stay away from the airfield.

To keep the airfield wildlife free,

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Safety, Cont.

the team removes any vegetation that could harbor insects or seeds that birds may feed on, said Mr. Grimm. “We have also removed jack rabbits and red fox which keep larger predatory animals from the airfield.”

Mr. Grimm, who has more than 18 years experience in aircraft bird strike avoidance and wildlife removal from airfields, says although the 455th AEW has reduced bird strikes dramatically in the past year. Their goal is clear : no bird strikes are acceptable.

“So far we have made a tremendous difference in the num-

ber of bird strikes in the area,” he said. Mr. Grimm has compared bird strike incidents from April and May 2009, with statistics from the same time in 2010, and wildlife incidents have dropped by 50 percent.

“When I first got here, we had a problem with black kites at the end of the runway. There were more than 2,000 birds in the area that would fly to the opposite end of the airfield at dusk every day,” said Mr. Grimm. His team was able to remove the birds from the area and remove the potential risk.

“We want to catch the birds,” said Mohammad Ashraf, an Afghan trapper who works with the safety office. “We want to keep them back from the airfield and keep the airplanes safe.”

(Top Left) Mohammed, a local contractor, and his falcon “Basha” hold a rabbit captured near the flight line. Afghan contractors work with the 455th Air Expeditionary Wing safety office to keep wildlife from interfering with flying operations at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. (Bottom) Mr. Todd Grimm, 455th AEW safety office, checks a bird snare in a grassy area near the flight line, May 20, 2010. He is a wildlife biologist with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Mr. Grimm is from Boise, Idaho. (U.S. Air Force photos by/ Master Sgt. Jeromy K. Cross)



Defending the perimeter: In their own words

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

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan—The early morning attack on Bagram Airfield May 19 may seem like a long time ago to some. After all, the airfield is one of the busiest in the world and the nerve center for much of what moves in and out of Afghanistan.

But for members of the 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron both on and off duty it was a day for which they trained and prepared, but hoped would never come.

“We hope for boring days,” said Staff Sgt. Curtis Wynn, 455th ESFS, element and fire team leader. “We actually look forward to them.”

Sergeant Wynn, deployed from Misawa Air Base, Japan, was on a mobile patrol on the western perimeter of the airfield the morning of the May 19 attack, when enemy combatants tried to breach the perimeter of Bagram Airfield.

“When I heard the initial explosions, I began to do a sweep around the sector,” he said. The Detroit, Mich., native was looking for a potential point of impact and indirect fire attack. He stopped his vehicle in a position to gain a clear view of his local area.

Then he called one of the tower guards who notified him of individuals moving towards the perimeter fence. “The Airman asked me if he could engage the enemy positions and I told him to go ahead.”

After giving his Airman the green light to fire, Sergeant Wynn proceeded up the tower to give his Airman support and gain a better view of events unfolding on the fence line.

“Once I got in the tower, I immediately began to engage targets,” said Sergeant Wynn. He saw three individuals on the fence line and



U.S. Air Force Capt. Jason Williams, 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, sector officer-in-charge, gives a mission brief to 455th ESFS Airmen during a humanitarian mission at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. During an attack on the airfield May 19, 2010, Captain Williams directed his Airmen to supplement perimeter defenses. Captain Williams is deployed from Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., and is a native of Asheboro, N.C. (U.S. Air Force photo by/ Staff Sgt. Richard Williams)

three individuals providing support fire with rocket-propelled grenades.

Both were firing at U.S. Army Apache helicopters that had arrived on station and he added, “We engaged until we were sure all of the targets in the area were neutralized.”

Sergeant Wynn was on duty, patrolling the area when the attack occurred, but many of the responders were not.

Senior Airman Andrew Van Arb awoke to the sound of gunfire in the early morning hours.

“Originally, I thought it was the aerial gunnery range,” said Airman Van Arb, deployed from Beale Air Force Base, Calif. “As I listened, I realized it was a little too close.”

Shortly after Airman Van Arb, a Desert Hot Springs, Calif. native, heard an Airman run down the hallway of his dorm yelling, “Get up, and get out of bed. Let’s go. We

have been recalled. We are under attack.”

Airman Van Arb and his room-mates all threw on their personal protective equipment and took off downstairs to a bunker area where other ESFS Airmen were meeting to organize and assist the perimeter defenders.

“The first sergeant came around the corner with an M249 machine gun and asked, ‘who can use this?’” said Airman Van Arb. “I replied that I could and he handed me the weapon and it was already loaded, so we came around the corner and they began splitting us into teams to get out to the perimeter.”

Once Airman Van Arb was split into his team they grabbed an up armored vehicle and took off to the northern perimeter of the base to render assistance to their fellow

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ESFS, Cont.

Airmen.

“As we proceeded around the north end of the runway the sun was cresting over the mountains,” said Airman Van Arb. He spotted four individuals rising from a prone position and getting ready to run. “When they saw our high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle, one of them turned and fired at us so I sent two three round bursts in their direction and saw one of them go down.

“We turned around after we had engaged and passed the remaining three individuals who had fired at us before,” he added. Airman Van Arb engaged them again.

Once his team got to a nearby tower, Airman Van Arb provided over watch as the others moved up the steps into the tower. They then provided cover for him as he moved

into the tower and set up his M249 preparing for another attack.

For Tech. Sgt. Joshua Behm, 455th ESFS, assistant sector flight chief, the scene on the southern perimeter was much like those on the northern and western perimeters of the airfield, busy.

“We had just completed our change over,” said Sergeant Behm, deployed from Andrews AFB, Md. “It was probably about 3:30 a.m. or 3:45 a.m. when we heard the initial RPG attack.”

Once they heard the initial attack and some additional small arms fire in the area, Sergeant Behm, a Reading, Pa. native, and members of the section who were in the area grabbed their gear and moved to a rally point near their operations center.

“When we got there, we began breaking into small fire teams,” said Sergeant Behm. “Once we were broken into teams, we began

to push out to support our towers and sweep the area.”

Sergeant Behm and his team moved towards a nearby tower to support the Airman there who had a visual on four enemy combatants in the area. The Airman in the tower had already engaged two of the enemy combatants and as Sergeant Behm and his team moved into the tower, they gained a visual on the second two combatants and engaged them, neutralizing both.

With the threats neutralized, Sergeant Behm scanned the area for about an hour and moved to two other areas of the airfield to assist and provide security.

At the end of the mornings activities, 16 enemy combatants were neutralized and the 455th ESFS had only received minimal injuries.

“I believe this was the

first time a complex attack has been attempted on an airfield since Vietnam,” said Capt. Jason Williams, 455th ESFS sector officer-in-charge. “They (enemy combatants) were a well armed force coming to do business and we eliminated them.”

Captain Williams, deployed from Keesler AFB, Miss., added, “They tried to hit us from all sides and we showed them we (ESFS) could defend the airfield.”

A native of Asheboro, N.C., Captain Williams said he was most impressed with his young Airmen, most of whom are under the age of 23, for performing their duties under fire and his noncommissioned officers on scene who stepped in and controlled their areas and ensured the Airmen were engaging the right targets, in the right areas, at the right time.

“We train constantly,” added Captain Williams. “We conduct battle drills all the time so our guys know what to do when a threat like this arises.

“Our guys did an amazing job,” said Sergeant Behm. “Although I think our Airmen do their job and do it well, everyone really came together and everything seemed to flow.” He attributed that to personal experience of some of the 455th ESFS personnel, but emphasized that training was a key part to their success.

“You can train for this all the time,” said Airman Van Arb. “When it happens for real, the training and preparations make everything second nature and you just do what you need to, sometimes without thinking about it.”

The experiences shared by these Airmen are only a microcosm of the events of the morning of May 19, 2010, but the 455th ESFS had a base defense plan in place, they were trained, and understood the very real threat facing Bagram Airfield.

Airman Van Arb added, “I sleep comfortably at night knowing there are ‘Defenders’ on the perimeter and they are going to do the right thing.”



A 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron Airman provides over watch during a humanitarian mission at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Airmen of the 455th ESFS were primary defenders during an attack on the airfield May 19, 2010. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Richard Williams)

Afghanistan PRT Holds Remembrance Ceremony

Story and photos by: 1st Lt. Jason Smith, Provincial Reconstruction Team Panjshir Public Affairs

PANJSHIR PROVINCE, Afghanistan—Provincial Reconstruction Team Panjshir members held a remembrance ceremony May 26 on the one-year anniversary of the day that four of its members were killed by an improvised explosive device.

U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Mark Stratton, PRT commander, Army Master Sgt. Blue Rowe, PRT first sergeant, Senior Airman Ashton Goodman, PRT vehicle operator, and Abdul Samad, PRT Afghan legal advisor, were all killed May 26, 2009, in Kapisa Province while travelling from Forward Operating Base Lion in Panjshir Province to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.

The remembrance events started before 7 a.m. with PRT members hiking “Blue Rowe Hill” which is just behind FOB Lion.

At the top of the hill, named in honor of Sergeant Rowe, the group held a brief ceremony, including words from the PRT commander and director. After the reading of a poem, the team unveiled a marble plaque inscribed with the names of those killed. It also had a quote from Ahmad Shah Massoud: “We consider this our duty, to defend humanity against the scourge of intolerance, violence, and fanaticism.”

At around 11:30 a.m., the PRT starting receiving many guests, including Panjshir Governor Kera-muddin Keram, Deputy Governor Abdul Rahman Kabiri, and many other government officials and friends of the PRT. The group gathered inside the FOB dining facility for a standing-room-only ceremony.

Following introductions, James DeHart, U.S. Department of State and PRT Panjshir director, gave a speech citing instances of courage and kindness of the PRT members



(Front, left) U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Curtis Velasquez, Provincial Reconstruction Team Panjshir commander and Abilene, Kan., native, says a few words at a May 26 ceremony on top of Blue Rowe Hill near Forward Operating Base Lion. The team gathered to pay tribute to four PRT members who were killed in action one year earlier. The group mounted a memorial marble plaque at the top of the hill and unveiled it following the reciting of a poem. (Photo by U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Jason Smith, Provincial Reconstruction Team Panjshir Public Affairs)

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PRT, Cont.

so that they could walk up and down these mountains,” said DeHart.

“Senior Airman Ashton Goodman was only 21-years-old,” said DeHart. “She was passionate about helping the women of Panjshir and was full of optimism and hope for the future.”

“PRT Legal Advisor Abdul Samad believed in the rule of law over the rule of violence,” said Mr. DeHart. “He always had ideas about how to improve the PRT’s mission.”

Mr. DeHart was followed by a speech from Mr. Kabiri who said the loss of life was not just a loss for the PRT, but for all Panjshiris.

“They were serving their country and the people of Panjshir,” said Mr. Kabiri through an interpreter. “One year ago, they were on their way to Bagram Airfield to get approval for projects for Panjshir, and they were attacked by terrorists. Through the PRT, I’m sending my best regards to their families and friends.”

U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Curtis Velasquez, PRT commander and Abilene, Kan., native, closed the ceremony which was followed by a traditional Afghan lunch.

“It’s always important to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice for us and for the safety and security of the Afghan people” said Colonel Velasquez. “It’s really about freedom, and it reflects on how freedom is not free, and there are many hardships to endure that



Provincial Reconstruction Team Panjshir members mounted a marble plaque on top of Blue Rowe Hill just outside Forward Operating Base Lion May 26. The team gathered to pay tribute to four PRT members who were killed in action one year earlier. The group unveiled the plaque following some words from the PRT commander, director and the reciting of a poem. (Photo by U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Jason Smith, Provincial Reconstruction Team Panjshir Public Affairs)

are associated with freedom.”

Khalid Siddiqi, PRT Panjshir political advisor, said the gathering together of Afghans and Americans to remember the sacrifice of Colonel Stratton, Sergeant Rowe, Airman Goodman and Mr. Samad will bring a stronger unity between the two cultures.

“Panjshir is one of the most peaceful provinces, and we were not expecting such a bad thing to happen to our PRT,” said Mr. Siddiqi.

“They were here to serve and help

the Panjshiris. They were hard-working and were here to do things for the good of the province.”

Following the ceremony and departure of the guests, Velasquez called the event a “testament to the whole team pulling together.”

The memory of Colonel Stratton, Sergeant Rowe, Airman Goodman and Mr. Samad will not be forgotten, said Colonel Velasquez. The memorial event was an emotional one that highlighted the generosity and sincerity of their sacrifice.



Military Justice Report April 2010

ARTICLE

15

OF THE
UCMJ

An airman 1st class from the 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron who stole military property worth more than 500 dollars received a reduction to the rank of airman and forfeited 811 dollars in pay

A senior airman from the 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron who was found sleeping on post received a reduction to the rank of airman 1st class.

A senior airman from the 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron who was found sleeping on post received a reduction to the rank of airman 1st class and a suspended reduction to airman.

A senior airman from the 455th

Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron who lost his weapon received a forfeiture of 500 dollars pay a month for two months.

A senior airman from the 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron who failed to obey General Order 1B by consuming alcohol and allowing a member of the opposite sex to visit his sleeping quarters and who conspired with others to make a false official statement and made a false official statement received a reduction to the rank of airman 1st class and forfeited 125 dollars pay for two months.

A senior airman from the 4th Expeditionary Reconnaissance Squadron who lost her weapon received 14 days extra duty and a reprimand.

A senior airman from the 855th Air Expeditionary Squadron who failed to obey General Order 1B by visiting the sleeping quarters of a member of the opposite sex and made a false official statement received a suspended reduction to the rank of airman 1st class and forfeited 350 dollars pay per month for two months.

A staff sergeant from the 455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron was found with unauthorized equipment on post in violation of a direct order received a suspended reduction to senior airman, forfeiture of 250 dollars pay a month for two

months, and thirty days extra duty.

A technical sergeant from the 774th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron who failed to obey General Order 1B by consuming alcohol and who conspired with others to make a false official statement and made a false official statement received a suspended reduction to the rank of staff sergeant and forfeited 100 dollars pay per month for two months.

A technical sergeant from the 577th Expeditionary Prime Beef Squadron who lost his weapon received a suspended reduction to staff sergeant and forfeited 50 dollars pay.

A major from the 455th Expeditionary Medical Operations Squadron who failed to obey General Order 1B by consuming alcohol and visiting the sleeping quarters of a member of the opposite sex and who made a false official statement received a forfeiture of 3,378 dollars pay per month for two months and a reprimand.

NOTE: Punishments may vary from airman to airman. When deciding on an appropriate level of punishment, commanders take into consideration the member's oral and written presentation, the member's duty performance and past history of misconduct, the need for good order and discipline, and the nature and circumstances of the offense(s).

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455TH AIR EXPEDITIONARY WING WARRIOR OF THE WEEK

Tech. Sgt. Jared Wilson, 455th Expeditionary Maintenance Group

Tech. Sgt. Jared Wilson is this week's 455th Air Expeditionary Wing Warrior of the Week. He is the noncommissioned officer-in-charge of maintenance management for the 455th Expeditionary Maintenance Group, and deployed from the 92nd Maintenance Group, Fairchild Air Force Base, Wash.

A Vacaville, Calif., native, Sergeant Wilson provides maintenance analysis to show trends and improve maintenance performance. He identifies trends in problematic aircraft and records data to reflect health of fleet and combat sortie production ensuring maximum mission output for Bagram Airfield aircraft. He is also the vehicle control officer for more than 100 vehicles assigned to the 455th EMXG.

When asked about being nominated as Warrior of the Week, Sergeant Wilson said he was humbled to have the honor bestowed upon him.

"I see a lot of Airmen doing a lot of things," he said. "And it is humbling."

Sergeant Wilson says his job is important because he keeps the vehicles rolling and ensures data



integrity for all close air support aircraft maintenance.

He was nominated for this honor by his management team who said Sergeant Wilson is a great leader and performer who gives 110 percent every day to ensure the mission is not interrupted. When the EMXG was faced with a significant bus shortage due to several accidents, he immediately coordinated with the 455th Logistics Readiness Squadron to re-

place the buses in less than 24 hours. His efforts ensured the maintainers had safe and reliable transportation to and from work enabling seamless personnel shift changes and no negative impacts to the mission. Sergeant Wilson revamped the Health of Fleet presentation and incorporated it for the new MC-12W squadron's critical performance data and his efforts were praised by U.S. Air Forces Central.

STORY IDEAS
STARTING A NEW MISSION
MEDIA QUESTIONS

Contact your
455th Public Affairs Office
@ DSN 431-2371
or email @
455aew.publicaffairs@bagb.afcent.af.mil

~~EVERYONE~~

~~Employees:~~



Must wash their hands
before returning to work...

SARC FAQs

Sexual Assault Prevention Safety/Risk Reduction Information

Common sense, situational awareness, and trusting your instincts will reduce your risk of being sexually assaulted.

Following the tips below will also decrease your chances of being sexual assaulted:

- If you consume alcohol, do so in moderation. Studies indicate that about half of all U.S. sexual assaults involve the use of alcohol by the offender, the victim, or both.***
- Do not leave your beverage unattended or accept a drink from an open container.***
- When you date someone, communicate clearly with that person to ensure he or she knows your limits from the beginning. Both verbal and nonverbal (body language) communication can be used to ensure the message is understood.***
- If you go on a date with someone you do not know very well, tell a close friend what your plans are.***
 - You have the right to say "No" even if you:***
 - Say yes, but change your mind***
 - Have had sex with this partner before***
 - Have been kissing or "making out"***
 - Are wearing "provocative" clothing***
- If you feel uncomfortable, scared, or pressured, act quickly to end the situation. Say, "Stop it" and leave or call for help.***

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.mil

NEWS BRIEFS

NEWCOMERS INPROCESSING: 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 1245Z/0515L 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:

BAF residents, ensure individuals sending mail have your most current contact information. May 5, 2010, Camp Cunningham was issued a new zip code. Ensuring proper postal codes are used 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 09352

CITIZENSHIP FOR MILITARY MEMBERS:

If you are a deployed member of the U.S. Armed Forces and interested in becoming a U.S. citizen, you may be eligible to apply for citizenship under a special provision in the Immigration and Nationality Act. The Combined Joint Task Force 82 legal client service office can assist and conduct naturalization ceremonies on Bagram Airfield in May and November of each year. For any questions or assistance contact the CJTF- 82 legal client service office at 481-8540.

COMBAT STRESS: has two new programs to help servicemembers cope with traumatic events. Trauma Restoration helps individuals overcome stress reactions from traumatic combat and operational events they've experienced, while Trauma Resiliency training helps the individual prepare for successfully performing in a future potentially traumatizing event. Groups are available each week-contact CSC for further information at 431-4639 or view the RC East CSC website at <http://bgrma7afgmedsh1/CSC/default.aspx>.

455th AEW Safety tip of the week

DRIVING A UTV ON BAF: Gator and all-terrain vehicle operators will be trained and licensed. Operators and their passengers will wear proper personal protective equipment: Helmet, Eye Protection, Reflective belt diagonally across the shoulder, full finger gloves, long pants, and sturdy footwear. Gators without headlights and taillights will NOT be operated during hours of darkness. If you have questions, please contact the Safety Office at 431-4743

455th AEW Financial Tip of the Week

DTS orders: will be filed in the DTS system and processed by your home station finance.

Non-DTS orders: log in to virtual MPF, click on the Accrual Travel Voucher link, fill out the form and submit. Once submitted, your home station finance will receive the accrual voucher for processing and you will receive an e-mail notification showing you what you have claimed for your records.

Purpose of Accrual Voucher: to pay off what you owe on your Government Travel Card. If you paid for travel expenses out of pocket, it will also reimburse you in your personal bank account. An accrual is just an advance on your final travel voucher, so make sure you claim everything when you get home as if you never filed an accrual. Keep your receipts!

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.

